

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT THROUGH CAPACITY MANAGEMENT IN HOSPITALS

The Case of the Governmental Hospital in Hebron "Alia Hospital", Palestine.

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Abstract

Governmental Hospitals in Palestine operate at the limits of their design capacity. On average, the Governmental Hospital in Hebron "Alia Hospital" is over occupied. This state of work to cope with high demand leaves behind adaptive responses and practices that negatively affect the quality of care.

This study scores the operational quality of care services delivered in Alia Hospital as being the deviation of patients' perceptions from their expectations. Adapted SERVQUAL questionnaire tool is used to measure the relative gaps in five dimensions of quality, tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

The researcher had conducted a pilot study to improve and test the questionnaire first, then cross-sectional data of 118 respondents sample revealed gaps in all the dimensions of quality in Alia Hospital; maximum relative gap of 0.982 was measured for the responsiveness dimension. The Pediatrics Department scored the maximum average gap (0.93) between all the inpatient departments of Alia Hospital.

Actual activities, processes and procedures to deliver care services were analyzed, observations and interviews were conducted in the Emergency and Pediatrics Departments. Nurses were a sample of human resources in the hospital. Results show weaknesses in communication, documentation process, resource allocation, and layout.

Process analysis in the Emergency Department shows the needs for process restructure to eliminate non-value added activities, and to increase the medical team. The department also needs a daycare unit to balance load with inpatient departments, and to objectively manage the triage unit.

Process analysis in the Pediatrics Department shows the need for; more nurses, nursing staff reallocation, and additional primary equipments. The admission room in the department will operate efficiently.

To effectively manage the interdependency relations between departments, a whole communication process improvement is recommended. The researcher strongly recommends the implementation of Medical Record and Information Systems. These two systems are effective quality improvement tool and decision making tool.