

An Assessment of the Effects of Service Management on Excellence in Oral Health

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Abstract

Oral health is an integral part of general health and has a huge impact on well-being and the Kenyan economies. In many parts of the world, an alarming increase of oral diseases, such as dental caries and oral cancer can be observed. Despite hundreds of studies involving thousands of individuals, we know remarkably little about how best to promote oral health. It is in this view that health service management should be implemented in our health facilities to propel the need on oral health and not just normal business. A survey was conducted in Nakuru town and used the following objectives; to assess factors affecting oral health in dental service management, to identify factors affecting the quality of health service management and to establish the relationship between Oral health Management and customer value proposition. A survey design was used and a purposive approach was applied in selecting the study. The selection was based on dental services within Nakuru Town. The total population was 26 comprised of 13 dental care Professionals and 13 front office staff. A census design was employed and data was collected using structured interviews. Data analysis was done by use of descriptive statistics. The research findings indicated that there is room for growth in terms of quality service delivery in all areas of management. This means out of the oral health management the dental care should be in opposition to educate the client on post dental care. The research recommends that dentists should address oral health with an integrated approach based on the prevention of common risks. Also health services managers working in a large facility require to have assistant managers and that department within a health facility are supposed to run smoothly with tasks and right people.

Key words: Oral health systems, Health Service Management.

Introduction

The dental team has long been encouraged by the UK Government to educate their patients in the surgery setting in order to promote good oral health, and prevent dental disease. The emphasis is on the advice available to the dental team on how to support patients to change their behaviour, rather than on shifts in the scientific basis of the content of that advice. It is evident that patients may not have adequate information on how to maintain their own oral health unless they are well informed. Primary care dentists and their teams have a pivotal role to play in providing health education to patients in the surgery setting. Guidance on the scientific content of the advice to be given is widely available. However, much more support could be provided for dental care professionals on the most effective ways to provide advice to patients.

Research Objectives

The paper was guided by the following objectives: to assess factors affecting oral health in dental service management, to identify factors affecting the quality of health service management and to establish the relationship between Oral health Management and customer value proposition.

Research Methodology

The research adopted survey a design of dental service providers and a census conducted to all the respondents. This study was conducted between 22nd September 2012 and 22nd November 2012.

The total population was 13 dental care Professionals (DCPs) and 13 receptionists who receive the clients in the dental clinics. All 26 respondents were interviewed.

Research Design

A survey design was used and a purposive approach was applied in selecting the study. The selection was based on dental services within Nakuru Town.

A desk research was used by obtaining the records of the clients which addressed questions on the existing levels of health management services. Interview sheets were used to get information that aided decisions and conclusions.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by the use of descriptive statistics where simple averages were done to determine the relationship between Oral health Management and customer value proposition. Data was presented by use of tables and simple line graph to indicate the relationships.

Results

The study revealed that, the dental care Professionals (DCP's) do not give adequate services to their clientele. This was reflected by the number of cases reported in the reception areas where the clients report whenever they needed the dental care. Many dentists still suffer and have losses with stagnant business. They have the old equipments for executing their services to the clients. The facilities for implementing the services are costly hence escalating the prices charged for dental care professionals. Every year the Kenya Dentists Association hold conferences but very few dental practitioners attend the conferences hence affecting the dental practice quality.

Conclusions

Dentists should address oral health with an integrated approach based on the prevention of common risks. Appropriate workforce planning and health systems strengthening are necessary to provide affordable oral health care for all.

Health services managers working in a large facility require to have assistant managers who direct activities in clinical areas, including nursing, surgery, therapy, medical records, or health information.

Health services manager working in a smaller facility will manage personnel, finance, facility operations, and admissions. This reflects on health service management which is the branch of management that is concerned with the planning, organising, staffing, directing, controlling and coordinating the delivery of health care services within a health facility.

Departments within a health facility are supposed to run smoothly and that the right people are in the right jobs, that people know what is expected of them, that resources are used efficiently and that all departments are working towards a common goal.

Therefore the health service management should be implemented in health facilities to propel the need on oral health and not just normal business.

Continuing Professional Development

Association should hold continuing professional development (CPD) lectures, delivered by both international and local experts on perionatology, orthodontics, third molar surgery, dentine sensitivity among others. These seminars will be a platform where members are able to gain valuable insight in various aspects of dental practice and will continue to strengthen position as credible CPD provider. CPD activities include: seminars, conferences, hands on courses, study groups, journal clubs and E-learning.

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