

> Hospital of Walcheren

Improving patient care with analytics

The situation

The Hospital of Walcheren, a general hospital located in Vlissingen, The Netherlands, services nearly 120,000 patients annually. Walcheren is committed to using the latest technological innovations to provide its patients with the best healthcare services.

The challenge

In 1996, the government of The Netherlands passed the Quality Act – Health Care Institutions. This required healthcare organisations across the country to evaluate the quality of their services based on patient feedback. To comply with the Act, Walcheren needed to establish a process to gather and analyse patients' feedback regarding their care at the hospital.

The solution

Walcheren was already familiar with SPSS Inc.'s analytical capabilities, and looked to the company for a solution. In 2000, the hospital implemented PASW Data Collection, SPSS Inc.'s suite of market research tools, which enabled hospital staff to process annual patient questionnaires quickly, thereby improving the hospital's efficiency and its compliance with the Quality Act.

At a glance

Country: Netherlands

Industry: Healthcare

Date founded: 1974

Company type: Health service

Employees: 1,300 (including 65 medical specialists)

Application

Process improvement

Solutions used

PASW® Data Collection*

PASW Statistics Base*

□ “There was no way I could process 6,500 forms and also effectively do my other work. PASW Data Collection helped me enter results faster, so I could quickly use them to make changes that will have a positive effect within our hospital's corridors”

– Peter Cijssouw
Quality Manager
Hospital of Walcheren

* PASW Data Collection, formerly called Dimensions™, and PASW Statistics Base, formerly called SPSS Statistics Base, are part of SPSS Inc.'s Predictive Analytics Software portfolio.

The results

The Dutch government ensures high quality healthcare by mandating that all hospitals implement a system that helps them evaluate, and subsequently elevate, the quality of their patient care. Like hospitals throughout The Netherlands, the Hospital of Walcheren has made significant progress toward meeting the government's new quality standards.

The hospital followed two models for tracking its quality of care: The Institution for Quality in the Netherlands model (a modification of the European Foundation for Quality Management. Model); and the Netherlands Institute for Accreditation of Hospitals model. However, these guidelines did not include methods for investigating patients' opinions and preferences.

The hospital's management team drafted a questionnaire to obtain feedback from its patients on a broad range of topics – from treatment methods to cafeteria food. Due to the large number of patients the hospital needed to survey, it was clear that the project would be complex and require advanced analytics to characterise the responses efficiently.

The requirements of the national healthcare mandate were satisfied

The search for a valued analytics partner was not difficult. SPSS Inc.'s PASW Data Collection suite was selected because it eliminated the tedium of setting up questionnaires, and made it quick and cost-effective to scan paper surveys. With the use of PASW Data Collection's analytic tools, the hospital's analysts were able to make comparisons and draw reasonable conclusions. In this case, PASW Data Collection provided a manageable way to process all of the results from patient questionnaires and enabled it to comply with the Quality Act.

The time required to process patient care questionnaires was reduced

SPSS Inc.'s analytics were already a proven technology at Walcheren Hospital, and PASW Data Collection was the logical choice for the hospital to use to gather patient survey data in a timely fashion.

"There was no way I could process 6,500 forms and also effectively do my other work," says Peter Cijssouw, the hospital's quality manager. "PASW Data Collection helped me enter results faster, so I could quickly use them to make changes that will have a positive effect within our hospital's corridors."

The hospital was able to analyse patient perceptions and attitudes, and apply the knowledge to improve its patient care services

The Walcheren staff used PASW Statistics Base to review and analyse questionnaire results. They used the results from this analysis to identify problems and make appropriate improvements in their services. For example, many patients noted that they weren't given enough details about their illnesses and their treatments. Using PASW Statistics Base, the hospital was able to identify this as a common complaint, and its doctors now give more comprehensive descriptions of patients' ailments.

According to Cijssouw, "PASW Statistics Base has really helped us to identify areas where we can improve patient care, and has already contributed significantly to patient well-being and satisfaction."

For example, patient survey analysis also revealed that a majority of patients felt that they were insufficiently informed about where they could turn for emotional support. Knowing that maintaining emotional wellness is as important as physical wellbeing, hospital staff made considerable changes in their communication processes.

The analysis of patient feedback has become increasingly important at the Hospital of Walcheren, and success with the PASW Data Collection suite of tools has led the hospital to extend its evaluation processes to nursing and outpatient departments. As it turns out, SPSS Inc.'s analytics were just what the doctor ordered.

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