



CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF ALABAMA IMPROVES PATIENT SATISFACTION THROUGH DINING AND EVS INNOVATIONS

A Case Study

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HEALTHCARE+



CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF ALABAMA CASE STUDY

When children are in the hospital, there is a high degree of stress and uncertainty for everyone. Having comfortable surroundings and a familiar routine gives them a sense of normalcy during a difficult and unfamiliar time.

Pediatric hospitals must achieve a balance between managing large, complex facilities efficiently, while creating positive experiences that support the entire family. This was especially true at The Children's Hospital of Alabama, the third-largest pediatric hospital in the United States. With more than 2 million square feet, the Children's Hospital of Alabama managed nearly 677,000 outpatient visits and more than 15,000 inpatient admissions in 2018.

In a busy hospital environment, maintaining patient satisfaction is a team effort. Every interaction has an impact on the children and their families, from conversations they have with physicians to visits from the people who serve their food and clean their rooms. The Children's Hospital of Alabama wanted to make sure it was engaging the entire care team and using the latest innovations to create a healing environment.

As the hospital dining and environmental services partner, Aramark Healthcare+ plays a key role in influencing patient satisfaction with its innovative approach to dining and environmental services.

Specific program enhancements included creating rotating menus for pediatric patients, making dining more convenient for children and their families, and improving cleanliness and bed turnover.

Since implementing these changes, the hospital has experienced significant improvements, primarily a boost in patient satisfaction.

Quick Stats¹

With help from its longtime partner, Aramark Healthcare+, Children's Hospital of Alabama implemented new programs that helped the hospital achieve quick wins within just a few months, including:

- ▶ Increasing patient satisfaction metrics by 5% after implementing new pediatric menu and room service
- ▶ Improving patient/visitor/nurse satisfaction with café dining innovations
- ▶ Meeting or exceeding patient satisfaction metrics in cleanliness 7 out of 8 times
- ▶ Using real time patient satisfaction surveys increased the monthly response rate by 317%



3 BIG WINS FOR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF ALABAMA PATIENTS & FAMILIES

Win 1

BOOSTING PATIENT DINING SATISFACTION

Being sick in the hospital is hard on kids. Mealtime can be a welcome distraction—but only if the meals are appealing, delicious and familiar. Children's Hospital of Alabama brought this concept to light by overhauling its dining program to provide patients with higher-quality meal options. Within this overhaul, the hospital now incorporates Aramark Healthcare+'s **Little Chef Series** program, a limited-time-offering option that provides rotating, seasonal menus each month. Examples of the new monthly menus include:

- ▶ June — blueberry scones, cheese pizza, barbecue chicken, peach mousse
- ▶ July — turkey sausage, cheddar breakfast taco, turkey taco melt

Since implementing the new pediatric menu in April 2019, patient satisfaction scores increased by 5%.

The way food is delivered to patients also impacts their satisfaction. Traditional methods that rely on paper menus and scheduled delivery times can result in patients receiving food they don't want or are unable to eat due to dietary restrictions. To address this, the facility also introduced a room service and tray monitoring approach to ensure patients receive appetizing foods and proper nutrition during their stay. Patients order meals on demand from a restaurant-style menu, which gives them greater control over what they eat and when. Hospitality coordinators in the Diet Office review the patient's selections, using a computerized system to assist in monitoring dietary restrictions.



For Aramark Healthcare+ clients using room service, the overall food, quality, temperature and courtesy are **12-21 points** above the national average.



The Children's Hospital of Alabama was the first children's hospital in the country to use Food Service delivery carts, and have recently outfitted these carts with cartoon wraps to brighten patients and families spirits during tray delivery time.





Win 2

PROVIDING CHOICES TO CAFÉ DINING GOERS

When parents have sick children in the hospital, they want to spend as much time with them as possible. If they have to leave the facility for too long just to eat, this can negatively impact their overall experience. Children's Hospital of Alabama addressed this issue with two key innovations:

- ▶ **Providing meal tickets to patients' families upon request at no charge.** The facility currently averages about 75 complimentary tickets per meal. This allows family members to spend more time with their sick child during a stressful time.
- ▶ **Adding new options to café dining, including a Chick-fil-A retail option and three snack areas.** This allows children and their families to eat at restaurants they recognize and experience the comfort of familiar meals during their stay.



The average hospital stay for pediatric patients is **6.3 days**.

Win 3

IMPROVING ENVIRONMENT AND CARE THROUGH CLEANING

Children's Hospital of Alabama faced additional efficiency challenges when cleaning rooms upon patient discharge, ensuring complete disinfection to avoid hospital-acquired infections, or HAIs.

The hospital improved its environment of care by incorporating three driving initiatives:

- ▶ **Improved Equipment Efficiency and Productivity with Asset Telemetry.** Using **IRIS**® asset management technology, EVS staff can predict when equipment, such as floor scrubbers, require maintenance. This eliminates the downtime and ensures that equipment is available to keep the hospital's floors as clean as possible. It also provides data analytics and insights into equipment performance, usage, and location. Among other benefits, this information is used to assure staff are properly and continuously trained in equipment usage and infection control. Finally, it supports delivery of a consistent cleaning experience throughout the hospital, providing each room with the same level of quality and service.
- ▶ **Increased Response Time with the FacilityFit™ Pro Platform.** The **FacilityFit™ Pro** platform supports every aspect of the hospital's environment including operations and management, environmental services, and patient throughput. EVS managers are able to adjust cleaning activities based on service demands. Best practice industry standards for cleaning activities, tasks, and frequencies assure equitable and efficient staff deployment. Additionally, mobile devices (iPods) provide timely communication as staff have real-time access to room cleaning needs. These efforts have greatly increased response times to user requests, as well as room turns from patient discharges.
- ▶ **A Fostered, Kid-Friendly Environment.** In keeping with the desire to create a more engaging environment for children, Aramark Healthcare+ softened the clinical atmosphere of a hospital by wrapping its floor care machines with a cartoon character and colorful imagery designed to put a smile on a child's face. "Rex" depicts a smiling dinosaur with mop and bucket, ready to clean. Alabama Children's Hospital was one of the first systems to deploy a fully wrapped floor care machine in partnership with Aramark Healthcare+ and 3M. The inviting and imaginative wrap helps create an environment of comfort and joy in the pediatric healing process.





About Children's Hospital of Alabama

Since 1911, Children's of Alabama has provided specialized medical care for ill and injured children. Ranked among the best pediatric medical centers in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*, Children's provided care for youth from every county in Alabama, 42 other states and seven foreign countries last year. Children's offers inpatient and outpatient services across its Russell Campus on Birmingham's historic Southside, with additional specialty services provided at Children's South, Children's on 3rd and in Huntsville and Montgomery.

CHILDREN'S-ARAMARK HEALTHCARE+ PARTNERSHIP AT A GLANCE

Partners Since:

1996 – Food Service
2002 – EVS

Facilities:

2 – COA Main and COA South
Outpatient Center

Physicians:

750

Patient Beds:

330 (licensed)

Staff Size:

300

Aramark Healthcare+ Services:

Food & Nutrition Service

Café Dining

EVS

Linen Distribution

Managing Central

Transportation Department

Reference

1. US News & World Report Best Hospitals, 2019

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