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Prof. Werner

SOC 220: Social Class

10 December 2013

Community Project: Health Care

1. Name, location, and date visited
   1. Yale-New Haven Hospital
      1. 1450 Chapel Street, New Haven, Connecticut, 06510
      2. Date visited: December 1, 2013, 6:00 PM
   2. Saint Joseph’s Medical Center
      1. 127 South Broadway, Yonkers, New York, 10701
      2. Date visited: December 3, 2013, 7:00 PM
2. General appearance
   1. Yale New Haven:
      1. Yale-New Haven hospital was a very large institution, and appeared to be very well-kept. The lawns and gardens around the building were maintained, and signs were at each parking lot, allowing visitors to know which direction they needed to go. However, it was still very confusing and disorienting
   2. Saint Joseph’s Medical Center:
      1. In general, St. Joseph’s was a much smaller institution. It was clearly built more vertical than most hospitals, mostly because of the city’s layout and building structures. Overall, the building was easy to navigate, but much smaller, and did not look as well-kept as other hospitals may be.
3. Structures
   1. Yale-New Haven:
      1. Easily the most interesting thing about this hospital is its atrium room, which features flowers, trees, and a huge fountain, right in the middle of the hospital. Patients and visitors can choose to eat here, in cushioned chairs and wood tables, or simply lounge around and enjoy the view. There were many different buildings at this location, each with a different medical focus.
   2. Saint Joseph’s Medical Center:
      1. Overall, this building was much less well-kept than other buildings. It looked dingy, and was in need of a paint job. There was one building for the entire hospital to use, including an emergency room for both children and adults. The rooms were small, including the emergency room waiting area.
4. Parking
   1. Yale-New Haven Hospital:
      1. Parking was definitely confusing at Yale-New Haven hospital. There are so many different parking lots that are close to certain buildings, so finding the right building, parking lot, and then a space was a challenge. When walking to the car, though, people are allowed to ask for a security escort although this means waiting for an officer to arrive. Parking is available at a rate, which is close to a dollar an hour. Though, it is based on a grouped total of hours. So, zero to three hours is three dollars per hour, but any longer is a twelve dollar flat rate. This hospital also offered valet parking for twelve dollars, available from 6:00 AM until 8:00 PM.
   2. Saint Joseph’s Medical Center:
      1. There was not a shortage of parking for St. Joseph’s. They own a parking garage just a short walk away from the main building, so parking is not an issue. However, the closer parking spots were either on the street, or close to the street. Patients, visitors, and employees have both options, though. Walking to the lot was slightly troublesome at night, but it was relatively well-lit and easy to walk to. Parking, however, is available at an hourly fee.
5. Main entrance
   1. Yale-New Haven Hospital:
      1. The main entrance of Yale-New Haven Hospital was slightly more difficult to find, since it is a larger institution, but the entrances were clearly visible and labeled. However, the six entrances made it much more confusing to find the correct entrance, and the different buildings became much more difficult to find after some time. There were many signs leading to the main entrance of each building, and the front doors of these buildings were adorned with flowers, trees, and walkways outside. In some lobbies, there were even glass ceilings, sliding glass doors, and fountains. Inside, nurses, doctors, and/or volunteers waiting to help behind a large mahogany desk.
   2. Saint Joseph’ Medical Center:
      1. The entrance to Saint Joseph’s was very clearly marked, and very easy to access. It was clearly marked as the hospital, and had two ambulances outside in the circular drop-off point. There were some bushes alongside the building, but the garden did not look like it had to be taken care of, since it was relatively easy things to tend to, like bushes and mulch. The lobby at Saint Joseph’s was slightly ordinary. There was a large desktop with a nurse behind it when I walked in, but there was nothing outstanding about the room. It could have been more comforting, but it was easy to navigate and functional.
6. Emergency Room General Appearance
   1. Yale-New Haven Hospital
      1. At this hospital, I visited both the emergency room for children and the emergency room for adults. In the children’s emergency room, there were much friendlier nurses, and brighter colors around the room. Toys were scattered around the room, and there was a television with cartoons playing. In the emergency room for adults, the news was playing on the television, and it was relatively quiet for an emergency room. Magazines lined the room for adults, both male and female, to read. In both rooms, the nursing staff was able to answer some of my questions, and seemed very accommodating.
