



MEDIFEM HOSPITAL – EFFICIENT CUSTOMER JOURNEY/EXPERIENCE

Undergraduate Applied Project Capstone

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Declaration

We hereby declare that this project titled “*Efficient Customer Journey/Experience (BA Applied Project Capstone)*” has been prepared by us for the academic year 2021/2022 under the supervision of Dr. Sena Agbodjah and Miss Esther Afoley Laryea, the Business Administration department of Ashesi university as a fulfillment for BSC degree prescribed by the university. Also, we assert the statements made and conclusion drawn are the outcome of our research and all members of the group have read and checked that all parts of the piece of work, irrespective of whether they are contributed by individual members or all members as a group. We further certify that this project is the outcome of our effort and has not been submitted to any university for the award of any degree.

Acknowledgements

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List Of Abbreviations

MOH: The Ministry of Health

GHS: Ghana Health Service

NHIS: National Health Insurance Scheme

SPMDP: Society of Private Medical and Dental Practitioners

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

SCMA: Specialty Certified Medical Assistance

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

OOPS: Out-of-pocket spending

SPMDP: Society of Private Medical and Dental Practitioners

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Executive Summary

The mission of Medifem is to provide cherished healthcare experiences to improve the quality of life of patients, their families, and the community. Medifem's ways of communicating with their customers have not given their customers the desired customer experience. Front desk interaction with customers is unwelcoming. Customers also struggle to find their way around the hospital. As a result, Medifem's healthcare service communication methods need to be improved to enhance client interaction and experience. With that, the team explored solution frameworks and technology that will enable Medifem to match its exceptional healthcare service ambit to its service delivery approach. The purpose of this project is to improve the customer journey experience at Medifem through effective communication methods that provide a more enhanced/immersive experience for its customers. To achieve an efficient customer experience, the team has designed a customer service training manuals which would be used to create a comprehensive customer service training framework by the respective Medifem team to help improve front desk interactions. Also, the team has created Medifem hospital maps to help customers easily navigate Medifem.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Project:

With the vision of being a leader in excellent health care delivery and fertility management, providing positive patient experience and innovative medical practice, Medifem operates like a traditional corporate organization to be efficient. However, the hospital faces a challenge in satisfying its customers due to the poor nature of the non-health services rendered to them. Thus, the unwelcoming front desk experience and the challenge in navigating through the hospital in finding the respective facilities due to less assistance provided. As a result, they tend to have an extremely poor customer experience when they visit Medifem. The team undertaking the project are junior consultants who are final year students of Ashesi, namely Aisha Salifu, Digney Yemofio and Shamuuel Kulondwa who are assisted by the senior supervisors. The team aims in designing solution framework that will provide exceptional customer service that will leave a lingering experience in the minds of their patients, resulting in high customer retention and more customer referrals.

The objectives of this consultancy are to,

- Gain fresh insights into how to improve the entire customer journey to provide a more enhanced/immersive experience whenever patronizing medical services from the organization.
- Design a tool that will improve front desk customer service provided.
- Develop a navigating tool that will assist customers to easily navigate the hospital premises.
- Provide insights on how proposed solutions can be maintained and improved upon.

1.2 The Task:

The scope of work and key deliverables for this project includes the following:

- Perform customer research by interviewing the customers to understand their experience and pain points better.
- Evaluate the current systems in place when it comes to customer navigation and management.
- Understanding the hospital's layout to know where each department or facility is and how customers usually get there.
- Design, prototype and test a new solution framework to achieve customer satisfaction hence improving customer journey.
- Developing a tool that can aid in navigating the hospital.
- An action plan to revise and improve on the proposed solution tools.

Required Skills and Experience

- Ability to conduct lean interviews
- Knowledge and Experience in operations management
- Knowledge and experience in design thinking
- Good client/interpersonal relationship skills
- Good listening skills
- Having innovative ideas
- Ability to analyze data and understand trends.

2.0 ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

2.1 Company Profile:

The Medifem Multi-Specialist Hospital & Fertility Centre is a Ghanaian-owned, first-class private healthcare institution dedicated to the provision of a range of specialized medical services. Since its creation in 2004, Medifem envisions to become a leading institution of healthcare delivery and fertility management in Ghana, providing positive patient experience and innovative medical practice. After establishing its first operational center in Dzorwulu Medifem moved to its current operational site, the Margaret Anderson Avenue in Westlands, Accra, in 2012. The mission of Medifem is to provide cherished healthcare experiences to improve the quality of life of patients, their families, and the community. (Medifem Hospital, 2022)

From an internal perspective, the company has proven to have qualified and experienced personnel. According to the feedback of the hospital's administration, Medifem has a service delivery framework that manages all service procedures and keeps track of all data related to customers. Unfortunately, there are always lags that are either beyond the personnel's control or go beyond the organizational protocols put in place. Hence this situation ends up affecting customer retention at Medifem.

Medifem has a reputation of being one of the leading private hospitals in the domain of fertility management per the google reviews our team interacted with. It ranks 16th on the list of the top 100 Ghanaian hospitals (Gyamfi, 2021). This list is a result of a survey conducted by the Ghana Locum Group in collaboration with the Risso group. According to Kojo Ernest, approximately 4000 healthcare workers were interviewed in this regard. They assessed both public and private healthcare institutions based on their quality healthcare delivery and the state of their facilities.

2.2 Internal Analysis

Medifem ranks high in terms of quality facility, quality personnel, and adequate equipment in the domain of fertility management. Nonetheless, Medifem believes it is yet to reach its fullest potential in terms of customer experience (customer satisfaction and retention), and the ultimate threat to Medifem remains that its competitors already have an upper hand regarding the delivery of satisfactory customer experience.

The healthcare private sector surpasses the healthcare public sector in both service delivery and quality facilities, given that, many investments are injected in the private sector, their corporate governance strategies are always adjusting with the context, and they have high maintenance compared to that of the public sector. Although Governmental subsidies are channeled to public hospitals, their management capacity is always inferior to that of private hospitals.

3.0 INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

3.1 A Scan of the Industry:

P.E.S.T.E.L Analysis

To understand the external environment in which Medifem operates, the team utilized the PESTLE framework. PESTLE is a strategic tool that examines the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and the legal factors that affects the market environment of Medifem. The PESTLE factors are elaborated below.

➤ *Political*

Ghana have had a stable political environment for two decades and that has helped bolster investment and developed strong relations with the likes of the United Kingdom, the United States, and European Union, etc. A stable political environment means non-interruption of business operations of which the health sector is not exempted. Again, the government has shown interest in the health sector over the past and as a result, implemented the National Health Insurance Scheme to increase the involvement of citizens in health care services.

➤ *Economic*

The gross domestic product (GDP) is an economic metric used to measure the economic growth of a country. According to the world bank open data, the annual percentile GDP growth of Ghana increased from 2.21% in 2015 to 8.13% in 2017 where it declined to 6.51% in 2019 and further declined significantly to 0.414% in 2020. This shows that the economy of Ghana was doing well until it got struck down by the global Pandemic hence decreasing the economic growth of the country. Again, according to the world bank, the annual inflation growth of Ghana was recorded at 17.15% in 2015 which increased slightly to 17.46 in 2016 and declined significantly to 0.41% in 2018 and increased again to 9.95% in 2020. (World Health Organization (WHO), 2021). These two factors (inflation rate and economic growth) influence

the use of healthcare services like insurance schemes, health care facilities, and others. This is because a fall in economic growth could mean a decline in income of households and therefore crippled with inflation, would mean people paying more for services with less improvement in their incomes. As such, people spend more on essential items and thereby reduce their patronage of health services like insurance schemes as well as reduce their involvement in health care.

