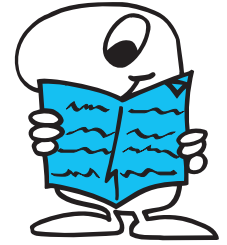


Initiative for Sub-District Support



Kwik-Skwiz
#27

A Barometer of District Hospital Management

About this Kwik Skwiz:

- It is aimed at management teams of health districts and of district hospitals
- It raises issues about managing District Hospitals in the context of the District Health System
- It provides a framework towards a well-managed District Hospital

File for quick reference

The Issue

In the past, Regional Hospitals and provinces often gave management support to District Hospitals. As part of national policy District Hospitals will form part of the District Health System (DHS). The District Hospital management team (executive officer, head of administration and manager for patient care) also form part of the management team of the DHS.

Management Teams need to

- find ways in which the hospital-based resources can be harnessed to strengthen the DHS
- assess performance
- plan changes, one step at a time.

The district hospital in the district health system

District Hospitals support Primary Health Care in the district. Patients are referred to the District Hospital from community health centres and clinics. The District Hospital provides level 1 (generalist) services to in-patients and outpatients and generally has between 50 and 200 beds¹. All have a 24-hour emergency service and an operating theatre. The District Hospital refers patients to Level 2 (Regional Hospitals) for more sophisticated (and more expensive) levels of care. (See Kwik Skwiz # 9 for ten features of a District Hospital).

Because a large proportion of resources (human and other) are concentrated in the District Hospital, it plays an important role in determining how well the health district performs as a whole. The District Hospital can play an important part in:

- The clinical management of patients referred from primary levels of care. (This assures that patients are treated at the appropriate level of care as well as assuring continuity of care.)
- Reaching out and supporting primary level services outside of the hospital.

This is done by:

- In-service clinical training for the district.
- Sharing of scarce human resources such as pharmacists, physiotherapists and doctors.
- Using capacity in financial and transport administration, inventory management and supplies, to assist clinic and community based primary care services.
- Sharing equipment.
- Use PHC morbidity and mortality data in service planning.

¹ National documentation indicates a range of between 30 and 400 beds.

Aiming to achieve core management objectives

In order to become a well-functioning district hospital, management needs to assess their performance against accepted criteria for the management of District Hospitals. Below is a suggested list of core objectives for managing a District Hospital. These are then further expanded with criteria of good performance.

Core Management Objectives

1. The hospital management works according to Goals and Objectives of a Strategic Plan.
2. The community plays a role in the management of the hospital.
3. Efficient and effective management systems are in place.
4. Hospital resources are managed well.
5. The hospital has clear policies and procedures to guide management and service provision.
6. The hospital has processes in place to improve quality.
7. Management encourages teamwork and promotes an enabling environment for staff.

In many district hospitals the situation does not yet measure up to these objectives. The checklist below assists management teams to assess how they are doing by following a stepwise approach:

- Use the checklist below and identify where changes need to be made.
- Prioritise those changes that would most improve patient care.
- Plan how to make the changes, step by step.
- Set up systems for monitoring progress.

It is often quite easy to make some changes such as introducing regular staff meetings. Other changes will take longer (e.g. monitoring patient satisfaction).

A checklist for assessing your district hospital management

1. Does the hospital management team work according to its Strategic Plan?

Criteria:

- a. A Strategic Plan is available providing the vision, mission and values of the hospital.
- b. The vision, mission and values statement is clearly displayed.
- c. An operational plan is available for the current year.
- d. The operational plan is based on a review of the previous year.

- e. The financial plan is linked to the service plan.
- f. A map showing the hospital's catchment area and the referral system is displayed.

2. How is the community involved in hospital management?

Criteria:

- a. There is a Hospital Board with community representation.
- b. The community is kept informed of the work of the hospital by means of an annual report.

3. How well do the hospital's management systems function?

Criteria:

- a. Routine hospital information is collected and analysed.
(E.g. is the national data collection form ID: HA01D completed every month?)
- b. Hospital performance is measured and acted upon. (See annexure A for a suggested list of indicators)
- c. Patient records are neat and complete.
- d. The retrieval rate of patient records is satisfactory.
- e. Births, deaths, communicable diseases and cases of child abuse are reported.
- f. Financial reports are available on-line.

