

QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES PROVIDED FOR PATIENTS WITH ORTHOPEDIC DISEASES IN INTEGRATED AMBULATORY OF A COUNTY EMERGENCY CLINICAL HOSPITAL

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Abstract

The need to improve the quality of medical services provided in the outpatient clinic to patients with orthopedic diseases is supported by the needs and expectations of modern society in accordance with technological and therapeutic advances. Given the fact that there is a legal basis in Romania regarding the conditions for providing medical assistance, medicines and medical devices within the social health insurance system, it is possible to establish well-defined standards. This paper is part of a complex study that analyzes the provision of medical services to patients with orthopedic problems, thus conducting a retrospective study based on satisfaction questionnaires addressed to these patients in the Integrated Outpatient Clinic of the County Clinical Emergency Hospital Oradea during 01.07.2019 - 31.02.2020 will increase the level of knowledge. These questionnaires provide information on the perception that patients, the third party payer or other service providers have about the organization. Thus, it was proved that the reputation of the County Clinical Emergency Hospital Oradea and of the doctors from this institution have a major contribution for attracting patients with orthopedic diseases in the integrated outpatient clinic in order to benefit from medical services. A percentage of 85% of patients were satisfied with the medical services provided in the Integrated Outpatient Clinic, 77.5% considering the level of the Integrated Outpatient Clinic to be good or very good. The short waiting time and the observance of the appointments have contributed to the increase of the degree of satisfaction regarding the medical services provided.

Key words: outpatient, orthopedics, quality management, integrated ambulatory

INTRODUCTION

Implementing a continuous quality development strategy for medical care services is an important component of the processes of improving the health system. Currently, medical institutions are motivated to organize structures for quality management, prevention of medical risks and adjustment of current practices to the standards of evidence-based medicine. (Armean P. et al., 2002)

According to the WHO, quality means providing each patient with a set of diagnostic and therapeutic acts that ensure the best outcome for their health according to the current state of scientific knowledge, with the lowest cost and risk. At the same time, it is necessary for the patient to be as

satisfied as possible with the procedures, results and human contacts in the respective health organization. (Panaite N. et al.,2011; Gheorghe I.L et al, National School of Public Health and Management , Romania, 2006)

Given the fact that there is a legal basis in Romania regarding the conditions for providing medical assistance, medicines and medical devices within the social health insurance system, it is possible to establish well-defined standards. These standards are established and controlled by the National Authority for Quality Management in Health (NAQMH/ANMCS). International regulations on quality management systems are currently established by the standards ISO 9000: 2015 (ISO.org, 2020) which describe the concepts and fundamental principles of quality management, they being universally applicable in the field of health.

The quality of health services, unlike that of other tangible goods, cannot be assessed until they have been provided. Patients' reaction is subjective, as it is based on expectations and perceptions that may vary from person to person or even to the same person at different times. A systematic action to assess perceived quality requires tools capable of monitoring the expectations of all patients. (Panaite N. et al,2011)

The technical quality of medical care is usually related to technical competence, compliance with clinical protocols and practice guidelines, use of infection control measures, information and counseling, integration of health services, efficient management. Its existence leads to an effective and efficient work environment, positive treatment results, followed by patient satisfaction and, last but not least, provider satisfaction. (National School of Public Health and Management , Romania, 2006). One of the problems identified in the research conducted by the author of this paper on ensuring adequate technical quality was the need of a diagnostic protocol development for all elderly patients with fractures, for a correct diagnosis and appropriate therapeutic conduct. (Bancsik K. et al, 2019)

Quality assessment involves the systematic identification of the current level of quality achieved by a health unit or a system, and consists in quantifying the level of performance according to certain standards. The quality assessment process begins with identifying areas that can be improved. (Popa F. et al,2008)

Patient satisfaction is an important measure of organizational performance, as it synthetically combines: the organizational context in which the care process takes place, the patient's experience in interpersonal relationships that characterize the interface with the organization, the professional content of the service received, even if the patient has no competence. necessary to enable it to indicate the technical characteristics and clinical quality of an intervention or service. (Furtunescu F. et al ,2010)

MATERIAL AND METHOD

A retrospective study was performed based on satisfaction questionnaires addressed to patients with orthopedic diseases in the specialized Outpatient Clinic of the County Clinical Emergency Hospital Oradea(CCEHO/SCJUO) between 01.07.2019 - 31.02.2020. The questionnaires contained a set of 25 questions regarding the conditions under which the medical services are provided within the County Clinical Emergency Hospital Oradea, respectively in the integrated Outpatient Clinic. A number of 40 questionnaires were awarded in the period studied by the author of this paper to 40 patients, the exclusion criteria being the lack of patient consent and age <18 years.

The questionnaires contain questions that assess:

- a) Information on the hospital unit chosen by the patient
- b) The degree of patient satisfaction regarding the hospital unit
- c) Patients' satisfaction with medical services
- d) General data about the patient

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The identification of individual specific factors

Recognition, grouping and analysis of individual specific factors of patients who have received medical services in the Orthopedic cabinet within the Integrated Outpatient Clinic is essential for identifying consumers of medical services. Thus, the study shows that there is an unequal distribution between patients presented in the Ambulatory clinic, the ratio being 1,857 women to one man, 67% of people presented in the Ambulatory came from urban areas and most patients (67.5%) were registered in the age category 50-70 years, centralized data in Table 1.