➤ *Social*

Despite the recent receptiveness of Ghanaians towards technology and new development, it cannot be ignored that some Ghanaians (especially those in rural areas) are deeply religious and superstitious people and hence are reluctant in opting for modern-day health care services. As such, some will opt for traditional and herbal treatments which affects their involvement in healthcare facilities. The culture and beliefs of people have direct impacts on their involvement in healthcare services. (Essay, 2021)

➤ *Technology*

From the recent pandemic, many hospitals and other healthcare services like pharmacies, health insurance, and others have transitioned online using websites and mobile applications. This has made it more convenient for patients with minor health issues to access healthcare services from their homes. In turn, this has reduced the pressure at the health facilities and subsequently increased the efficiency of the sector. Also, with the rising nature of technology, sophisticated procedures (with elevated risk) which were done manually have been made easier with the use of machinery and other equipment. Despite the inadequacy of machinery and equipment in Ghana, it is still recommendable that our health facilities especially in the private health sector are doing their best to equip their facilities with ultra-modern healthcare tools. Also, hospitals have transitioned record keeping from manual file keeping to online patient

portals, where data of patients are stored and retrieved for further use. This has improved efficiency and productivity in the health sector.

➤ *Legal*

The law of Ghana under the Copyright Act of 2005, Act 690, Patents Act of 2003 (Act 657) and Trademarks Act of 2004 are kept in place to protect the intellectual properties of individuals, groups, organizations, etc. This will ensure that invention made at the hospital by its personnel is preserved as the intellectual property of the hospital. (Act 6640, the Industrial Designs Act, 2003 (Act 660). Also, Ministry of Health (MOH) is responsible for policy making whereas the Ghana Health Service (GHS) is responsible for healthcare service delivery. MOH is responsible for the creation of sector-wide policies, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of progress toward achieving sector goals. The GHS was established in 2001 to allow decentralization of planning and management, as well as granting Regional and District Health Services more authority. Ghana's National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) was established in 2004 to relieve consumers' need to mobilize payment at the time of illness. (Makinem, Sealy, Bitrán, Adjei & Munoz, 2011).

The Ministry of Health has also established regulatory boards and councils to examine private providers' plans for opening new offices and providing new services, as well as to monitor their performance and quality. Also, there is the establishment of the Society of Private Medical and Dental Practitioners (SPMDP), a well-organized association representing 300 for-profit hospitals and clinics. (Makinem, Sealy, Bitrán, Adjei & Munoz, 2011).

➤ *Environmental*

Policies are put in place to ensure that the environment in Ghana is safe and conducive for its inhabitants. Most of these policies are geared towards promoting the health of citizens. The

recent ban on illegal mining was a step to prevent the pollution of water sources for some communities hence aimed at reducing and eradicating waterborne diseases. Also, afforestation measures set by the environmental protection agency of Ghana is also geared towards providing a safe environment for citizens.

Porter's Five Factors

To assess and analyze the competition and attractiveness of the health industry and how Medifem can overcome competition to gain competitive advantage, the team employed the Porter's five forces framework. The framework evaluates the bargaining power of supplies and customers, industry rivalry, threats from new entrants and threats of substitutes. These factors are elaborated below.

➤ *Bargaining Power of suppliers*

There is low supplier bargaining power due to the availability of many medical suppliers in the market. In Accra, there are about fifteen major medical supply stores with renowned stores such as 3MC& Medical equipment, Greenland Supply Medical Equipment Ltd and Alos Paraklet Health Care Ltd. Besides, there is about 490 pharmacies in Accra (Ghana Yello, 2022). This situation translates into a lower switching cost from one supplier to another, as such increases the capacity of Medifem to purchase quality equipment and drugs at fair price. However, the problem arises in determining the suitability and quality of the equipment and drugs given that there is low monitoring of the national health care supply chain from the government's end.

➤ *Bargaining Power of customers*

There is high customer bargaining power due to the availability of several health care options. According to Statista, the Ghana health care sector is dominated by public/government health

facilities (2020). This informs the attitude of a typical Ghanaian who would choose a public health institution over a private one due to the price factor. In addition, this availability of many actors in the industry increases combined with low switching cost of customers (from one health facility to the other) gives customers the capacity to opt for healthcare services at a cheaper price, to the detriment of quality health service providers. (of which Medifem is included)

➤ *Industry Rivalry*

The main rivalry in this industry lies between the two sectors: the public and the private sector. In addition, there is rivalry among providers in the private healthcare service in which Medifem exist. The commonly known competing factors in this segment are customer relationship, quality facilities, quality health service, price, innovation in technology, easy access & facility navigation, and promotions. Given that all the market leaders in this industry display the majority of these qualities, the competitive market is to be termed as red Ocean. Consequently, Medifem would need to strategize to shift to a blue ocean (a new market segment with less or no competition).

➤ *Threat of new entrants*

The Ghana health care industry (particularly the private sector) presents a range of opportunities for new investors considering the shift of the Ghana economy from low-income earners to high middle-income earners (Oxford Business Group, 2022). This translates into the increase in demand of quality health services, hence avails an opportunity for private hospitals to offer their services and attract prospective investors but gives room for saturation and high competition. Further, the Ghanaian medical industry market accommodates low restrictions/barriers to limit entrance of new investors. As a result, the threat of new entrants is omnipresent. According to the Ghanaian ministry of business development, the Ghana

healthcare sector relies majorly on imports. Hence, it does not have any explicit import restrictions or tariffs. (2020). In other words, the open market allows any willing investor to enter the market unless restrictions are made by the market leaders themselves.

➤ *Threat of Substitutes*

Informal health sector and herbal medicine would be termed as substitutes to the practical health care service delivery. The government of Ghana recognizes the existence of these two types of health care services, though not formal. In most parts, the two are practiced in marginalized areas and places where there is no or minimal easy access to quality healthcare such as suburbs and other remote areas. The main factors which influence the patronage of the two (informal health sector and herbal medicine) are cost and geographical location. According to Kraemer-Mbula and Wunsch-Vincent, the estimated ratio of people in Ghana using these two types of medication over the conventional one is 1:400 (2016).

3.2 Organizational SWOT.

S.W.O.T Analysis:

To further understand the internal and external factors affecting Medifem and its industry, the team employed the SWOT analysis framework. The SWOT framework analyses the strengths, weakness, threats, and opportunities which Medifem can utilize to make informed decisions.

Below is a **S.W.O.T.** of Medifem Hospital.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Medifem offers a wide range of healthcare specialists' services. ➤ Medifem's human capital is highly competent and experienced. ➤ Medifem uses world-class medical equipment sets. ➤ Medifem offers the widest range of services for any private hospital/health center in Ghana. 	<p>Weakness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Medifem lacks more interactive customer experience. ➤ The maintenance framework has extraordinarily little link with the procurement framework. ➤ Medifem lacks a computerized stock inventory system. ➤ There is inadequate inter-departmental communication and information exchange.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Due to a rising Ghanaian middle class, private healthcare is becoming the preferred choice. ➤ Medifem is a growing healthcare brand for family health. ➤ The quality of Medifem's healthcare delivery is popular among its customers. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Medifem is struggling to create its niche in private healthcare. ➤ Healthcare providers like Medifem are being established. ➤ Medifem lacks an online presence, losing out on potential customers. ➤ Medifem operates small pharmacy facilities that do not provide full support of its customer needs.

4.0 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

4.1 Methodology

To conduct the situational analysis, the group employed interviews, customer reviews and team immersion. The customer reviews were obtained from Medifem's website online. This method was used because we wanted to obtain the customer's perspective and experience with Medifem to enlighten us more on the problem at hand. Through this method we were able to gather the feedbacks and reactions of customers who patronized Medifem. To further understand the customer experience at Medifem, the team utilized the immersion technique. A team member visited Medifem hospital at Westlands to experience the service at first hand. He experienced an unwelcoming front desk experience, as well as no assistance in what to do and how to navigate the hospital premises, leaving the hospital frustrated and unsatisfied. The team spoke with a few customers on site about their experience. The team grouped the data gathered into appropriate headings like front desk experience, duration of waiting times, communications from front desk staff and ability to navigate the hospital premises. The overall analysis from the immersion, customer interactions and reviews implied that, the typical Medifem customer experience is unsatisfying. Lastly, the team conducted an interview with the project partner from Medifem hospital. Insights gathered from the conversation pointed to the fact that Medifem has apt technologies and equipment necessary for providing quality healthcare however the hospital is yet to reach its full potential in customer service in terms of front desk interactions.

