

A CLIENT STORY

# How Southern Cross Healthcare brought the patient voice to life across their organisation

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Lourdes Noronha shares valuable lessons from Southern Cross Healthcare's process to embed patient feedback and insights across the organisation to drive patient-led improvements.

*“Our aim is to focus on data that drives improvement. We want to be proactive rather than reactive when there are problems we need to solve.”*

*Some of the questions we now ask include: What are we seeing in the data? What is our action plan? What is the outcome we are looking for and how are we going to get there? What do we want our patients to experience when they utilise our services?*

*The real driving force has been changing our mindset and doing things differently.”*

When Lourdes Noronha started her role as National Quality & Risk Advisor at Southern Cross Healthcare, New Zealand's largest private healthcare organisation, she had a big job on her hands.

“We want to be proactive rather than reactive when there are problems we need to solve.”

With a background in improvement and a passion for listening to patients and really understanding what they are saying, Lourdes was determined to bring the patient voice to life across the entire organisation. She knew that doing so would unlock valuable insights and help drive better patient experiences and outcomes.

Lourdes immediately saw how the Cemplicity platform could bring her aspirations to life and disseminate value across all levels of Southern Cross Healthcare. While an existing consumer council was charged with ensuring that the patient was a key driver of decision making, she saw an opportunity to further embed the patient voice using patient experience survey feedback.

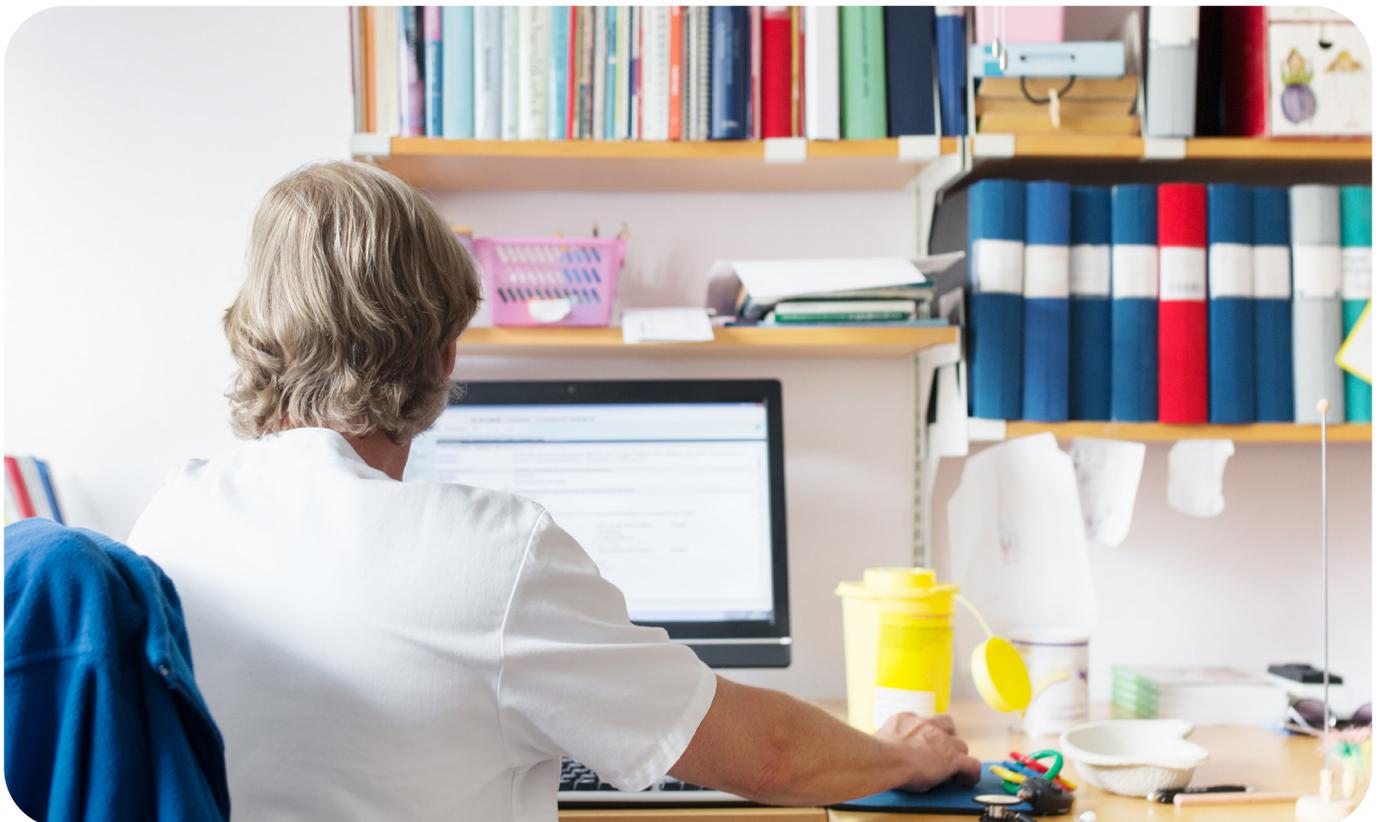
***“Because of my improvement background, I was keen to explore what Southern Cross Healthcare patients were saying and what we were hearing. My first realisation was that while staff were aware of Cemplicity, they didn’t fully understand the value it could provide.”***

