

Quality of Care at Outpatient Department

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Abstract

Quality of health care includes several aspects of health care delivery characterized by elements such as getting timely appointments, availability and affordability services, easy access to information, and good communication with health care providers.

Keywords: Quality • Health

Introduction

Hospital outpatient departments are among the most important parts of a health system, a major source of patient supply to inpatient departments, and one of the first contact points between a patient and a hospital. The quality of outpatient services contributes significantly to a patient's overall impression of hospital services. Moreover, outpatient centres are growing more rapidly, and the revenues of these centres are predicted to be equal or even exceed those of inpatient services in the near future.

Patient's experience about quality of health care services has attracted considerable attention in the 21st century both in developed and developing countries. The feedback obtained from the patients' experience play a crucial role in improving the quality of services. The principle of patients' satisfaction is directly linked with the whole health care system, and it is also the measurement of health system responsiveness. The need for amplified demand of quality of health care services has been recognized by health - related information and advances in technology, changes in expectations and opinions about health care, an increase in individuals' involvement in their health care and increased cost and competitiveness in the health sector. Patients experience related to quality of care received can provide key information on performance thus contributing to total quality management and good clinical outcome. Asking patients what they think about the care and treatment they have received and conducting well-structured observations by qualified person on service delivery process are important step towards improving the quality of care.

Patient satisfaction is a positive or negative attitude reflecting the patient's feelings in relation to the received services. To obtain satisfaction, the patient

must get a quality service; in contrast, the perceived quality of services by the patient is not necessarily the result of the service rendered. Several quantitative studies have been done on the service quality and customer satisfaction. But limited qualitative researches have been done on quality of care in outpatient department at different settings. Investigating the experience of the patient on the quality of care in the outpatient services is important to incorporate the patient's perspective on the stated title. Therefore, the aim of this study was to explore patients' experience of quality of care at outpatient department.

On the basis of these findings, the gap of quality care specifically on the disobedience of ethical principles, lack of necessary infrastructure and unwelcoming physical environment led to poor quality of care and patient dissatisfaction. Hence, it calls for policy makers, hospital managers and planners to give due emphasis on quality of service at outpatient department of the hospital. And they should also give emphasis on shaping health care providers and supportive staffs' attitude on the code of conduct by reinforcing individual messages and responsibility so as to give the quality of care and patient satisfaction. This result only provides an insight reasons for quality of care and patient dissatisfaction from clients perspective. Therefore, it is recommended that further studies should be done to explore the view of health professionals' and policy makers in this regard.

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