Table 1

Individual specific factors

18-30 years 0p	Age						Gender		Living area	
	30-40 years 5p	40-50 years 3p	50-60 years 12p	60-70 years 15p	70-80 years 4p	80-90 years 1p	M	F	Urban	Rural
							14	26	27p	13p

Note: p – number of patients

The reasons for choosing the Integrated Outpatient Clinic

Identifying the main reason for choosing the healthcare provider is necessary in order to highlight the main factors that attract service consumers (patients). In Figure 1 we can see that the most important reasons for choosing the integrated outpatient clinic within the CCEHO/SCJUO

were the reputation of the hospital, the recommendation of the doctor or relatives / friends.

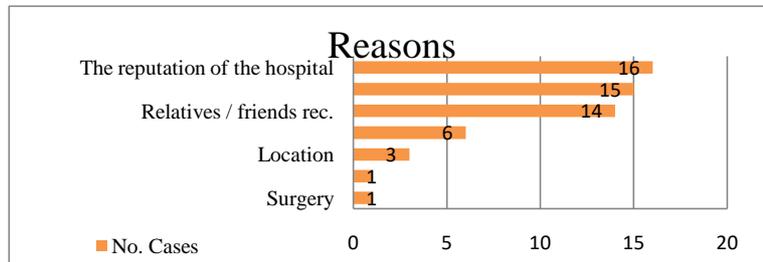


Fig. 1. The main reasons for choosing the integrated outpatient clinic

Specific statistical results regarding the medical services

Regarding the evaluation of the medical services provided in the Outpatient Clinic, we can see that: 77.5% of patients considered that the level of integrated ambulatory is good or very good, 85% of patients were satisfied with the medical services provided, data presented in Figure 2 and Figure 3.

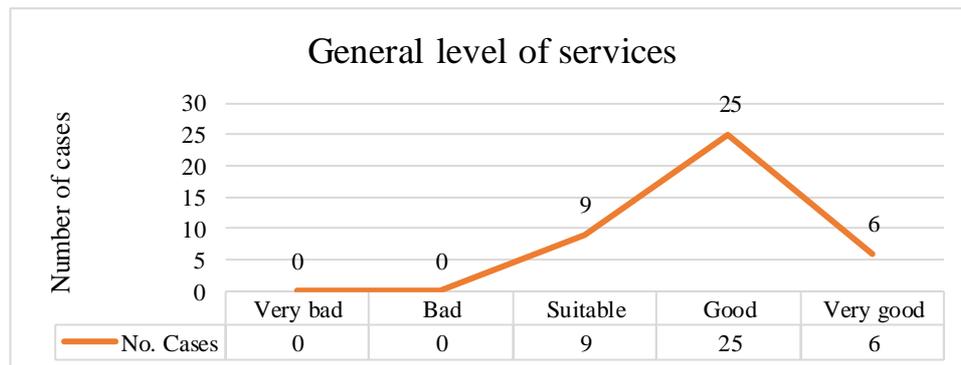


Fig. 2. Evaluation of the general level of medical services provided in the Outpatient Clinic



Fig. 3. The degree of satisfaction with the medical services provided in the Outpatient Clinic

Similar results were obtained in the evaluation of medical services provided in the Orthopedics and traumatology departments of County Clinical Emergency Hospital Oradea, 80.5% of patients being satisfied with the medical services provided. (Daina C. et al, 2018)

Long waiting time for the patient can be one of the most frustrating situations providing health care services. Three parameters were analyzed in the study: convenient scheduling hours, compliance with schedules and waiting time from the moment of entering the unit to the actual consultation. Thus, after analyzing and synthesizing the data from the questionnaires we can see that 87.5% of patients were very satisfied or satisfied with the convenient scheduling hours, 90% of patients were very satisfied or satisfied with compliance with appointments in the Outpatient Clinic respectively 95% of patients they were very satisfied or satisfied with the waiting time.

Ensuring optimal staff levels in terms of quantity is crucial to achieving the organization's objectives and maintaining cost-efficiency ratio in a sustainable way for the organization. Thus, 92.5% of patients were very satisfied or satisfied with the number of medical staff.

The location of the Outpatient Service/ Outpatient Clinic can facilitate the increase of the satisfaction regarding the provision of medical services as well as the attraction of new possible patients. Thus, it was found that 85% of patients were very satisfied or satisfied with the location of the hospital compared to 82.5% of patients who were very satisfied or satisfied with the location of the integrated Outpatient Clinic.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The reputation of the County Clinical Emergency Hospital Oradea and of the doctors from this institution have a major contribution for attracting patients with orthopedic diseases in the Integrated Outpatient Clinic in order to benefit from medical services.

2. Short waiting times and compliance with appointments have helped to increase satisfaction with the medical services provided.

3. Relocation of the Integrated Outpatient Clinic within the hospital would increase patient satisfaction and facilitate access to medical services.

5. A percentage of 85% of patients were satisfied with the medical services provided in the Integrated Outpatient Clinic, 77.5% considering the level to be good or very good.

6. Maintaining a quantitatively optimal staff had a major impact on the low waiting time and satisfaction with the medical services provided, 92.5% of patients were very satisfied or satisfied with their number.

6. The number of female patients is almost twice as high as the number of male patients who go to the integrated outpatient clinic for orthopedic consultations.

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