4.2 Situational analysis

The customer reviews and interviews and immersion by team provided insights into the service delivery at Medifem. The key insights were that

- The Medifem healthcare service lacks front desk experience and as such has the possibility of deterring a customer from coming back to the hospital or recommending it to other people. This particularly has to do with the inappropriate behavior put up by the persons at the front desk. Again, we realize from the customer reviews that Medifem does not have effective communication channels, especially in areas of appointment bookings. As a result, they do not adhere to appointment times.
- There is a service delivery mismatch. Despite Medifem having the best facilities and skilled specialists, hence among the best healthcare provider in the private health sector in Ghana, they lag in terms of customer service. Therefore, the experience from the moment a patient enters the hospital up to the consulting room is unpleasant and the experience once they encounter the doctor/specialist is pleasant one.
- It is difficult to navigate the hospital premises in finding the respective facilities. Customers receive little to no assistance from the staff in identifying the respective location. What makes it more difficult is the nature of the hospital structure.
- The key factors preventing Medifem from reaching its objectives are the negative customers reviews (implying poor customer service and experience), disintegrated service methods in terms with communication being an inhibiting factor and the disconnect between infrastructure and service delivery.

4.3 Needs Assessment/Analysis

Medifem's existing situation and what the hospital desires are not consistent. Medifem ranks among the best private healthcare providers in Ghana in terms of healthcare service scope. This means Medifem has some of the most apt healthcare service competencies with a diverse range of services on offer. However, insufficiencies in healthcare service delivery and healthcare service access methods act as the main factors for the mismatch between where Medifem is

and where it wants to be. And the latter includes Medifem being the best healthcare service provider, a leader in excellent healthcare delivery, and a provider of innovative medical practice.

Insights on the reason behind the conflicts between a recognized and credited healthcare service scope and substandard service delivery at Medifem show that the current customer journey framework works systematically such that no accommodation is made to monitor the various customer interaction point. This led to an oversight of customer journey pain points and the dynamics around customer behavior and expectations thus the current mismatch.

A gap analysis was performed to aid in determining what the gap between the existing situation and what is desired is. The analysis was facilitated by in-depth experiential data analysis pooling from customer experience feedback and reviews made on Medifem. Also, online literature and interviews offered similar but refreshing knowledge blocks in the gap analysis process.

Customer service consciousness is the first discovered gap. Staff at Medifem share with external stakeholders the same confidence in the healthcare service competencies of the hospital. The existing customer service procedure does not match those competencies but Staff at Medifem do not recognize the inconsistencies with the procedures. This has created low levels of intentionality in terms of engaging customers with their healthcare services while paying attention to key moments of interaction and how to ensure customers earn the expected value of the services.

Another gap has to do with the customer feedback framework at Medifem. Per the existing customer service procedures, avenues are created to receive feedback and suggestions from customers. However, it adds little to no value to decision making processes and structural reform because such customer solicited information is treated as a simple corporate norm and

not as an input to service delivery policies. Customer engagement, especially in healthcare, involves the need for constant and clear communication, requiring the absolute attention of the customer and staff.

Another gap identified is the inelaborate customer communication structure at Medifem which oversimplifies interactions that require more extensive engagements with the customer. This means so much is left out with some key information potentially not shared because of the existing communication structure.

The front desk procedure also presents another gap. A customer's journey at Medifem starts from the moment he/she steps into the compound and is greeted by the security personnel and ushered into the counter/front desk area. Every customer comes with a service need that has to be first understood if not fully by the front desk representative. In that initial interaction, the customer's mood, and anticipation of receiving the desired service are determined. Insights from engaging experiential data from customers overly emphasize unwelcoming conduct and the lack of enthusiasm of the front desk representatives to engage them.

In all, the gaps detected from the analysis implies that the identified gaps are some contributing causes preventing Medifem from reaching its desired organizational targets. As such the elimination of these gaps will result in a more customer centered environment hence, an excellent customer experience.

4.4 Business case

The business case is to design a customer communication standard at Medifem to provide a more enhanced/immersive experience whenever patronizing medical services from Medifem, employing best customer service practices among staff through a customer service training manual and hospital map. By improving customer communication and creating a ease in

navigating the hospital, Medifem is aligned to its business goal of becoming a family-community oriented medical space.

In the interviews conducted with the Medifem project partner, insights gained pointed to the insufficiencies and inconsistencies of customer journey appraisals. From the interview, the project stated that there are customer service procedures however the hospital does not incorporate interaction tracking structures along customers' journey in the hospital's service delivery flow. This was heavily reflected in customer reviews of Medifem's customer service performance elaborating the absence of structures that track key activities and interactions affecting a customer's entire service experience. In such customer reviews, there is conflicting feedback on service delivery at Medifem and the competence of the hospital's healthcare personnel and infrastructure.

A summary of the problem is that there is no structure that allows Medifem to document customer journeys and provide efficient customer experiences through their healthcare services and service delivery concurrently.

The objectives set in the business case impacts Medifem's current organizational business case which is centered on customer service excellence. The main impact the identified objectives have on the hospital's business case is a settlement of focus on reconstructing Medifem's customer journey. Medifem's service strategy will shift more from service quality and incorporate service delivery standards that are comprehensive and relative enough to match service quality

5.0 SOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

5.1 Proposed Solutions

Solution 1: Medifem Digital Application

Medifem digital application is a proposed integrated digital solution framework that offers the right fit for Medifem's service quality-service delivery mismatch. Through literature reviews, the team has appreciated a broader and more detailed scope of the problem space Medifem finds itself as a healthcare organization looking to improve its customer service processes for a better customer service outlook. Building on the team's research insights gives context to the existing customer service procedures within Medifem and the private healthcare industry. The proposed Medifem digital platform gives Medifem the power and ability to connect better with its clients through the invaluable customer data it generates. Such data better informs Medifem's strategies on customer service procedures and processes.

A hospital application is a digital mobile application used to optimize healthcare service delivery and access, enhance internal hospital processes, increase patient satisfaction, and improve outcomes. Typical healthcare applications aim to optimize the hospital experience, complement medical services, convert health records into digital data, and more.

Healthcare applications are categorized into two forms in terms of purpose. And these are:

1. For physicians' use: this application will aid doctors in terms of patient monitoring and appointment scheduling, among others.
2. For patients' use: this application will aid patients in booking appointments, having online consultations, getting recommendations and quick support.

The Medifem digital application that the team proposes is applicable in 2 instruments. These instruments are a Medifem mobile application and a shortcode system. The reason for diversifying modes of use is to ensure that two customer segments are accommodated, customers owning smartphones and customers without smartphones. The Medifem mobile application will offer more services than the short code system will. This is due to the implementation constraints that both sets of technologies present. In that sense, the team gears towards leveraging the functionalities both systems can offer and how that will serve customers in different circumstances of use, whether preference, convenience, or availability.

The Medifem mobile application functional brief:

In our conclusive analysis of the problem space, Medifem relates itself to healthcare service delivery, and the cornerstones that define service delivery standards in the Ghanaian healthcare space were identified. These cornerstones are accessibility, accountability, communication, responsiveness, and fairness (Anabila, 2019). Such concepts link to the same standards Medifem aims to incorporate into its service delivery procedures and processes fully. And the Medifem mobile application will give Medifem that avenue to meet such industry standards. There are two categories of the purpose of a typical healthcare application, as exhausted earlier. The Medifem mobile application will focus on patients' use. In the application, customers of Medifem will be able to view personal health information, schedule appointments, receive newsletters, respond to surveys and learn more about Medifem.