   2. Saint Joseph’s Medical Center
      1. Saint Joseph’s emergency room was small, and slightly chaotic. The walls were painted a dull shade of white, and it was a tad noisy. The two nurses behind the counter were constantly tending to patients, whether it was signing a new patient in, or taking a patient’s vitals. The television was playing a news station, which I found odd since there were three children in the room. Magazines were on the tables for both males and females to read.
7. Number of patients waiting/Approximate wait
   1. Yale-New Haven Hospital
      1. There were four children waiting in the child’s emergency room, and seven adults waiting in the adult’s emergency room. When I asked the nursing staff, they said that the approximate wait time for the children was under half an hour. For the adults, the approximate wait time was between thirty to forty five minutes, but it could reach over an hour on some weekend nights. Usually, though, the children’s emergency room has a wait time of under an hour, on both weekends and weekdays.
   2. Saint Joseph’s Medical Center
      1. In this waiting room, ten adults and eight children were waiting for care. According to the nurse I spoke to, the average wait time was around half an hour, but they try to see patients based on the severity of the medical issue. The nurse said that the average wait time can get up to an hour and a half on nights and weekends, but on weekdays, it generally stays below an hour.
8. Gift Shop
   1. Yale-New Haven Hospital
      1. Yale-New Haven Hospital has two gift shops: the Atrium Gift shop, and the Glass Door gift shop. Families and friends can order items in-person or online and have them hand-delivered to a patient.
         1. Atrium Gift Shop: This gift shop is more tailored to organic and floral arrangements. Here, you can buy floral arrangements which will be delivered to the patient’s room if requested. Assorted health conscious foods, like sundried fruits, are available for purchase, along with children’s toys, clothing, and new baby gifts. The proceeds of this gift shop help fund many projects sponsored by the hospital. This gift shop is opened on weekdays from 6:30 AM to 9:00 PM, and on weekends from 8:00 AM to 8:30 PM.
         2. Glass Door gift shop: This gift shop offers many convenience items for patients and visitors, such as magazines, newspapers, greeting cards, crayons, health and beauty aids, and snacks. This shop will also deliver floral arrangements free of charge. As part of the hospital’s program, this shop also is tax-free, meaning patients and visitors do not have to pay tax on these items. This shop is opened Monday through Friday from 9:30 AM to 7:30 PM, Saturday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, and on Sunday from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM.
   2. Saint Joseph’s Medical Center
      1. The gift shop in Saint Joseph’s Medical Center sells an assortment of greeting cards, reading materials, personal grooming necessities, snacks, and gift ideas. Regular newspaper delivery can also be set up through the gift shop while a patient is visiting the hospital. This gift shop is opened on weekdays from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Flower and gift deliveries may be allowed through outside vendors, but this is up to the physician’s discretion.
9. Cafeteria
   1. Yale-New Haven Hospital
      1. The main cafeteria, the East Pavilion Cafeteria, is located on the first floor, next to the lobby, and is open to patients, visitors, and employees. It is open seven days a week, from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM. It is a buffet-styled setting, with sandwiches, salads, soups, etc. available. There also are four other cafés located in the hospitals, and one additional cafeteria. The Atrium Café and the Park Street Café are both open on weekdays from 6:30 AM to 4:00 PM. The Atrium Café is located in the main hospital’s lobby. The Park Street Café is located in the Smilow Cancer Hospital’s lobby. The Overlook Café is also housed in the Smilow Cancer Hospital, although it is a late-night option, open on weekdays from 11:00 AM until 6:00 AM. The final café, Jazzman’s Café, is located in the New Haven Pavilion Clinical Building, and is open on weekdays from 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Finally, the second cafeteria is also located in this building, and is open on weekdays from 7:30 AM to 2:00 PM. All cafeterias accept a hospital meal card, which gives a fifteen percent discount compared to paying with cash or a credit card. Vending machines are located near the East Pavilion Cafeteria for use.
