

PATIENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF TERTIARY HEALTHCARE IN A DEVELOPING ECONOMY

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INTRODUCTION

Patients perception of quality of health care involves:

- goodness of the match between patients total need and the act of service given
- perceived outcomes resulting from care received
- evaluation of the entire experience of seeking and receiving care

The importance

- patients are the central consumers of healthcare
- It affects patients choice of health plan or care provider
- It affects patients compliance with treatment plans, likelihood of return to care and willingness to pay for services
- assessment of these perceptions is useful in making healthcare services more responsive to peoples needs and expectations
- It affects the level and seriousness of malpractice claims
- As a basis for improvement in health care delivery

Objectives of this study

- To identify the areas of unmet needs and the causative factors, in order to draw the attention of the health care managers to the patients point of view on the quality of healthcare

Patients' perception of quality of health care

MATERIALS AND METHODS

- This is a descriptive study
- It was carried out on in-patients at the National Orthopaedic Hospital Igbobi-Lagos, Nigeria
 - A total of 214 in-patients chosen by systematic random sampling were used
 - Interviewer administered questionnaires were used
- Questionnaire was pre-tested at the general out-patient department, which is some distance away from the wards
 - Prior to the administration of the questionnaires, permission was sought and obtained from the Medical Director and the Ethics committee of the hospital
 - Informed consent was also sought from the patients
 - Analysis of the data was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences(SSPS), Version 10

RESULTS

Patients perceptions	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Availability of drugs in the pharmacy	93.5%	6.5%
Quality of time spent with the Dr	83.1%	16.9%
Level of co-operation between the healthcare providers	76.1%	24.9%
Pharmacists explanation of drugs	68.9%	31.1%
Period taken before admission and scheduling of operations	78.9%	21.1%
Delay at the service points	29.9%	71.1%
Uncleanliness of the restrooms	18.7%	81.3%
Expensive bills	41.8%	59.2%
Hospital food	25.7%	74.3%

CONCLUSION

- The evaluation of health care perception from the patients point of view is very important ,otherwise many areas of shortcomings would have gone unnoticed by health care managers
- From this study, the majority of complaints centered around long delays at the service points, poor maintenance of infrastructures and expensive bills.
- Suggested measures to reverse these negative perceptions include improved staffing, personnel training on attitude to patients, upgrading of facilities, reducing the cost of services and curbing of unnecessary delays as well as better funding of the health sector.

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