Working with the Cemplicity team, Lourdes has been on a journey to help her organisation engage with

the programme, from the CEO and executive leadership team, through to the marketing and digital teams.

She is gradually developing a sustainable process to get quality managers and staff from each hospital to take note of patient feedback and action improvements in a timely way.

**“Because of my improvement background, I was keen to explore what Southern Cross Healthcare patients were saying and what we were hearing.”**



Here's how she did it

## 1. Relevance

Lourdes began by ensuring individuals across the organisation were seeing patient feedback that was relevant to them in their role. She knew the way an executive team member and a clinician would react to and use feedback would be very different.

Rather than delivering a one-size-fits-all report, Lourdes took a different approach. She drilled down into the data, ensuring people had access and visibility to data that was meaningful to them and empowering, which could positively impact their work.

***“For me, with a background as a clinician, I would want to know how the patient feedback is relevant to my work, what do I need to know and why? Why is it important from a customer service or business perspective?”***

Lourdes understood that for the programme to drive real improvement, she needed to focus on the people in a position to make a difference to the patient - those on the ground.

Lourdes analysed in detail which touchpoints were most important to a patient within their care journey. Using Cemplicity's sentiment and theme analysis tool, she then drilled down into themes and sentiments within the patient journey.

She presented this information to those in a position to affect real change in the way those touchpoints were delivered. Lourdes began working with quality managers from each hospital, showing them areas they could focus on based on feedback within the platform.

***“At National Support Office we can talk about the findings, but the people on the floor are the ones that do the work and drive these improvements. Clinicians can't improve our patients' experience if they don't receive their patients feedback and to do something about it, they need to understand the patient concerns.”***

**“Clinicians can't improve our patients' experience if they don't receive their patients feedback.”**

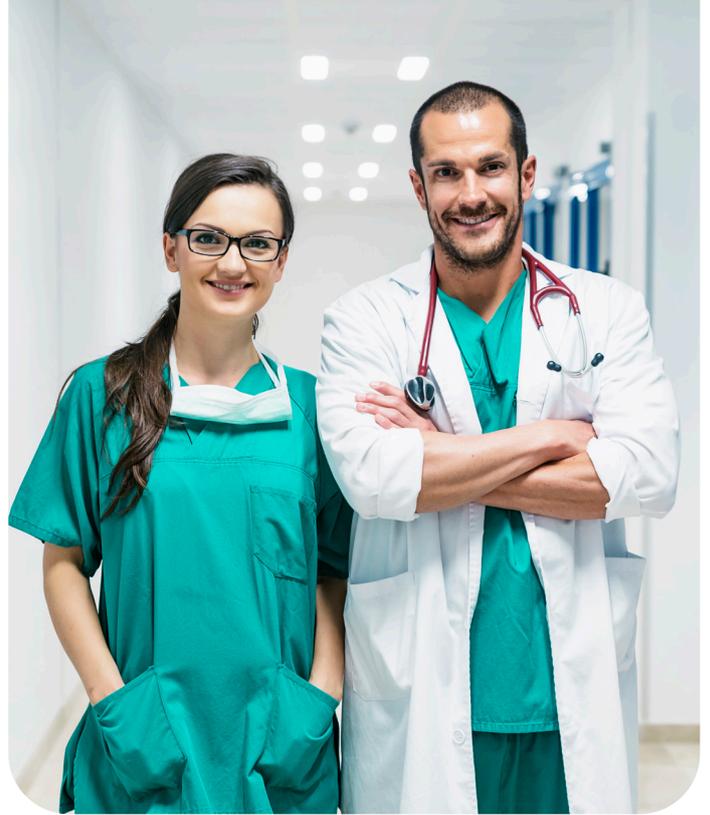
## 2. Leadership engagement

While Lourdes initially focused on delivering relevant insights to people on the ground, she knew she needed advocacy from the very top of the organisation. This would drive systemic buy-in and really shift the organisation towards more patient-feedback-oriented improvements.