4. How well are hospital resources being used?

4.1 Human resources

Criteria:

- a. Management encourages teamwork and a good working environment for staff.
- b. There are team meetings at each level of management at least monthly.
- c. Wards and units take management decisions involving their own activities.
- d. There are regular staff meetings, at least once a month.
- e. Staff are informed about management decisions.
- f. Each staff member has a job description.
- g. Complete staff records are kept.
- h. Staff absenteeism is monitored and acted on.

4.2 Financial resources

Criteria:

- a. Expenditure is monitored monthly against the budget.

- b. Internal audit reports are available and acted on.
- c. Revenue generation meets targets set.

4.3 Facility and equipment

Criteria:

- a. The facility is patient friendly:
 - The buildings and grounds are clean and well maintained.
 - There is access for people with disabilities.
 - There is clear sign-posting.
 - Telephone and / or intercom systems work.
 - Bathrooms and washing areas are clean.
 - Patients are free to communicate in the language/s of their choice.
- b. The wards are patient friendly:
 - Patients are able to call the nurses when in need.
- c. The facility and equipment is well-maintained
 - There is a maintenance plan for the facility and for equipment.
 - Essential equipment is available and functional (e.g. laryngoscopes).

4.4 Drugs and supplies

Criteria:

- a. There is evidence of proper management of stock levels.
- b. Essential drugs are available and appropriately used.

5. Does the hospital have appropriate written policies and procedures?

Criteria:

- a. Admission
- b. Discharge
- c. Referral
- d. Confidentiality
- e. Medical records
- f. Case management protocols
- g. Infection control
- h. Hygienic food handling
- i. Management of medical waste
- j. Deaths
- k. Contingencies
- l. Patient care including:
 - patients with special needs
 - safekeeping of patients' possessions
 - patients' rights (e.g. privacy)

6. Does the hospital focus on Quality Improvement?

Criteria:

- a. Quality improvement processes in each unit (e.g. clinical audit; nursing audit; proper nursing records).
- b. Adverse clinical incident monitoring.
- c. Peer review system (e.g. reviews of mortality, morbidity and patterns of drug use).
- d. Monitoring of patient perceptions.

RESOURCE MATERIALS THAT COULD ASSIST DISTRICT HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT TEAMS

- The role of the District Hospital in the DHS (Kwik Skwiz #9)
- How to monitor and manage absenteeism in hospitals (Kwik Skwiz #25)
- First Lady of the Northern Cape: A situation analysis of a district hospital (Health Systems Trust)
- Guidelines to conduct a district health expenditure review (Health Systems Trust; National Department of Health)
- Mapping for PHC (To determine the catchment population; Management Science for Health- Equity project)
- Guide to measure Client Satisfaction (Health Systems Trust)
- Hospital Strategy Project (National Department of Health)
- Hospital data collection Form ID: HA01D; Hospital capacity and Patient Throughout (National Department of Health)
- Eastern Cape Assessment Tool of priority management and clinical functions.
- Patients Charter (National Department of Health)

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Annexure A

Hospital performance indicators

There are many indicators of performance and only a few are listed below. Some norms (measurable targets) already exist. For some indicators, information will be easy to obtain but for other measures specific processes will need to be put in place.

Criteria	Performance measures/indicators
Are clients satisfied with the service provided?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Client satisfaction rate· Waiting time at Out Patient Department or the Pharmacy
Is the hospital doing the right things? (Being effective) <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Good diagnosis, treatment and care· Objectives and targets are met· Regulations and protocols are followed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Peri-natal mortality rate· Maternal mortality· Referral rate to higher levels of care· Mortality of children due to diarrhoea, measles and acute respiratory infections· Clinic audit meetings held
Is the hospital cost-effective? (Being efficient) Value for money for <ul style="list-style-type: none">· in-patient care· prescribing· use of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Cost per in-patient· In-patient care performance (e.g. bed occupancy rate, average length of stay, nurse : patient ratio)· Absenteeism rate of staff· Prescribing patterns and drug supply:<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Average number of drugs per encounter· % of drugs prescribed from the EDL for District Hospitals· % of scripts which contain drug name, strength, dose and duration
Are the services sustainable? The hospital stays within budget The level of services is sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Spending compared to budget· Payments collected from patients as a % of total hospital spending· % budget spent on maintenance of buildings and equipment

Please feel free to contact us and to visit our website at www.hst.org.za

The Initiative for Sub-District Support welcomes comments on this publication.
Any further queries could be forwarded to

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