Short Code system brief

It is essential the Medifem digital application serves all (almost all) customer segments. The shortcode system will give customers without smartphones or consistent internet access sources an opportunity to still engage with Medifem's services digitally. The system will operate as a short code number system that customers can use to book appointments, fill out

short-form surveys, and receive SMS from Medifem. This will be a valuable tool to engage customers and receive feedback on Medifem's healthcare service delivery outlook for customers.

Given that Medifem operates with apt technological integration, adding the proposed Medifem digital application is very feasible. This is because it would be applied in a tech-savvy environment. The solution would also be useful to customers, given a majority use a smartphone. A lot of private hospitals in Ghana have their own mobile application, so Medifem having its own is desirable for both the hospital and its customers, given the convenience of service it will offer. This should give Medifem a greater service appeal, especially among younger customers.

Solution 2: Hospital map.

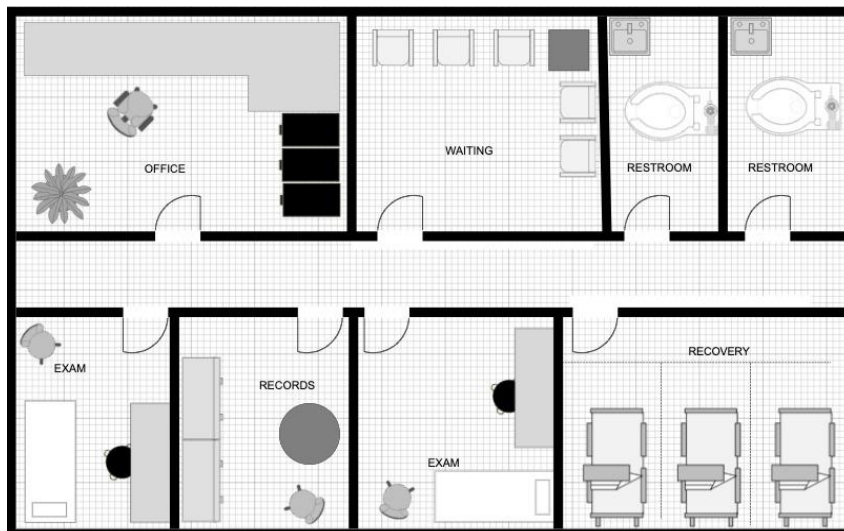
Hospital maps are the visual representation of the entire area of the hospital, detailing the various departments, the in-patients' wards, out-patients wards, the reception, and other departments. This is one of the team's proposed solutions Medifem can implement to tackle the confusing patients' experience, especially first-time patients, in locating the respective places at the hospital with little to no assistance. The maps will help them navigate more quickly through the hospital when they visit. The team is confident that this solution will be very instrumental to the customers of Medifem because patients desire to easily navigate through the hospital with little to no help and reduce the waiting times.

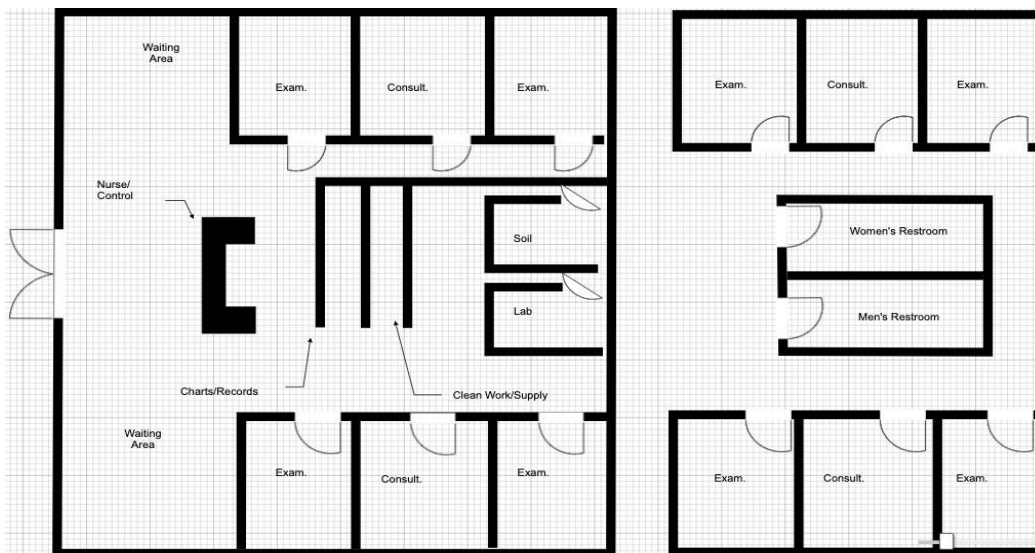
There are three typical patients in almost every hospital. (i) those in pain and need to see a physician as soon as possible, (ii) those who have busy schedules but make time to run some speed tests or follow-ups or make inquiries. (iii) those that are rushed to the hospital on emergencies notes. From the data gathered, the team discovered that the hospital maps will be

helpful to the patients of Medifem, especially the first two classes stated above; hence they would want to use them.

The hospital maps will be helpful as they will provide a visual outline of the hospital, making it easier for patients to locate the respective departments. However, if the hospital maps are not correctly done, it may distort the direction and distance to the respective places, making the individuals more confused and lost. The maps may not be useful to virtually impaired people as they cannot decipher the information at hand.

The Medifem Hospital Maps





Solution 3: Customer Service Training Manual

Customer service training manual

Human resources management is an integral part of the smooth running of a company's operations and the success of its business model. For the best implementation of a sustainable company strategy, a firm needs to employ personnel that is skilled and qualified for given positions (Schroeder, 2012). Further, the concept of emotional intelligence reiterated in our desk study stipulates that an individual needs to embody the capacity to control their emotions,

acts, and reactions to improve their workplace performance. This stems from the fact that research has shown there is a causality effect between the level of emotional intelligence and that of performance or burnout in the workplace (Gong Z., Chen Y., Wang Y., 2019). Hence, given the customer feedback of less professionalism at the front desk reception of the hospital, as well as disparaging communication between the firm and customers, the team proposes that Medifem needs to improve the effectiveness of their communication. Their level of communication must be maximum to the point that their way of connecting with the patient captivates their interest to keep patronizing Medifem's services. Apart from meeting the criteria of eligibility to work and permanence, the personnel at the front desk and those in charge of ushering prospective patients in must demonstrate an image of the highest generosity and ethics of the hospital, considering that the hospital is a place of psychological relaxation and obtaining the attention that may be lacking in society.

To achieve the above qualities amongst its personnel, Medifem must incorporate comprehensive training in terms of customer service as well as establish a system of employee evaluations through both personnel and customer feedback. Considering that, training will focus on upfront non-health workers like the security and front desk personnel. The training will focus on areas like entrance ushering ins, as well as front desk interactions like phone etiquette, check-ins, appointments, and scheduling, and responding to inquiries and patients' complaints. If these trainings are effectively incorporated and abided by the trainees, they will boost the overall communication at Medifem while achieving customer satisfaction and enriching customer experience. To ensure that these trainings achieve positive results, employee's evaluations through customers feedbacks will also be employed to assess the training and improve on it. Customer feedbacks will be collected through customer reviews, brief surveys, short emails, SMS, and suggestion boxes.

Also, to incentivize the personnel to uphold these trainings, Medifem will re-enforce its employee appraisals. These appraisals will constitute monetary prizes as well as certificates of recognition such as staff of the month, gifts cards featured on company social media, trophies, public praise, promotion, etc., to outstanding personnel. Medifem will ensure that these awards are given on a regular basis (preferably monthly)

To aid in the appropriate training, the team has designed *A customer service training manual for the front lines non-health personnel at Medifem hospital.*

The Customer Service Training Manual

1. Phone etiquette

Phone conversation is a key component for patients (or potential patients) making inquiries and booking appointments. Also, it may be the first time a patient will be interacting with the hospital. The first impressions from the phone conversations are very detrimental to whether the customer patronizes the service. Therefore, the front desk personnel of Medifem is expected to have effective communication with the caller. To achieve effective communication, which will boost customers' perception and satisfaction.

