

Dr. Donald L. Bricker, M.D.
Heart Hospital of Austin

Dear Dr. Bricker,

Thank you for assigning me with the transformative review of your patient information sheet, “What is ‘Open Heart Surgery’?”. My analysis is guided by your articulated goal of productively communicating necessary information about open heart surgery to your patients and their families, essentially reducing the number of repeated questions during medical visits.

The current data provided is informative and accurate; however, its presentation is overly technical, which likely hinders patient engagement, particularly among elderly patients. For example, terms such as “cardiac chambers”, “cardiopulmonary bypass”, and “nomological consideration” are highlighted without adequate explanation or clarification. I recommend simplifying technical terms, by clearly defining required medical terms in everyday language, and adding supportive visuals, such as diagrams to illustrate how a heart lung machine works. These visuals would significantly improve patient engagement and comprehension.

Additionally, crucial content about what patients should expect before, during, and after surgery needs to be present. Providing details about risks, preparations, recovery timelines, and post-operative care instructions would make the document more thorough and practically useful, which would hopefully reduce follow-up questions.

Furthermore, the document begins with a broad discussion of terminology confusion, which isn’t relevant to patients’ concerns. Thus causing readers to lose interest early on. I would suggest reorganizing the content to begin with what patients want to know more directly—this could look like in the form of questions, like “What does open-heart surgery involve?”, “How does it impact them?”, or “What can they expect?”. Any historical or descriptive points should be shorter and secondary. Specific headings or sections, such as “What is a Heart Lung Machine?”, “What is Open Heart Surgery?”, and “What to Expect from Your Surgery”, would notably improve navigation and readability.

The current writing style is clinical, formal, and rather academic, which may not connect with your intended audience. An empathetic, conversational, reassuring tone would better connect with patients, making them more confident and comfortable about their upcoming surgery. As an example, phrases like “rest assured” can be elaborated with compassionate recognition of patients dealing with anxiety or concerns, creating a more supportive ambience.

To summarize, by making the language a lot simpler and more patient-friendly, adding visuals to help your patients understand what they can expect, and revamping the content around patient-centered matters will better help achieve your goal of patient communication.

Again, thank you for giving me the opportunity to assist you! I look forward to any discussions and/or comments you might wish to have with me as you review these revisions.

Sincerely, Ymani Bennett