



MEDICAL SERVICES; QUALITY & ITS ATTRIBUTES

1. MBBS, MCPS, FCPS (OBGY)
MCPS, DCPS, (Health Professions
Education)
Diploma in Advanced Gynecological
Endoscopic Surgery (France)
Gynecological Endoscopist
(European Academy)
Professor Fatima Jinnah Medical
University /
Sir Ganga Ram Hospital Lahore
2. Assistant Professor
3. Assistant Professor

Correspondence Address:
Professor Zohra Khanum
Gynae Unit 3, FJMU/SGRH, LHR
zohradr@yahoo.com

Article received on:
09/11/2015

Accepted for publication:
19/01/2016

Received after proof reading:
10/03/2016

INTRODUCTION

Healthcare service quality is a complex process. It is integrated and dependent on certain factors. It can be defined as constantly providing the patient effective, efficient & efficacious health care service according to latest guidelines & set standards.¹ It is also giving the right treatment to the right patient at right time in right situation.² It is multifactorial and is dependent on multiple factors. The factors responsible for comprehensive quality health delivery are integrated & interlinked. Governance has a clear & major role in provision as well as quality maintenance of health services. These factors vary from place to place but there are certain fundamental factors that need to be identified. The factors may be related to health care provider, health care seeker and related to the facility of health care. So It is important to define the basic pillars, parameters and strategies for the health care service quality development as well as its continuous improvement. The quality of health care has certain characteristics & It has certain associations as patient satisfaction³ loyalty⁴, and profitability.⁵

The factors related to service providers are

Professor Zohra Khanum¹, Dr. Amna Khanum², Dr. Fatima Khanum³

ABSTRACT: A better health care delivery system is dependent on many factors. For effective health delivery, its important to identify those factors. **Objectives:** This study was conducted to study the factors responsible for health care delivery system in a tertiary care hospital. **Study design:** An exploratory study. **Period:** June 2015 to August 2015. **Methods:** The study was conducted at Sir Ganga Ram hospital. Fifty doctors were interviewed on a designed Performa to know the medical services quality & its attributes. **Results:** Quality of health services is influenced by the factors related to patients, health care system and factors related to health care providers. The factors related to patients were very important as seriousness for seeking health services was dependent on these factors. **Conclusion:** Health services are dependent on multiple factors. Factor related to patient's attitude towards health services needs to be addressed.

Key words: Medical services, Quality

Article Citation: Khanum Z, Khanum A, Khanum F. Medical services; quality & its attributes. Professional Med J 2016;23(3):350-353. DOI: 10.17957/TPMJ/16.3158

Competencies (knowledge, skills & attitudes), responsiveness, confidentiality & caring. The factors related to patient are patient social background, economical status, attitude toward itself.

It has certain associations as patient satisfaction³ loyalty⁴, and profitability.⁵ The standard defining & setting become even more difficult in the set ups where multiple health organizations, located geographically at different places are run & governed by the same set of SOP's. It becomes more complicated when we analyze certain factors for quality health provision at different levels. As in Pakistan the health care system is as follow.

1. Public health facilities (BHU, THQ, DHQ, Tertiary care hospitals, Specialty hospitals)
2. Private health facilities: These facilities are of different settings & standards providing the services ranged from OPD consultations to the major indoor facilities.

Although these set ups exist & are functional but practical integration, catchment area and referral

system is lacking

A study was conducted in Gynae unit 3 for exploring the attributes of the quality health care. This study can be a concept study. Further detailed study can be conducted for better understanding.

METHODS

This study was designed as qualitative, exploratory study. The interviews were conducted in Sir Ganga Ram hospital, Lahore from June 2015 to August 2015. Inclusion criteria was registered doctors working in different clinical departments voluntary participants. Exclusion criteria was doctors who were not volunteer. There were 50 participants (registered medical doctors) working in different capacities & titles as consultants, medical officers, residents and house officers. It was the voluntary participation & it was kept anonyms. The structured designed perform was circulated among the participants. Performa included the attributes for the effective health care delivery to the patients coming for service seeking in hospital.

All participants were introduced to the purpose of study & the performa. The performa included the three main domain factor related to health care facilities, factors related to health care providers & factors related to the patients. These factors were further explored in details.

Factors	Variables
Factors related to Patients	Demographic variables Social variables Illness
Factors related to Health Care facilities	Resources Facilities
Factors related to care providers	Motivation Competency Availability

Table. Factors related to Quality of Medical services

RESULTS

The results of the study showed that among the three main domains, certain findings related to each domain were persistently identified.

The results showed that although regarding the health quality services, a reasonable burden lies on the service provider’s core competencies related to knowledge, skills & attitude but at the same time it is equally important that additional competencies of health providers i.e., communication skills, situation handling, life long learner, motivation, leadership qualities, counseling skills and familiarity with modern technology.

One very important finding was identified as the socio demographic variables of the doctors. It has the reasonable link with the motivation of the doctor. Physician job satisfaction was important for providing good health services. Physician competency was one important factor for quality health service but it was linked to experience as well as with the emotional intelligence.

