

**AN ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY OF CARE PROVIDED AT OUTPATIENT DEPARTMENT (OPD)
AT BH KINNIYA USING PATIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY*****Dr. Chandradasa, D.H.N.S.**

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Abstract

Out Patient Department (OPD) is considered as the shop window of the hospital. This is because the OPD renders the first contact of a patient (Pt) or an outsider who seeks the services of the hospital. Here the patients call the outdoor room, consult with the doctor for his/ her problem, take the medicine given by the doctor and go back. If the doctor feels that the outdoor patient entails admission and needs indoor treatment then the patient is kept in the ward. It is shown that a higher level of patient satisfaction could improve the compliance of patients to treatment, which could lead to encouraging outcomes of the disease itself. The study was carried out among 300 patients, giving a response rate of 85 %. The sample group consisted of females, 44.5% and males 40.5%. Less than 18 years of age group was omitted from the study. More than half of the patients agreed that the OPD could be simply located (63.2%) and was clean (78.7%). However, only a smaller amount decided that the seating facilities were inadequate (42.1%) and that the seating was contented and patient satisfaction is an imperative tool to measure the quality of care provided to the patient. In this study, patient satisfaction was restrained in relation to OPD services under five domains as well as individual features within each domain. Most of the patients presented gratification based on their involvement related to physical facilities, pharmacy services and consultation services in the OPD while it was poor for waiting time mostly for obtaining medicine and consultation (54.6%).

Keywords: Satisfaction, Quality of care, OPD.

INTRODUCTION

OPD is defined as a part of the hospital with assigned physical facilities and medical and other staffs, with regularly scheduled hours, to deliver care for patients who are not recorded as inpatients. It is a department where patients obtain diagnosis and/ or treatment but do not stay overnight. OPD is the first point of contact between patients with the hospital and called as the 'shop window' of the hospital. OPD is a place where the patient or the visitor easily gets an imprint regarding the hospital. This impression often inspires the patient's sensitivity to the hospital and therefore it is vital to ensure that OPD services provide a tremendous experience for customers. Further, the care in the OPD is thought to indicate the quality of services of a hospital and is reflected by patients' happiness with the services being provided. Satisfaction means a sensation of fulfillment. Patient satisfaction is one of the benchmarks by which the quality of health care services is evaluated. It is a subjective assessment against one's own expectations, thus providing crucial information on the mismatch of expectations and quality of care received by each individual. It is revealed that a higher level of patient satisfaction could enhance the compliance of patients to treatment, which could lead to positive outcomes of the disease itself.

METHODOLOGY

This was a cross-sectional study conducted among 300 patients over 18 years of age attending the OPD at Base Hospital Kinniya. Patients who were visiting the OPD for the first time included to the study.

Data were collected using a pretested self-administered questionnaire, which consisted of two sections: personal characteristics of the participants and their satisfaction with the OPD services received during their current visit. OPD services were assessed in relation to five domains: physical facility, services on registration, consultation services, pharmacy services and accessibility of the services. The questionnaire was designed after a detailed literature survey that considered studies conducted in developed as well as developing countries

RESULTS

The study was carried out among 300 patients, giving a response rate of 85%. The majority consisted of females (44.5%) and males (40.5%) and Muslim's ethnicity (82.4%). Most were married (77.4%), had passed G.C.E (Ordinary level) examination. The experience on health care services received by patients at the OPD fewer than five domains. More than half of the patients agreed that the OPD could be easily located and (63.2%) as clean (78.7%). However, only a smaller proportion agreed that the seating facilities were adequate (42.1%) and that the seating was comfortable (41.6%). Although 42.2% agreed that there were enough toilets in relation to the waiting area, participants (45.4%) claimed that they were clean. With regards to registration services, participants (72.6%) agreed that the registration staff was cooperative due to electronic patient registration system. With regard to pharmacy services, more than half, (53.9%) of the respondents agreed that the pharmacist explained the use of medicines clearly, while almost a similar proportion (56.4%) of patients were satisfied with the availability of medicines at the OPD. Consultation services consisted of seven items. The majority agreed that the doctor obtained a detailed history of their illness (53.9%) and listened carefully to what they said and understood their concerns (56%). However, only 35.5%

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claimed that the doctor did a relevant examination. With regard to accessibility to services, the proportion of patients satisfied with the waiting time for registration was (72.6%); to consult a doctor was 33.4%; and in the dispensary was 48.1%. The majority of patients were satisfied with the physical facilities (42.1%) and pharmacy services (55.1%). However, less than 50% of the patients were dissatisfied with accessibility in terms of waiting time for consultation and pharmacy (54.6%).

DISCUSSION

Patient satisfaction is an imperative to measure the quality of care given to the patient. In this study, patient satisfaction was assessed in relation to OPD services under five domains as well as individual characteristics within each domain. Most of the patients showed satisfaction based on their experience related to physical facilities, pharmacy services and consultation services in the OPD although it was dissatisfied in relation to waiting time for consultation and pharmacy. Consider patient registration services, it has an efficient e-health record system in BH Kinniya. Patient satisfaction being less owing to long waiting time at the doctor and dispensary is noteworthy. The present study exposed poor satisfaction with the waiting time for consultation and pharmacy service. Waiting time has been an imperative indicator in a study, which was conducted in BH Kinniya. It had also been one of the key performance indicators of patient satisfaction in the survey showed in Banphaeo Community Hospital in Samut Sakhon Province, Thailand. Therefore, if action could be taken to reduce the time spent by patients in waiting areas, the patient satisfaction could improve harshly. The bigger time taken for waiting area before consultation can be enhanced by introducing separate queues for old and new patients, since new patients want more time for history and examination.

Appropriate distribution of patients among doctors is also recommended. Further, introducing an appointment system for the patient is beneficial. In this appointment system, patients are given appointments according to time schedules within different intervals. It would also prevent interruption of the patient's daily routine and working agenda.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In overall, maximum number of the OPD patients were satisfied based on their experience associated to physical facilities, pharmacy and consultation services in the OPD. In contrast, it was poor for waiting time applied specifically for dispensary and consultation. Also, specific facilities such as toilets and seating needed more enhancement. Authorities need to address the issue of waiting time by presenting an appointment system. Strengthening the organization and empowering patients to be responsive towards the cleanliness of hospital is also suggested.

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