The training on Phone etiquette should address the key areas below (not limited to only these questions),

- (i) What is the welcoming telephone voice?
- (ii) What is the hold on etiquette?
- (iii) How clearly and concise is the message conveyed to the person making the inquiries?
- (iv) How to contain the callers' excess without getting triggered

2. Ushering

Ushering is simply the ability to guide someone, precisely a new person, on where to go and how to get there. In the scope of hospitals, ushering in first timers is typically done by the security personnel at the gate. They are commissioned and directed to where to locate the reception, after which they proceed with the aim of their visit. The uncertainties that sometimes patients face in finding the reception area are because of lack or less assistance received upon entry. Therefore, the training should seek to improve the ushering because the beginning of the customer journey positively impacts the overall journey at Medifem.

As such, the training on ushering should address these critical areas below (not limited to only these questions),

- (i) How to politely respond to greetings
- (ii) What welcoming comments to say?
- (iii) How to be friendly and welcoming in addressing patients' inquiries
- (iv) How to give directions effectively and clearly to the reception area

3. Responding to inquiries

Inquiries can be made in person, via phone calls or through virtual platforms. The ability of the front desk to appropriately respond to the queries made contributes to positive customer perceptions, reviews, and satisfaction which goes a long way to impacting the patronage of services. Some customer reviews from patients of Medifem did not reflect positive customer interaction at the front desk. Hence, it is crucial to incorporate improved customer interactions and communication in the proposed training.

As such, the training on responding to inquiries should address these critical areas below (not limited to only these questions),

- (i) How can the front desk listen carefully to the questions of prospective patients? z
- (ii) What to do to understand the enquiries properly
- (iii) Within what time frame should the inquiries be responded to?
- (iv) How to be concise, clear, thorough, and accurate in the responses provided
- (v) How to provide options for future availability for further inquiries

4. Check-in

Check-in is the first major primary step in attaining healthcare services. It consists of entering the patient's information into the system regarding their identity, the purpose of their visit, their arrival and exit time, booking an appointment with a doctor, etc. Interaction between the front desk personnel and the patient must be as friendly and understandable as possible. Therefore, the Medifem front desk personnel must create a conducive environment that allows those patients with check-in issues to lean on them. Otherwise, the patients would not release specific information, hindering subsequent processes.

The following key areas (not limited to only these) would serve as guides for crafting Medifem training content regarding checking in:

- (i) How eligible and self-explanatory are the documents to be filled in by the patient
- (ii) How to provide special assistance to patients who are physically or psychologically challenged.
- (iii) How to retrieve information in a friendly manner from patients for medical records purposes.
- (iv) Is the jargon used by the front desk personnel understandable to the patient?

5. Scheduling

Scheduling consists of keeping track of the different appointments patients book with doctors and making sure patients are attended to in a timely and organized manner. However, some

patients might run behind time and others requiring emergency attention due to unforeseen circumstances. Also, there can be times when doctors may not be duly notified about scheduling, resulting in clashed appointments and the unavailability of doctors. Hence, communication would have to be conducive to the customer, and the schedule constantly adjusted given the circumstances. In other words, the interaction with the patients will have to be mollifying (especially in instances of tensions resulting from clashing times, rescheduling appointments, or Doctors not being punctual in attending to their patients).

The following key areas (not limited to only these) would serve as guides for crafting Medifem training contents regarding scheduling:

- (i) What kind of message can calm down a frustrated patient who is delayed?
- (ii) How to deal with patients' emotional reactions during instances of clashing scheduling.
- (iii) How to create patients' awareness of the Medifem rules regarding booking appointments.
- (iv) How to communicate any readjustment of scheduling to patients who are not in emergency cases.
- (v) What form of reminders to give to patients with booked appointments?
- (vi) How should the no-show policy be communicated to a patient who arrives (later) a day after a set appointment?
- (vii) What is the follow-up approach to patients who do not show up?

6. Waiting Times

Patient waiting time has a powerful effect on overall patient satisfaction. Over 90% of patients are frustrated by waiting times, according to Software Advice (2014). This statistic is projected

to reach 100% by 2023. Customer interaction during waiting times by hospital staff defines the level of customer service competency. While waiting times can be cut down, communication during such periods is as essential as having shorter waiting times at a hospital. So, the two go side by side in giving customers an excellent service experience. Revamping the service process structure reduces or improves waiting times at a hospital. In the Medifem context, some of the strategies on waiting times surround patients' information gathering, delegation, and relaying of information to customers.

The following key areas (not limited to only these) may guide Medifem in crafting training for its staff in handling issues about waiting times.

- (i) When should referrals and patient records be ready when the patient arrives for appointments?
- (ii) How is the team care model applied while attending to a patient?
- (iii) When to collect insurance information and patient history when scheduling an appointment
- (iv) How a delay in consultation time is communicated to a patient
- (v) How to educate patients on the reason for a span of the waiting period
- (vi) How to communicate the late arrival policy to patients who arrive late

7. Continuing care/follow-ups

Post-discharge communication is also essential in the customer journey experience. A patient's interaction with a hospital does not end after being discharged. This form of communication must be equally prioritized as in-hospital communication. The follow-up experience of patients concludes their overall satisfaction with Medifem's services. This necessitates the need for communication standards among staff. For Medifem, in designing communication training for

its staff regarding follow-ups and continuing care, the following questions may serve as a guide.

- (i) How can post-discharge communication be patient-centered?
- (ii) What are the ways through which discharged patients can contact the hospital?
- (iii) How fast should response get to patients?
- (iv) How responsive are Medifem's helplines to patients' emergencies?
- (v) How is clarity achieved in emergency communication?

8. Handling complaints

Handling complaints is how the hospital collects, analyses, and handles daily patient and other stakeholders' complaints. Properly handling complaints helps hospitals constantly improve their personnel performance and customer satisfaction. Complaints might be written or verbal and require a concordant answer format. Thus, the committee in charge of handling complaints must consider individual queries with keen interest and address them effectively in the shortest period to avoid customer dissatisfaction.

The following key areas (not limited to only these) would serve as guides for crafting Medifem training content regarding handling complaints:

- (i) How should agitated patients be communicated?
- (ii) Is every complaint taken into consideration with particular interest?
- (iii) How does Medifem separate non-urgent complaints from urgent ones, and how do they put on hold those with non-urgent ones?
- (iv) What body language and other forms of indirect communication should a Medifem employee adopt while dealing with a complaining patient to convince the latter they understand the situation?

SELECTED SOLUTION

The team narrowed down the problem scope to “unwelcoming and unsupportive front desk interaction at Medifem and difficulty navigating the hospital, which leaves customers frustrated and dissatisfied in their service experience.” The solution the team deems best is the *Customer service training manuals and Medifem hospital map*. These solutions are the best fit because they can positively impact the identified problem and improve the overall customer journey at Medifem. To further assess the suitability of the selected solution, it would be analyzed using the three-factor criteria, implementability of the solution, how it aligns with the Medifem’s goals and objective, its strategic benefits to the firm, and the feedback and recommendation from the project supervisor.

How the solution aligns with Medifem’s Mission and Vision

The mission of Medifem is to provide cherished healthcare experience to improve the quality of life of their patients, their families, and their community. Also, it envisions to be a leader in excellent health care delivery and fertility management, providing positive patient experience and innovative medical practice. The case provided by Medifem implies the hospital’s aim to improve its communication and ease in navigating the hospital to make the Medifem’s experience a wholesome one. As a result, implementing customer service training using the manual as a guide and providing the hospital maps at vantage points will be very instrumental in providing a satisfying journey. This is because Medifem has cutting-edge facilities and highly trained physicians to deliver the high-quality health care it promises. However, when it comes to non-medical services like reception, Medifem does not offer a particularly pleasant experience, making first-time patients hesitant to return. As a result, the customer service training will substantially improve customer service by requiring front-desk personnel to receive extensive training and evaluations focused on client services and interactions. This

would have a beneficial impact on how they connect with their patients. When combined with the ability to easily navigate the premises using maps and the high quality of health care offered, it would result in excellent healthcare delivery, propelling Medifem closer to becoming the leader in private health care delivery in Ghana.