Lourdes used VOICE, the sentiment and theme analysis tool, and smart graphing functions to surface compelling patient stories, themes and trends. This supported the creation of digestible snapshots that explained how patients viewed their own experiences across the hospital network.

For a CEO who was most familiar with the NPS (net promoter score) feedback, this generated something of an “aha moment”.

***“Our CEO can now share these insights with the wider network via weekly updates. He wanted to create a buzz around what we are hearing from our patients, to share the lovely comments and positive responses, along with the areas where work needs to be done. When he started to put it out there, it created even more awareness.”***



**“Our CEO wanted to create a buzz around what we are hearing from our patients, to share the lovely comments and positive responses, along with the areas where work needs to be done.”**

### 3. Culture of collaboration

Lourdes has put an enormous amount of effort into ensuring that the patient voice informs the work of Southern Cross Healthcare's quality team. But it hasn't stopped there. She has used patient insights to build bridges across other departments. This is particularly noticeable with the national quality team now a valued partner across the organisation. A culture of collaboration has been fostered through a shared orientation about what is important to the patient.

Lourdes was pleasantly surprised by the effect of the CEO sharing patient voice insights with the executive

team. For the first time, the marketing and digital teams saw the potential in utilising patient feedback and collaborating with the quality team and consumer council committee in the design of patient communications and information materials.

Throughout Southern Cross Healthcare, the renewed focus on the patient voice means staff are now engaging, connecting, listening and working as a united team. This is right down to the language used in marketing collateral, ensuring that it speaks to the patient.

**“We are now all collaborating, seeking input from various teams and making it patient-centric, which is the way it should be.”**

***“The marketing team now often reach out to our team to say, this is what we've developed, what do you think? What is the language like? This never happened previously. We are now all collaborating, seeking input from various teams and making it patient-centric, which is the way it should be.”***



## 4. Build capability and capacity

**“We’ve got this platform that you can explore and efficiently use to drive improvements.”**

It’s all very well driving integration through teams, but unless people have the capability and capacity to do something with the patient feedback, it won’t deliver optimal value. So, Lourdes targeted the quality leads in each hospital and built up their confidence in using Cemplicity insights to listen to what patients are saying. She encouraged quality leads to showcase and share their learnings across the network. This has allowed local hospital staff to own the process, identify patient pain points, and implement staff-sourced solutions.

This didn’t happen overnight and took ongoing commitment. Lourdes instigated weekly meetings, using patient feedback insights as discussion prompts with quality leads in order to identify areas of focus. Additionally, she encouraged hospitals to integrate insights into safety, quality and risk meetings and other meetings. Hospitals now have an assigned patient experience champion to manage the programme. Critically, these champions have been chosen based on their passion for the patient experience and their desire to drive a patient-centric approach.

Lourdes knew how fundamental it was that champions first understood the value of the Cemplicity platform and then how to utilise it to integrate insights into their team’s daily workflows. In collaboration with the Cemplicity team, she organised training webinars and encouraged all quality managers, patient experience champions and team leads to attend. This turned out to be a key driver of uptake amongst staff, promoting further buy-in and building capability.

***“In my role, it was fundamental in the first instance to get network-wide engagement from our key stakeholders.***

***So the first step was creating that awareness across all staff and quality managers, hence the initiative to provide education via webinars and encouraging staff to utilise this platform more efficiently.***

***The key message there was ‘We’ve got this platform that you can explore and efficiently use to drive improvements.’***

**“Champions who are passionate about patient experience and want to drive it.”**

**By engaging with the entire Southern Cross Healthcare network, from top to bottom, and taking a methodical approach to driving understanding and use of the Cemplicity platform, Lourdes has managed to drive a patient-led improvement culture.**

She has a team around her who are enthused and engaged, and has identified champions in the business who are: *“Passionate about patient experience and want to drive it.”* Sticking to the Southern Cross way - ‘Patients Always Come First’

That can only be a good thing for Southern Cross Healthcare, and their patients.

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