
HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT

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Hospital is a social institution that takes care of individual health by providing medical treatment in the form of cure, prevention and creating consciousness of health. Health is an important aspect of human life. Good health promotes efficiency and increases earning capacity of individuals resulting in growth of Gross national Income. In fact, health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being. Every person is entitled for the enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of health. Health is not merely absence of disease or deformity. It is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being.

Hospital is a place where people drawn from different background work together. There are Doctors, para medical professionals, technicians, clinical and non-clinical personnel, skilled and semi skilled as well as unskilled workers serving in the hospital to attain a common objective of Health care for the public. Hospitals work for twenty-four hours and their working hours cannot be confined to restrictive hours. Total well being of persons is the motto of any hospital.

Hospital needs to be managed scientifically by applying various principles of management. The diverse type of services provided, changing profile of patients, increasing costs, use of modern technology and equipments, competition, lot of misperceptions about hospitals and rising expectations of public at large call for scientific management of hospitals. Hospitals are basically categorised into

- i) Public Sector Hospitals
- ii) Private Hospitals
- iii) Corporate Hospitals
- iv) Co-operative Hospitals

Hospital owned and managed by public authorities such as Government fall in the first category. The management of these hospitals is by and large bureaucratic. Individuals or a group of doctors also run hospitals. This is a common category managed by people who do not have managerial background, Corporate entitles like Apollo Hospital are very few in India. Co-operative hospital is also not a very popular concept in our country. Health care sector is largely dominated by private hospitals run by individual doctors or a team of doctors.

The Evolution of Hospitals

Hospitals were first established in the battlefields by Romans. The Roman Empire was known for flourishing excellent health system with hospitals as a focal point. The early growth of hospitals could be traced and linked to the rise and spread of Christianity. The Roman Catholic Church had, as a service to humanity and God, established an extensive network of hospitals by 15th century. Modern hospitals owe their roots to the Christian perception of serving the sick and protecting humanity. The hospitals in the early periods were charity oriented, caring and meeting spiritual needs of the patient. Hospital industry moved from being religious centers to poor houses, further to death houses and now to research and teaching centers.

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Hospital System in India

There was no hospital system in India till the arrival of Christian Missionaries during the 18th Century. Till 1950, the hospital sector in India was dominated by public sector hospitals and dispensaries started by enlightened rulers of princely states and Britishers. There were hospitals established by Christian Missionaries in Kerala, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

Twentieth Century saw the growth of health care sector with newer dimensions. Technology support and advancement of medical research contributed significantly to the growth of modern concept of hospitals

In India the private nursing homes/hospitals have come up more rapidly since 1980's. There is almost proliferation of private hospitals in urban areas.

Problems of Private Sector Hospitals.

Indian hospital system suffers from problems like weak and haphazard referral system, multiplicity of agencies, lack of reliable data and such other difficulties. Mostly hospitals are located in urban district centres lacking adequate space and parking facility and affected by air and noise pollution. There is also a problem of fair pricing of health care services. Another feature of our system is practice of round about method of medical treatment. Health care delivery system in many hospitals is not rationally organised. They do not have support services, low paid employees and lack of job security affect the efficiency of hospitals. Hospitals are also negligent about waste disposal.

Objectives of Hospital Management

Hospital is a service - oriented institution. It enjoys a unique place in the social system. The main objectives of any hospital could be 1) Service Orientation, 2) Patient's Satisfaction, 3) Trust of Patient's family members and relatives. 4) Moral support and counseling.

In a country like ours, people expect provision of health -care services at lowest possible price. Against this back ground, hospitals have to invest in modern equipments and machinery, face competition meet rising expenses on training and rising salaries of non-technical staff all these have made it difficult to run hospitals efficiently. Managing hospital is therefore, not an easy task.

The gradation, quality and standard of hospital is determined by number of beds and the number of patients treated. The service rendered cannot be quantitatively measured. Each patient has a different profile and expectations. Therefore "humanity" constitutes the core of hospital management.

A hospital can be better managed by classifying work/operations into different sections such as

1. Administrative section.
2. Finance
3. Information
4. Equipments & Machinery
5. Patient's Service Division.
6. Government & Semi Government Plan Section
7. Educational Section.
8. Human Resource Development Division.

Administrative Section.

The responsibility of administering the hospital lies with this department/Section. The objective should be "maximisation of Patient's satisfaction". This needs discipline cleanliness, time schedule, service orientation, security, food arrangement and positive attitude. It is essential to enhance the confidence level not only of the patient but also his/her relatives. The dignified and respectful treatment of relatives and element of trust will add value to the administration of the hospital. Administration should create an atmosphere that the patients treat hospital as "Temple of Health". People with administrative experience and human touch should be recruited in this section. Shankar eye hospital of Chennai is the best example for this.

Finance Division

Improving and maintaining sound financial health of the hospital is the responsibility of this division. Financial planning is the major activity of this division. The main functions are preparation of budget, investment plan, raising working capital, balancing income and expenditure fixing and charging reasonable fees, controlling unproductive expenditure, disbursing salaries of the staff regularly on time, supply of medicine, maintenance of equipment and machinery by incurring necessary expenditure and all other matters concerning finance

Information

The growth of information technology has necessitated creation of information division in a hospital. For efficient management of hospital, lot of information/data has to be collected and stored. Broadly, the information required may be classified into two heads viz., (1) External Information (2) Internal Information. The former includes such information as Population within the radius of 10 KMS, Climatic, conditions, Patient strength, health awareness of people, available medical facilities, competition, latest developments in medical profession, technology growth, capabilities of experts, level of thinking, modern amenities and knowledge base. Internal information concerns with information about patients, treatment given, method adopted, accounts, salary and promotion of employees and other relevant details.

Information gathering should be hospital specific. All information about the hospital should be at one place. This should be accessible to all those concerned with decision making, Computers have made this job easy.

Equipments and Machinery Section

A modern hospital has to be well equipped with latest machinery and required equipments. While buying these equipments, its usage and investment should be considered. It requires money. People need to be trained periodically and equipments are to be maintained properly. Optimum use of equipments should be the aim of this section.

Patients service Division

This is a core division of the hospital. Service should be the motto of this division. The main tasks are examining patients, consultation, medicine, accommodation in case of hospitalization both for patient and one of the supporting relative, facilities, proper guidance, cordial and peaceful environment. "Service to humanity is service to God" should be the principle. Training in human relations is quite essential for this department. Patient's satisfaction and contentment of relatives should be the aim of this division

Government and Semi Govt, Section

Hospital is a social institution. It has social responsibility of implementing govt and semi governmental schemes. Family planning, child development, child health and Health center need to be promoted to create health awareness among people. Puls Polio, Diabetic Centre, Heart related diseases and information about new diseases should be provided and people need to be educated on all health matters. This helps in image building and creating brand equity for the hospital.

Educational Section

Some hospitals are attached to medical colleges. In such cases, it is better to create separate wing for educational purpose. Some patients do not like to go to such hospitals as they fear that there will be experimental treatment to the patient. Private hospital should provide services of experts and build an image that patient is an important person for the hospital.

Human Resource Development

In managing hospital, technical, non-technical, professional, clinical, non-clinical, skilled and unskilled workers participate. They need to be categorized and enhancing their efficiency should be the aim. The success of any organization depends on the efficiency of its people Training and development of staff on periodical and continuous basis on Positive Attitude, Behavioral pattern and human relations would go a long way in developing the staff.

Co-Ordination

When the organizational work is divided into different sections, there is a greater need for co-ordination and integration of these sections. The top management should take care of this function.

Whether the hospital is small or big in size, professional management is key to its success.