

Patient Satisfaction And Awareness Of Private Hospitals' Ancillary Services

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Abstract

Healthcare is a rapidly expanding industry that includes not only medical treatments but also professional care and high-quality patient services. Fifty-eight per cent of hospitals in the nation are in the private healthcare sector. To assist various services in a hospital, there are ancillary services that add an extra benefit to the hospital for the services provided. Patients in private hospitals are the focus of this study, where the percentage measure is used in this study to assess patients' awareness of ancillary services in private hospitals that are NABH entry-level accredited.

Keywords: Hospital, Healthcare, Private Hospital, Service Quality, Patient Satisfaction, Service Awareness, Ancillary services.

INTRODUCTION

Hospitals are healthcare facilities that treat patients using specialised medical personnel, nursing personnel, and medical equipment. In recent years, hospitals have evolved from simply being places where people go for medical care to becoming settings where people can seek holistic recovery. One of the most intricate operations that an organisation engages in is healthcare. Other service organisations cannot be compared to the managerial approach. Due to increased community health awareness, Indian healthcare is expanding quickly.

The Latin word "hospes" (which means visitor or stranger) is whence the term "hospital" gets its name. It comes from the same source as words like "hospice," "hostel," and "hospitality." Consequently, a hospital can be understood etymologically as a location where sufferers who are strangers go to receive care. Over time, hospitals have undergone changes. They were originally established as charitable institutions to help the weaker and poorer members of society. The hospital is now more than just a place where society goes for medical care; it is also a place where people go to find their whole healing processes and services. The social feature of modern healthcare is that it provides significant benefits to patients as well as

Patient/ Client satisfaction is an important outcome measure guiding quality improvement in the healthcare arena while the patient-centred care movement places increasing importance on patient

engagement in clinical decision-making. Patient satisfaction is considered as one of the desired outcomes of healthcare and it is directly related to utilization of health services. When patients are dissatisfied, they can undertake a different kind of action. One can express dissatisfaction by never visiting the healthcare provider again.

Patient satisfaction belongs to the service dimension. To create a culture of customer service excellence in hospitals and achieve outstanding patient satisfaction, there is a need to understand the intangible aspects of perception and expectation that contribute to patient satisfaction. The implementation of services especially its Awareness in a hospital is vital to patient satisfaction

Patient experience of healthcare provisions, including patient satisfaction, has become an important outcome measure for healthcare organizations. Patient experience encloses the range of interactions that patients have with the healthcare system. These include health plans from doctors, nurses and administrative staff in hospitals and other healthcare facilities. Understanding patient experience is the key step in moving toward patient-centred care. Assessing patient experience along with other components such as effectiveness and safety care is essential to providing a complete picture of healthcare quality.

Patient satisfaction is seen as a progressive factor but cannot guarantee that the patient will continue to be loyal to the doctor or the facility. The success and positive character of the patient in relation to the quality of services, which is a driving element for patient satisfaction. Awareness is a conscious recognition of a surrounding, product or service. Awareness gives insight and confidence in one's surroundings. In the case of awareness in a hospital, while a patient is in a sensitive mode, the awareness around especially about the services, gives confidence about the environment they are in.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Oliver (1980) found that customer satisfaction can be affected by expectation and disconfirmation. The expectation is seen as an adaptation level or a reference point used to compare actual performance with perceived performance. If perceived performances are higher than the reference point, it results in positive disconfirmation. If the perceived performances are lower than the expectation, it results in negative disconfirmation. These disconfirmation effects will make the post-decision deviate from the adaptation level.

Gronroos (1984) discovered that corporate image is extremely important for service organizations because customers can typically see the firm and its resources when they use service as it requires an interaction between customers and the service providers. He found that the corporate image forms as a result of how customers perceive the components of the firm that they can see. The most salient part that customers can see and perceive is the firm's service. Therefore, the image may be built up mainly by the technical and functional quality of the firm's service.

De Silva and Valentine (2000) express that; Patient satisfaction embodies the patient's perceived need, his expectations from the health system, and his experience of health care. This multi-dimensional concept includes both medical and non-medical aspects of the hospital.

