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MEDICAL QUALITY: HIRSLANDEN BREAKS NEW GROUND

The private hospital group published its latest [Quality Report](#). In addition to recording the quality of its medical treatment, Hirslanden recently began measuring patient satisfaction according to international standards, thereby going far beyond Swiss requirements. A word first: The website www.vanessas-diary.ch discusses topics related to patient safety and patient satisfaction in layman's terms and is presented from the perspective of a patient, using a blog and an interactive short film. The [short film Vanessa's Diary](#) is directed by celebrated up-and-coming Swiss director Dominik Locher.

Find the best hospital

From new hips to the removal of your appendix – if you need surgery, you naturally want to have the procedure performed in the most suitable hospital. There is currently a boom in online platforms that provide hospital rankings. But what makes a hospital a good hospital? Three economists from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) made an astonishing discovery that was recently reported on the industry portal [Medinside](#) (article only available in German). They found a strong correlation between patient safety and patient satisfaction. To put it another way: The higher the patient ratings received by a given hospital and the more comfortable the patients felt during their stay, the higher the patient safety ratings.

Does good food equal good treatment?

"The deeper cause-and-effect relationships are not at all clear yet," says Dr. med. Christian Westerhoff, who as Chief Clinical Officer is responsible for patient safety at Hirslanden. After all, patients usually aren't aware of key patient safety factors such as the rate of bacterial infections or unplanned reoperations. A possible explanation for the correlation could be that a culture of quality is not only expressed through the medical quality, but also in other areas such as employee friendliness or the quality of the meals, suggests Westerhoff. However the study also demonstrates that patient satisfaction is not simply a feel-good factor, points out Westerhoff, who is also a member of Hirslanden's Executive Committee. "The findings of the US researchers will definitely make the collection of patient satisfaction data even more important in the future," says Westerhoff.

International comparability

Currently Swiss hospitals are only required to carry out a National Patient Survey once a year to measure patient satisfaction. The current results for Hirslanden are also available in the [Quality Report 2016/17](#). The survey developed by the [National Association for Quality Development in Hospitals and Clinics \(ANQ\)](#) was limited to just six questions (website only available in German, French and Italian). The small number of questions is therefore only capable of producing a very generalised picture of patient satisfaction. Furthermore almost all hospitals in Switzerland score above-average results in the survey. Such minimal differentiation reduces the significance of the results.

For these reasons, the Hirslanden Private Hospital Group recently decided to start collecting far more comprehensive quality data. At the start of the 2017/18 financial year, Hirslanden was the first institution in Europe to launch a new patient satisfaction survey with 80 questions. What's more, the survey is not conducted annually, but instead continuously throughout the entire year. This enables the hospitals to respond swiftly when problems are encountered, explains Christian Westerhoff. The surveys are conducted by Press Ganey, an acclaimed, independent and international healthcare assessment

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company. “These surveys enable us to compare ourselves with other hospitals around the world,” says Westerhoff. “The initial findings indicate that Hirslanden compares very favourably and is among the top 10 percent in relation to numerous indicators,” notes Westerhoff. The initial results can be found in the [Quality Report 2016/17](#) – next year the report will include a comprehensive range of comparative figures for all the Hirslanden hospitals.

At Hirslanden, high patient satisfaction does in fact correlate with high patient safety. Data collected as part of the [Quality Healthcare Initiative \(QHI\)](#) (website only available in German) shows that Hirslanden reached or exceeded 88 percent of the quality goals. The average figure based on all the hospitals that took part in the international initiative was 72 percent.

Focus on the patient perspective: Director Dominik Locher turns the Quality Report into a short film

The new [Quality Report for the 2016/17 financial year](#), which was published today on Hirslanden’s new website, offers more than just facts and figures. “We also wanted to show the lay public what patient safety and satisfaction means in each individual case, so the report is complemented by an interactive short film and a blog available at www.vanessas-diary.ch,” says Westerhoff. On the website, a fictitious patient called Vanessa Birrer talks about an emergency situation and her stay at a Hirslanden hospital from her own personal perspective as a journalist. It was directed by Dominik Locher, whose current feature film *Goliath* was the only Swiss film to be shown as part of this year’s main competition at the Locarno Film Festival.

Related links:

Quality Report 2016/17:
<https://www.hirslanden.ch/en/corporate/quality.html>

Vanessa’s Diary:
www.vanessas-diary.ch

Report about the MIT study into patient satisfaction and patient safety
www.medinside.ch/de/post/ist-das-der-praeziseste-qualitaetsmassstab-von-allen

ANQ:
www.anq.ch/messergebnisse/ergebnisse-akutsomatik

IQM:
www.initiative-qualitaetsmedizin.de

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As of 1 July 2017, the Hirslanden Private Hospital Group consists of 17 hospitals in 11 cantons, many of which have an integrated outpatient surgery centre and emergency department. The Group also operates 4 outpatient clinics, 15 radiology institutes and 4 radiotherapy institutes. It has around 2 000 affiliated doctors and 9 920 permanent employees, 484 of whom are doctors. Hirslanden is the leading private hospital group and the largest medical network in Switzerland. In the 2016/17 financial year, it generated a turnover of 1 704 million Swiss francs. As of 31 March 2017, the Group had treated over 100 000 inpatients with a total of 466 000 inpatient days. In insurance terms, the patient mix consists of 44.8% with basic, 31.2% with semi-private and 24.0% with private insurance.

Hirslanden Private Hospital Group stands for first class medical quality, made possible with highly qualified, experienced doctors. In medical terms, Hirslanden stands out in the market as a system provider. Interdisciplinary medical competence centres and specialist institutes enable optimal and individual treatment of cases, whatever their level of medical complexity. The private hospital group was formed in 1990 out of the merger of a number of private hospitals, and became part of the South African hospital group Mediclinic International Limited in 2007.