   2. Saint Joseph’s Medical Center
      1. This hospital’s cafeteria is located on the second floor of the hospital, and is opened to employees, staff and visitors. It is opened on Monday through Friday, and serves a variety of hot and cold foods, such as sandwiches, soups, and salads. For breakfast, the cafeteria is open from 7:00 AM to 10:00 AM. Then, coffee and snacks are served until 11:00 AM. There is a half an hour break, and lunch is then served from 11:30 AM until 2:00 PM. Dinner is not served, but there are vending machines located outside of the cafeteria for use.
10. Waiting areas/lounge
    1. Yale-New Haven Hospital
       1. There are various large waiting rooms at this institution. Each waiting room is equipped with a large television, chairs, and couches. Magazines are also available, as well as a separate area for children. In the waiting rooms near the children’s area of the hospital, there are more toys, as well as a large television and chairs. For surgery, patients are given a personal, pre-operative bay, with a bed and a television. In the waiting rooms, important notices are also displayed, such as how to become an organ donor, and how to protect young children from illnesses and diseases. The Atrium lounge is the main lounge for people outside of waiting rooms, and is filled with nature’s beauty. It does not have televisions, so the room remains peaceful, and is adorned with large leather couches, glass walls, and a water fountain.
    2. Saint Joseph’s Medical Center
       1. A visitor’s waiting area is available on the first floor across from the surgery unit. There are also waiting areas on select floors, and a quiet room on the seventh floor, near the Intensive and Immediate Care Units. Each waiting room has a television and magazines, as well as relatively comfortable chairs and couches. These rooms are slightly smaller than they could be, but there are many waiting areas in this hospital, so space is not limited. However, preferred space may be limited, and visitors may have to wait in an area further away from their friend or family member. There is no lounge for this hospital.
11. Patients and Families
    1. Yale-New Haven Hospital
       1. Most patients and families in this hospital appeared to be either working class or middle class. Most people in the waiting areas or in the emergency room seemed to be family groups, with one or two people accompanying each patient. Patients in the emergency rooms appeared to be either white or black, with one Hispanic family in the adult emergency room. Overall, these patients seemed to be relatively healthy, but with physical injuries, like broken bones.
    2. Saint Joseph’s Medical Center
       1. At Saint Joseph’s, it seemed to be made up of patients and a spouse or friend. There were not many family groups. Most people in the emergency room appeared to be part of the working class. Patients in the emergency room were mainly black or Hispanic, with seven white patients and/or partners in the room of almost thirty people. Overall, most people appeared to be healthy. Some patients were talking about illnesses, like a headache or a stomachache, but others were talking about physical injuries, like a broken bone. Generally, there seemed to be an even number of patients talking about illnesses as there was patients talking about injuries.
12. Ease of access and helpfulness of staff
    1. Yale-New Haven Hospital
       1. Overall, it was extremely easy to get information from the hospital and its staff. The nursing staff was very welcoming, and answered many questions of mine. In the cafeteria, some doctors even asked if I needed help finding my way around, or getting information. I noticed that some staff members spoke English and Spanish for patients that may not speak English fluently. It was relatively easy to walk into the centers, and to find someone to ask for assistance. It was even easy to distinguish the volunteers from the nurses and the doctors. The staff seemed like they enjoyed helping, and it definitely helped my project. In addition, the website is very easy to navigate, and gave me much more information than I expected. Every department of the hospital is listed on the website, along with information, what to expect sections, and ways to contact individual doctors, nurses, etc.
    2. Saint Joseph’s Medical Center
       1. It appeared that the staff at Saint Joseph’s Medical Center was very busy, and too preoccupied to help me with my questions. Instead, I wandered around the hospital and the emergency room, and was not stopped. The nurses that I asked questions to tried to help, but they also got interrupted many times due to patients, other nurses, or doctors. It was very easy to access the emergency room and the main floors, but the staff was not as helpful as they could be. However, they looked very chaotic and pressed for time, so I could not fault them for doing their job. The website was slightly more helpful, but it was definitely not appealing to the eye, and was much harder to explore than other websites. A lot of information was not on the website that could have been, and most of the information was clustered onto one or two pages, making it very difficult to navigate until the right page was found.