



2004 Award Winner

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton

Located on a beautiful 68-acre campus, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton (RWJ Hamilton) is a private, not-for-profit acute care hospital serving more than 350,000 residents in Hamilton Township, N.J.

Founded in 1940, the 340,000-square-foot hospital includes services for medical, surgical, obstetric, cardiac, orthopedic, emergency, and intensive care, as well as a comprehensive outpatient cancer center, an Occupational Health Center, and eight child care centers. Three outdoor areas, designated Grounds For Healing™, offer environments that aid healing through art and nature. And, the recently opened 86,000-square-foot Center for Health and Wellness features extensive community health education, fitness and physical therapy facilities, a healthy cooking kitchen, healthy café, and day spa.

RWJ Hamilton's more than 1,730 employees and 650 medical staff members provide quality care to 14,000 admitted patients and manage more than 50,000 patient visits a year to its Emergency Department, generating revenues of over \$170 million.

The hospital is part of the Robert Wood Johnson Health System and Network and is affiliated with the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.



Highlights

- RWJ Hamilton's "15/30" program guarantees that patients coming into the emergency department will see a nurse within 15 minutes and a physician within 30 minutes.
- RWJ Hamilton utilizes its 5-Star Service Standards, which include commitment to customers and co-workers, courtesy and etiquette, and safety awareness, to recruit, train, and evaluate employees.
- RWJ Hamilton, New Jersey's fastest growing hospital from 1999 to 2003, has attained a market leadership position in an extremely competitive environment.
- Patient satisfaction with the emergency department has improved from 85 percent in 2001 to 90 percent in 2004, exceeding the national benchmark.

Vision: Growth Through Improvement

RWJ Hamilton, New Jersey's fastest growing hospital from 1999 to 2003, has attained a market leadership position across the service lines. Its market share in cardiology grew from 20 percent to nearly 30 percent; in surgery 17 percent to 30 percent; and in oncology 13 percent to above 30 percent. Its closest competitors' market shares have remained the same or declined in each of these areas. RWJ Hamilton's emergency department volume doubled in that time, making it the volume leader in the area.

Fueling this growth is RWJ Hamilton's continual drive to improve the quality of its health care services and environment—or, as the organization's vision statement phrases it, "to passionately pursue the health and well-being of our patients, employees, and the community." A 2002 Gallup Community Survey ranked the hospital first among all local competitors in customer satisfaction and loyalty, an indication of why the hospital's occupancy rate grew from 70 percent to 90 percent, more than 25 percentage points higher than its nearest competitor.

Excellence Through Service

From the patient's bedside to the hospital's board room, RWJ Hamilton's mandate is to provide ever-improving service to three customer groups: patients, employees, and

community. The hospital continuously studies the changing market to determine what these customers need today and anticipate what they will need years down the road. It studies trends in the industry, patient preferences, and physician referrals. It gathers and analyzes market research, demographic data, and information on competitors. It continually solicits opinions and recommendations from employees and pays close attention to the results of customer and community surveys. All information is captured in a database called "Voice of the Customer" and is used to design service improvements and set ever-higher *Excellence Through Service* goals.

Also with a focus on *Excellence Through Service*, the leadership team works within a system that links all management functions—from planning and implementing policies, new technologies, and new facilities through ongoing cycles of evaluation and improvement—with unhindered communications at all levels. Each Executive Management Team member, including the CEO, holds daily briefings that are designed to share key information with the staff and to answer questions. As a result, over the past four years, employee satisfaction with hospital leadership has improved to almost 100 percent.

Serving Patients

At RWJ Hamilton, the patient is the central focus of the organization. Multidisciplinary health care teams design service objectives and expected outcomes based on patient needs. Patient care plans are evaluated daily and take into account each patient's language preferences, cultural needs, lifestyle, and quality of life issues.

As part of this focus, RWJ Hamilton utilizes its 5-Star Service Standards—which include commitments to customers and co-workers, courtesy and etiquette, and safety awareness—to recruit, train, and evaluate employees. Between 2002 and 2003, the number of training hours for full-time employees was increased from 38 to 58 hours, ensuring continued improvement of skills.

RWJ Hamilton's commitment to excellence mandates innovation—in services, processes, and technology. In 1998 it launched the 15/30 program, guaranteeing that every emergency patient sees a nurse within 15 minutes and a physician within 30 or their emergency department charge is waived. And, in a program called Walk in My Shoes, employees work in departments other than their own, creating opportunities for cross-training, sharing information and best practices, and gaining fresh insights. An integrated information technology system enables RWJ Hamilton to acquire and internally share information essential for day-to-day operations and decision-making, improving key processes and strategic planning. The hospital's steadily expanding IT capabilities—what RWJ Hamilton calls its "IT Innovation Journey"—has also made the hospital a pioneer in technologies that are the future of medical care, such as fully digital radiology, barcoding of medications and blood and radiology products, electronic patient medical records and computerized physician order entry systems.

This patient-centered focus has led to growing satisfaction with the Emergency Department – up from 85 percent in 2001 to 90 percent in 2004, exceeding national benchmarks. Also, patient satisfaction with the nursing staff has improved from 70 percent in 1999 to 90 percent in 2004. In two Gallup Community surveys, RWJ Hamilton's nursing staff has been recognized as the best among local competitors.

RWJ Hamilton scores just as high in clinical results as it does in customer satisfaction results. Through partnerships with physicians and steady improvement of processes, facilities, technology and training, RWJ Hamilton has reduced its rates of mortality, hospital-acquired infections, and medication errors to among the lowest in the nation. Physician partners are involved in developing evidence-based clinical guidelines and implementing standards to promote the highest level of care. In an evaluation by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, RWJ Hamilton ranks among the top 10 percent of hospitals in the effectiveness of its aspirin and beta blocker treatment for patients who have suffered a heart attack or congestive heart failure.

Serving Employees and Community

RWJ Hamilton values its employees and promotes their health and safety. Health screening is part of the hiring process and repeated annually. Employees with direct contact with patients receive additional testing and training in safety procedures and the use of personal protection equipment. Over the past four to five years, employee satisfaction has risen in a number of key areas. Between 1999 and 2003, satisfaction with benefits rose from 30 percent to above 90 percent; satisfaction with participation in decisions grew from about 40 percent to 90 percent; satisfaction with employee recognition from 70 percent to 97 percent. Retention rates for employees tipped 96 percent in 2003; retention of registered nurses reached 98 percent.

RWJ Hamilton demonstrates deep community concern and involvement. In an average month, the hospital provides more than 900 community residents with free health screenings. Guided by the Medical Advisory Panel, the RWJ Hamilton Center for Health and Wellness provides health education to more than 100,000 individuals annually.

Between 1999 and 2003, hospital donations to community organizations increased from \$80,000 to almost \$140,000 and Charity Care Dollars increased from approximately \$5 million to almost \$23 million.

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