Justification for Selected Solution

The customer service training manual is desirable because it provides a clear, concise, and helpful guide on areas the customer service training should target. Hence, it will be easier for the customer service consultants and Human resource personnel in charge of the training to create the comprehensive training needed. Similarly, the maps will be presented in clear and aesthetically pleasing modules that would attract customers to use them while also benefiting from their sole purpose. In terms of feasibility, the training manuals designed by the team can be developed into full training content targeted at improving customer service. Also, Medifem has the ability to incorporate the training because it has similar employee workshops and has (can access) the resources needed. The maps, on the other hand, can be conveniently implemented by Medifem, considering their resources. As such, the desirability of the maps combined with the anticipated success makes it feasible to implement.

In terms of sustainability/viability, training is a subsequent activity to the recruitment process, hence a recurring activity in Medifem that can be maintained in the long run. In other words, the training manual will be used on a recurring basis. The sole adjustment to the manual will be that of emphasizing the needed components of customer service protocols pertaining to communication. In that, the recruited personnel will always adjust their competencies with Medifem's new strategy to interact/ communicate with their customers. In addition, Medifem can decide to make this training a periodic activity given that all resources required to achieve

the latter are available. Hence, the training manual will be used on a monthly or yearly basis by the HR department while considering contents that feed into the gaps of the moment.

Medifem will keep digital copies of the map to aid future retrievals for more printing. These maps will target (but are not limited) to first-time patients for guidance purposes. These maps will be given at the entrance/main gates by the security personnel and then returned to the security personnel after use. Also, the map will have to be updated every time there is a change in office locations. The security personnel will oversee communicating any changes of this sort to existing Medifem's clients right from the entrance to ensure the latter does not lose their way in finding the office's new location.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Project Goals and Objectives

The primary project goal is to close the gap between Medifem's service scope and service delivery processes. To achieve this goal, the following specific objectives are important.

Goals:

1. Medifem staff gains wider knowledge of customer service standards and applications.
2. Medifem gathers insight from customer feedback through diverse channels.
3. Medifem identifies the reasons for its service performance.
4. Medifem monitors staff service performance.
5. Medifem incorporates a sense of family in its service delivery.
6. Medifem has service standards enforced within all its departments.

Objectives:

1. Train Medifem staff in customer service processes and judgment, equipping Medifem's human resources with a comprehensive service delivery approach.

TEAM MEDIFEM- Efficient Customer Journey/Experience

2. Train Medifem staff in customer interaction, improving staff communication methods and skills.
3. Guide patients at Medifem in easy navigation of the hospital premises
4. Review customer service performance by Medifem staff, deducing common performance trends.
5. Build personal relationships with customers, creating a family health environment comfortable enough for customers to be more expressive about the type of service they want.

Success Criteria

Medifem becomes the best family hospital with an increased customer satisfaction score which can be best measured through Net Promoter Score (NPS) and Customer Churn Rate (CCR) generated through valid customer data aggregated from customer service feedback.

Scope Statement

This project involves designing customer service training manuals and hospital maps for Medifem. The customer service training manual will provide guidelines for creating the training. Customer and personnel feedback can be used to measure customer satisfaction and the impact of the training. The hospital maps, on the other hand, will provide clear directions to locate the respective departments at the hospital by being located at vantage points across the hospital.

Human and Capital Resources Needed to Implement Solution

1. Customer service consultants: They are essential for the project. This is because customer service consultants and human resource personnel will serve as the project implementation leads. They would review the proposed training manual and offer expert changes and recommendations that will ensure that the solution framework is a competitive customer service process that truly sets Medifem apart. Also, they would

help with the designing and implementation of the comprehensive customer service training module.

2. Medifem human resource personnel: They would work hand in hand with the customer service consultants in converting the customer service training manual into a comprehensive customer service training. The human resource personnel is directly in charge of conducting and facilitating the training.
3. Cartographers: Despite the creation of the map by the team, professional cartographers may be required to review the maps and provide expert changes to make the map more desirable and easier to use.
4. Customer service pamphlets: The pamphlets will be prepared by the customer service consultants and human resource personnel of Medifem. The contents of the pamphlets will serve as a customer service brief to Medifem staff and will be discussed in addition to similar material at the customer service training workshops to be organized by the human resource personnel as part of the solution framework.
5. Data presentation tools: Digital tools like Canva, PowerPoint, and others will be employed to present data on customer service training at the hospital and staff levels. Such tools will also be key in presenting findings from customer service feedback and service satisfaction surveys.
6. Data collection tools: Data collection tools like survey documents, suggestions boxes and others will be needed to gather data on the effectiveness of the training and its impact on customer satisfaction. These documents will contain questions and queries of different forms and will be presented to customers as methods of receiving their feedback on Medifem's services and service delivery.

Risk Analysis

Risk Matrix assessment:

Data collection and Data privacy: Given the proposed solution will require a lot of input and analysis of customer (patient) data, one of the risks posed by the solution is a breach of data privacy and data collection standards. Even with a clearly defined procedure and ethical guide to patient data collection and analysis, concerns from patients on the modalities around their data use, and the exposure of such sensitive and personal data will always arise. This may consolidate data streams that allow for the comprehensive nature of the solution framework to fully function. Enough data is needed from customers (patients) to appraise their service journeys while at Medifem and allow the staff to serve them accordingly. The proposed solution will result in more frequent customer (patient) data requests which may have customers raising privacy concerns. In turn, this will result in Medifem spending additional resources to build data protection confidence among its customers (patients).

Security risks: Having a detailed hospital map publicly displayed, may pose a security threat. This is because it exposes the location of all Medifem facilities and equipment to any individual who walks into Medifem.

Risk mitigation

Identifying and managing biases: As staff are trained through the customer service training manual and the key principles are applied, identifying the biases that influence customer interaction in terms of impact before and after the insertion of the training manual is useful for risk mitigation. By acknowledging biases on customers, staff, and the outlook of Medifem, the discussed human factor risk is subdued. Managing such biases, increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the customer service training manual. The biases may include judging a customer based on their appearance, attributing emotional reactions to religion, ethnicity or race, just to mention a few.

Data representation: The representation of customer data can lead to operational risks depending on how it is done. The implementation process of the training manual and hospital map requires some level of customer data analysis. Through that, there may be exposure of such sensitive data in way that triggers reputational risks and compliance concerns.

Reinforcement of security: having a detailed map may pose a security risk hence Medifem would be require to reenforce its security measures as well use make very efficient use of the security cameras to be able to detect any risk on time and curb it to prevent any patient harm or equipment losses.

The human factor

Although the solution framework presents clear guidelines on the procedure, the human factor plays the core role. This is in the sense that the administration and application of the framework are subject to human behavior and circumstance. Customer service admittedly is built on human interaction and connection. The risk here is the core principles of the proposed solution are not being followed rigorously because they may not be applied systematically. A continual adjustment of the solution framework to suit human behavior will cause the framework to lose its intended impact on Medifem's service delivery process.

Although in the solution framework, there are contingencies to ensure an absolute application of the solution principles, the risks posed by human factors are unavoidable. The solution framework does not discard the human factor but, in fact, is set to restructure the solution principles to incorporate feedback from its application. The risk here is that human behavior (from Medifem staff) may cause the solution to be presented completely different to customers (patients). If the Medifem staff apply the solution framework subjectively and not objectively, the solution principles lose their value. And that puts the entire solution framework at risk.