Jamal and Naser (2002) propose that customer satisfaction is based not only on the decision of customers towards the reliability of the delivered service but also on customers' experiences with the service delivery method.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To find out the awareness of clients with services offered in multi-Speciality hospitals

RESULT ANALYSIS METHODS

The exact steps or methods used to locate, pick, analyse, and evaluate data pertaining to a topic are known as the research methodology. The methodology portion of a study enables the reader to assess the general validity and reliability of the study. It includes theoretical analysis and is systematic in form.

This study's methodology made it possible to gather responses from Cochin City, which is a part of the Ernakulam District. The investigation was conducted at four NABH entry-level hospitals in the city of Cochin. These hospitals have 100 to 150 beds available. For this investigation, both primary and secondary data were employed. The chosen research design was descriptive. Utilising both primary and secondary sources, data was gathered.

Data were collected from four Hospitals; A, B, C and D and 30 (25 per cent) respondents each combining a total of 120 respondents for the study.

Of 120 patients who are respondents, 50 (42 per cent) are male and 70 (58 per cent) are female which is the majority share of the total respondents.

DEDUCEMENT

Awareness level of multi-speciality medical services

A hospital is said to be multi-speciality if it has more than one medical speciality to it. Out of the 120 in-patient respondents, 102 (85 per cent) are aware of the hospital's multispeciality services and 18 (15 per cent) are not aware of the hospital's multi-speciality services. The patients who were aware of the services were satisfied and were content to know that the hospital hosts multi-speciality medical treatments.

Awareness of healthcare programs, medical camps and other social services

Hospitals commonly host health care programs, medical camps and other social services such as blood donation camps and health screening camps.

Out of the 120 in-patient respondents, 102 (85 per cent) are aware of the hospital's healthcare programs, medical camps and other social services and 18 (15 per cent) are not aware of the hospital's healthcare programs, medical camps and other social services. The patients who are aware are satisfied and feel a sense of contentment due to the goodwill of the hospital and its interest in society's betterment.

Awareness of the online appointment system

Technological advancements have been a part of various sectors where healthcare and hospitals have been at the forefront in some aspects such as online appointment systems. This has enabled a smooth system in the hospital where overcrowding and confusion have been eliminated.

Out of the 120 in-patient respondents, 40 (33 per cent) are aware of the hospital's online appointment services and 80 (67 per cent) are not aware of the hospital's online appointment services. Unfortunately, a majority of 40 (33 per cent) patients are not aware of the hospitals' online services. This has led to disappointment among the patients due to the lack of awareness.

Awareness of hospital pharmacy services

Pharmacy services are provided in hospitals to ease the stress of the patients while they focus on their health treatment.

Out of the 120 in-patient respondents, 109 (91 per cent) are aware of the hospital's pharmacy services and 11 (9%) are not aware of the hospital's pharmacy services.

Awareness of non-medical services

Non-medical services refer to the additional services such as the canteen, feeding rooms, by-standers lounge area and coffee shops.

Out of the 120 in-patient respondents, 95 (79 per cent) are aware of the hospital's nonmedical services and 25 (21 per cent) are not aware of the hospital's non-medical services.

Staff briefing of available services and their access

Staff briefing is an initiative taken by the hospital to inform the patients about its available service to make the hospital experience less stressful. Briefing of services adds to the awareness of patients and is a bonus to Patient Satisfaction.

Out of the 120 in-patient respondents, 78 (65 per cent) have been briefed by the staff regarding the available services and their access which makes them aware of the hospital services. 42 (35 per cent) have not been briefed by the staff about the available services and their access.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

85 per cent of patients are aware of the hospital's multi-speciality services. 66.7 per cent of patients are not aware of the hospital's healthcare programs, medical camps and other social services. A large population of patients 75 per cent are not aware of the hospital's online appointment services. 90.8 per cent of patients are well aware of the hospital's pharmacy services. 79.2 per cent of patients are aware of the hospital's non-medical services such as canteen, lounge area, feeding rooms, etc. 65 per cent of patients have been briefed by the hospital staff regarding the available services and the process to utilise the. Awareness of services creates a sense of relief, comfort and trust in the hospital and the patient feels important and understood.

The hospital must ensure People Relations Officers (PRO) are appointed to ensure the awareness as well as the delivery and experience of the hospital services. Visible boards or an information brochure can be handed over to the patient during the registration process.

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