Factors related to patients were socio demographic factors. It included patients education level, living place (urban / village), patients believes in treatment, affordability for the treatment. Patient cooperation was an important factor but this factor was dependent on other factors even, clear communication between patient & doctor. Patient disease with diagnosis was also identified as important factor. The patient who were with the diagnosis of better prognosis were more firm & regular in seeking their treatment.

As patients have liberty about the place of seeking health care, no area boundary or referral system is functional, so lot of burden on the tertiary hospital. Work distribution was un even. As limiting lines for the private as well as other health care facilities are not practiced, there was unrealistic work load in the hospital. Even certain very simple cases that may have been dealt at primary or secondary level were also entertained here. This makes the in mismatch between the resources & utility.

Furthermore as the services in the public hospital are free, patient satisfaction was variable. Some patients valued it as free treatment but some patients took it in non-serious way. It was observed that some patients had visited at more the two places for seeking the treatment for the same complaint. Patient social background and education level was identifies as an important factor from patient side.

Regarding health care facilities it was observed that it is inappropriate use of the tertiary care level as patients with simple disease were also coming to this hospital either they have been treated at secondary or primary level hospitals. As data maintenance is not appropriate, repetition of the investigations added an additional burden on the health facilities.

DISCUSSION

Health care delivery is a complicated process. It is dependent on different factors. These factors are organizational (infrastructure, human resource, facilities, organizational vision & mission). To define quality and further standard setting become more complexed in this context when for better & effective patient care following concerns are addressed. These are related to three main domains.

1. Health services
 - a. Services availability
 - b. Accessibility
 - c. Persistence of services
 - d. Facilities / technology at services
 - e. Comprehensiveness at service place
 - f. Environment
 - g. Equity
 - h. Amenities
2. Health care providers
 - a. Availability
 - b. Competency
 - c. Attitude / motivation
 - d. Caring
 - e. Professionalism
3. Patients
 - Accessibility to health care services

- Affordability by the patient
- Attitude
- Continuity

Organizational factors are dependent on the finances & budgeting. In the study it was observed that as there was mismatch between the workload & the facilities, so quality aspects were meet with difficulty instead of all organizational effort. Regarding the human resources, overburden staff in certain situations and lack of external motivational factors lead to compromised services. This is consistent with already published studies in which it was found that good human resource management drives service provider satisfaction & loyalty.⁶ Health care provider attitude about the patient care has a strong influence on the quality of the health service provided. The mismatch between the work responsibility & payment also lead to demotivation. This has been also mentioned in other study.⁷ Regarding the patients coming for treatment, a very important factor was identified as the socio demographic background of the patients. In my study it was observed that patient age, disease, education, social class has a correlation with the attitude of the patient towards the health seeking. It correlates with already published study.⁸

As demand for health services is increasing day by day, certain sound strategic planning is need of time to meet the effective and standard medical services provision.

CONCLUSION

Health delivery is a complicated process, attributed to certain factors. For quality health delivery, its important to focus the three main domains including facilities, professionals and patient education.

Further studies may be required at different levels of health delivery system that can guide for further guide lines.

Copyright© 19 Jan, 2016.

REFERENCES

1. MosadeghradAM (2013). **Healthcare service equality: Towards a broad definition.** International Journal of

Health Care Quality Assurance, 26 (3): 203-219.

2. Mosadeghrad AM (2012). **A Conceptual frame- work for quality of care.** MatSocMed.24 (4): 251-261.
3. Choi K, Lee H, Kim C, Lee S (2005). **The service quality dimensions and patient satisfaction rela- tionships in South Korea: comparisons across gender, age and types of service.** Journal of Ser- vices Marketing, 19 (3): 140-9.
4. Boshoff C, Gray B (2004). **The relationships be- tween service quality, customer satisfaction and buying intentions in the private hospital industry.** South African Journal of Business Man- agement, 35 (4): 27-37.
5. AlexanderJA, WeinerBJ, GriffithJ (2006). **Quali- ty improvement and hospital financial perfor- mance.** Journal of Organisational Behaviour, 27 (7): 1003-1029.
6. Mosadeghrad AM, Ferlie E, Rosenberg D (2011). **A Study of relationship between job stress, quality of working life and turnover intention among hospital employees.** Health Services Man- agement Research Journal, 24 (4): 170-181.
7. Mosadeghrad AM, Ferlie E, Rosenberg D. (2008). **A study of relationship between job satisfac- tion, organizational commitment and turnover intention among hospital employees.** Health Services Management Research, 21 (4): 211-227.
8. Ko KD, Kim BH, Park SM, Um CS, Shin DW, Lee HW (2012). **What are patient factors as- sociated with the quality of diabetes care?** BMC Public Health, 12: 689.



AUTHORSHIP AND CONTRIBUTION DECLARATION

Sr. #	Author-s Full Name	Contribution to the paper	Author=s Signature
1	Professor Zohra Khanum	First Author	
2	Dr. Amna Khanum	Second Author	
3	Dr. Fatima Khanum	Third Author	