Implementation timeline

Schedule	Program activity
Five months before implementation	Company profiling, internal & external organizational environmental scanning and industry analysis
Four months before implementation	Needs/Situational assessment
Two months before implementation	Literature review
One month before implementation	Solution proposal and Solution document
One month before implementation	Implementation plan
Implementation period	Customer service workshops Staff customer service performance assessment Multi-stream service feedback inception

Implementation Plan Milestones

Solution Implementation Breakdown

Core activity	Breakdown
Customer service training content preparation	Using the customer service training manual designed by the junior consultants, Medifem prepares its own localized customer service training content.

	The preparation process involves input from Medifem’s head of client services, Medifem’s most recent customer satisfaction survey, the business development team, and an external customer service expert (if Medifem deems it necessary)
Customer service training content approval	The head of client services and the hospital administrator with the human resource department as aides review the prepared content, request changes, and approve the training content.
Customer service training scheduling	Medifem decides on the dates and times of the customer service training program. The scheduling involves input from the Human Resource department, the customer service training team, the hospital administrator, and the head of client services.
Customer service training presentation preparation	The customer service training team decides and practices the presentation modes for the content as well as the personalities to facilitate the sessions.
Customer service training program	The customer service training team leads the training sessions with assistance from external facilitators (if decided)
Medifem hospital map verification	The hospital map is cross-checked by the administrative team of Medifem, with the necessary changes applied where they are needed.
Medifem hospital map installment	After all, corrections are made, the hospital map is installed at vantage points of all branches of Medifem.

Impact assessment	Through customer satisfaction surveys, Medifem assesses the impact of the solution through the lenses of customer retention, new customer rate and brand image.
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Team roles and responsibilities

Head of client services: The head of client services is to be the head of the customer service training team. The office of client services will provide all the necessary client insights needed to guide how the training content is drafted from the proposed customer service training manual. The head of client services will also communicate the training content to the senior management of Medifem.

Human resources department: The human resources department serves as the representative of Medifem staff. The department is to review the training content and the program structure of the training sessions, ensuring it is all within the auspices of improving Medifem’s human resource and labor compliance.

Customer service training team: The customer service training team is responsible for drafting the training content and updating it based on feedback from all important stakeholders. This team is also responsible for facilitating the training sessions and presenting the training content to Medifem staff.

Hospital administrator: The hospital administrator is responsible for providing the training session space and coordinating the Medifem staff in terms of the most appropriate times for the training sessions. The hospital administrator is to design a comprehensive training timetable that ensures that all staff expected to attend the sessions are present when required to be.

External facilitators (Customer service consultants): External facilitators offer expertise in the drafting and presentation of the training content. Customer service consultants may be brought in to contribute and facilitate some parts of the training sessions.

Implementation plan metrics (Key Performance Indicators)

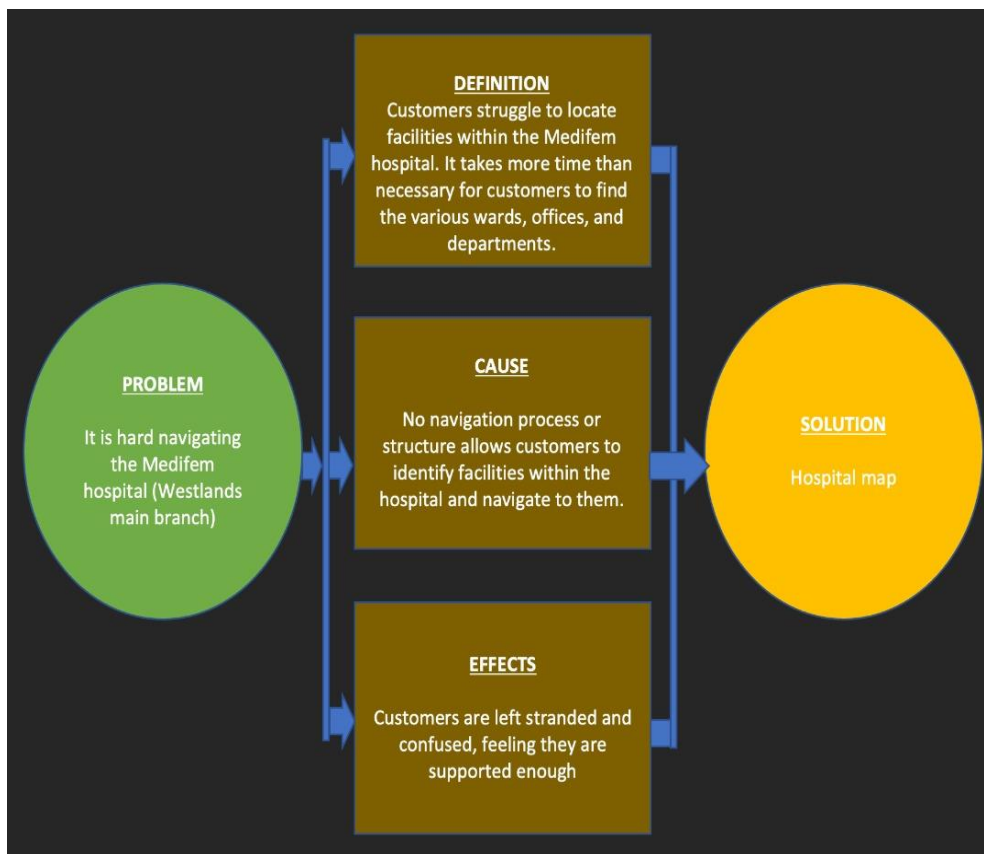
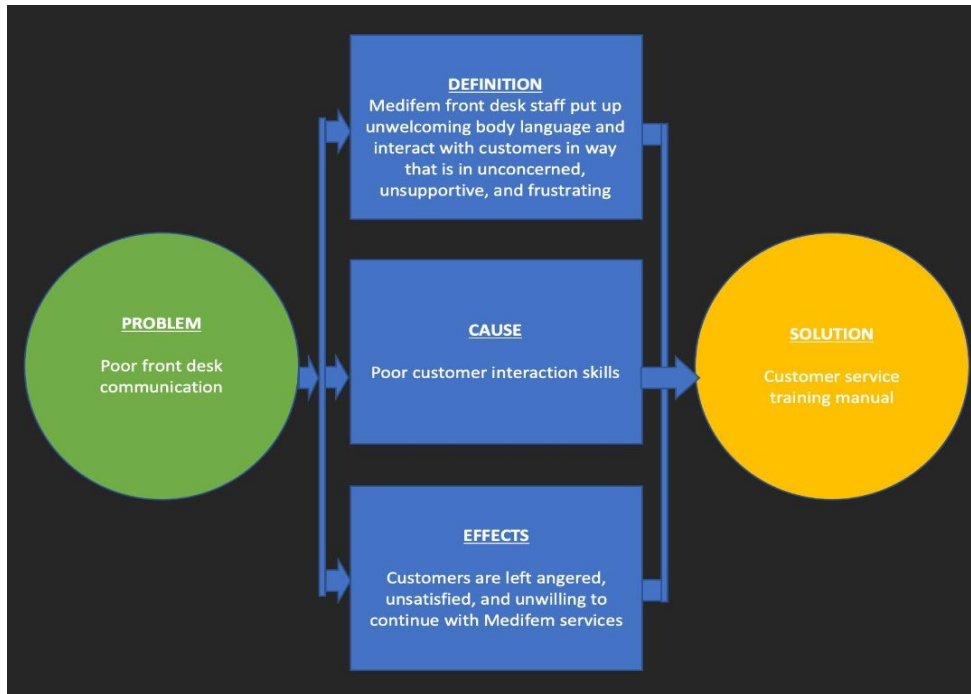
Customer Churn: One of the key performance indicators is for customers to keep coming back to Medifem. Customer Churn means a business is able to retain a consistent customer base. This is a key implementation plan metric as the end goal of the project is to ensure service delivery processes at Medifem offer excellent customer journeys/experiences that would make customers regular.

Customer Satisfaction: Another key performance indicator of the project is getting positive feedback from customers on their interaction with Medifem's front desk personnel. This is key because it would be the expected outcome of a successful implementation plan and process.

Customer retention: This is another key performance indicator of the proposed training manual. Through the content taught at the training sessions, customer service performance by Medifem staff should be improved to the extent that served customers return to Medifem for more services.

Net Promoter Score: Increased referrals is a key performance indicator. This is because, with an improvement in Medifem's service delivery outlook, customers' confidence in Medifem's customer service will cause them to refer the hospital to their colleagues, friends, and family.

6.0 PROBLEM-SOLUTION MAP



7.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Customer service excellence is a core service component for healthcare. Throughout the project, the team has noted insights into Medifem's customer experience. One insight gathered was the attitude and outlook presented at the front desk. Customers found their interactions with the front desk staff unprofessional and unwelcoming. Another insight was the need for tools that enabled customers to easily navigate the hospital. The team through interactions with customers gathered that customers were frustrated of not being able to locate facilities in the hospital.

The proposed solution will be optimized when Medifem restructures its human resource development strategy to incorporate more training on communication skills. This will emphasize the importance and need for the proposed customer service training manual. This restructuring also necessitates the introduction of the hospital map, which will inform customers of the appropriate navigations within the hospital. The projected risks of the proposed solution include security complications and data breach. For Medifem, in training its staff on communication skills, there is the need to present customers data on satisfaction and service patterns for better appreciation of customer experiences. Such a process may compromise customers' data with Medifem. Giving details and locations of all departments and facilities may also leave Medifem vulnerable to security risks.

For Medifem to scale up, more advanced technology will have to be incorporated into their service delivery processes. The map could be accessed through a QR code, a digital customer service feedback will help track performance and issues in real-time. In all, more comprehensive and convenient tools can be used to better communicate with customers and pool data from their experiences to improve customer experience even further.

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APPENDIX

Figure 1. Stakeholder map

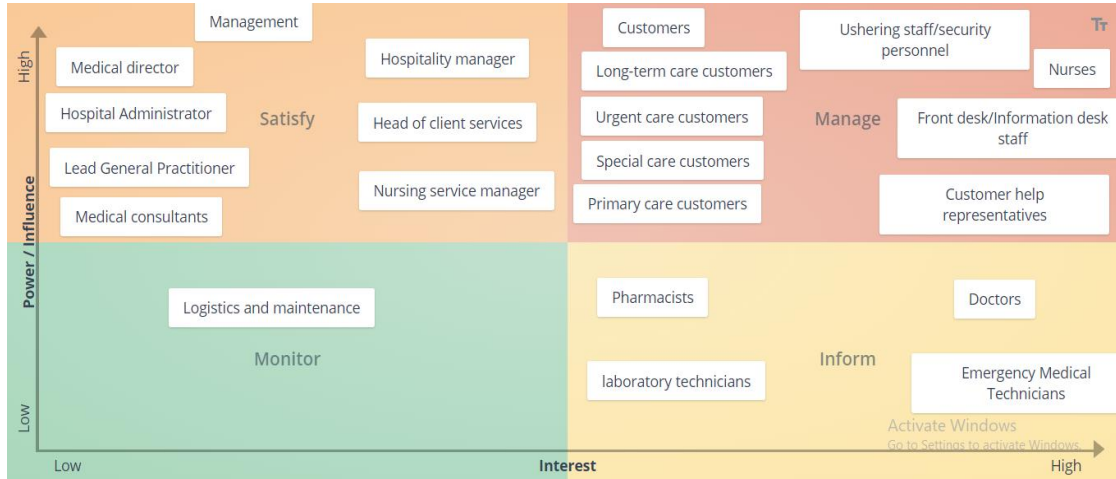


Figure 2 : Graph of Facilities of the types of hospitals

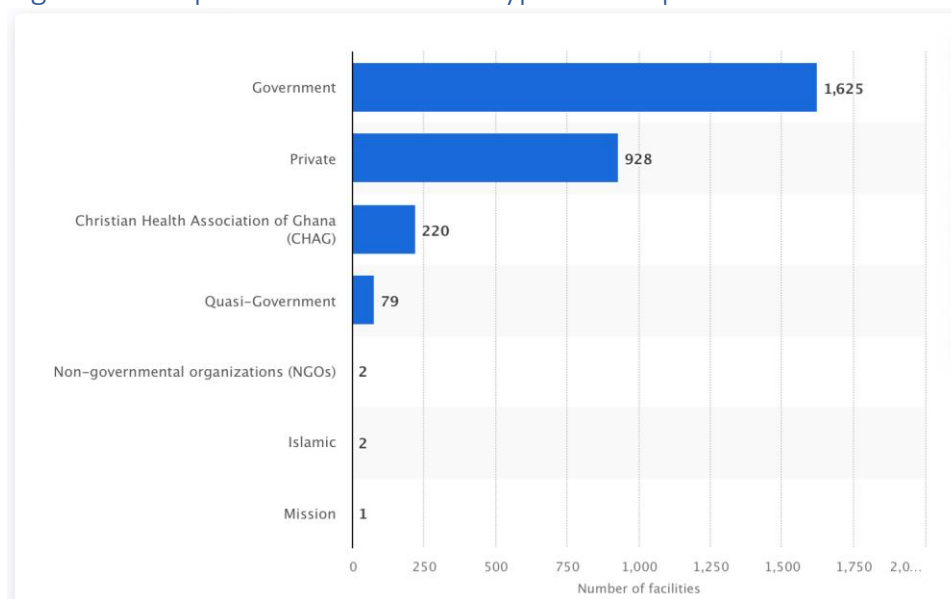


Figure 3: Customer Journey Map

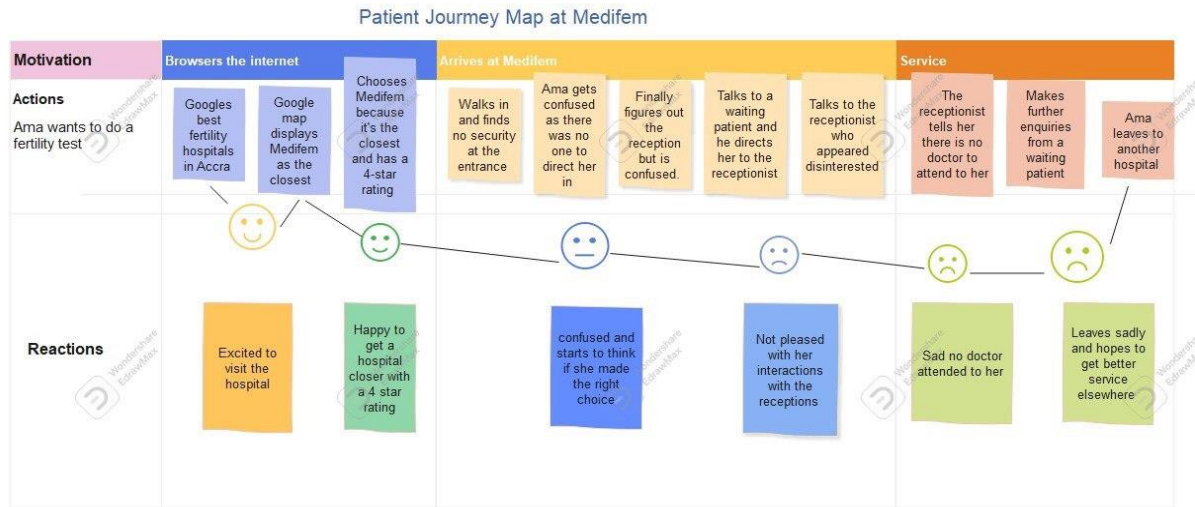


Figure 4 3X3 Risk Matrix



Figure 4