

Summer Internship Program on “Apollo Institute Of Gastrosiences & Liver” at Apollo Multispeciality Hospitals Limited, Kolkata.

A STUDY OF IMPROVING HOSPITAL OUT PATIENT DEPARTMENT (OPD)

ABSTRACT

Service time and waiting time in hospitals are of growing importance in quality healthcare delivery. Long waiting times for health care is a critical issue in many countries. Many of the countries have now introduced benchmarks for that. The objective of this Poster is to study the Out Patient Department (OPD) of a hospital using **queuing network analysis**. The study aims to analyze the patient flow system by measuring the **length of stay, service and waiting time distribution of patients and waiting time between two consecutive services availed / treatment undergone / department visited were calculated in an Out Patient Department (OPD) of a multispecialty hospital.**

There are major differences in how waiting times are measured: waiting period for kind of care/ services the patient is waiting for; the parameters used; and where in the patient journey the measurement begins. I have investigated the waiting time for patients before and during availing any of the services of “**Apollo Institute Of Gastrosiences & Liver**” at **Apollo Multispeciality Hospitals Limited, Kolkata.**

Various descriptive statistics analyses of routine data for 120 patients determined the association between selected patient characteristics, service time and waiting time. The median time spent by a patient (between patients enters in the hospital, being seen by a physician / availing various services and leaves the hospital is 44 minutes (within a range of 7.59–420 minutes). Day of arrival, time of arrival and service/ treatment category were significantly associated with waiting time. Variability in waiting times could be addressed by more standardized hospital operations, but may also be influenced by other clinical or non-clinical factors that require further investigation.

INTRODUCTION

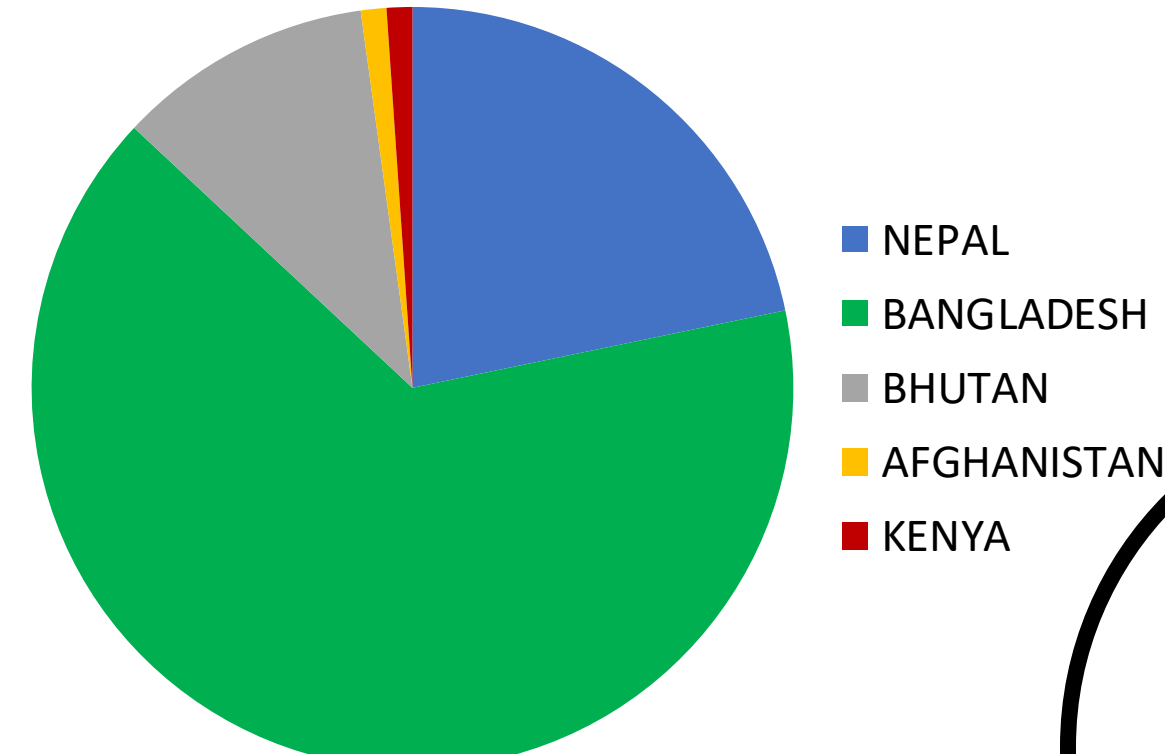
In today's competitive market, patient service time and waiting time have received more consideration in the quality delivery of healthcare than ever before. They play an important role in developing and maintaining quality healthcare delivery services. Patients undergo various treatments in outpatient units within the hospital system, but almost, patient's arrival and departure time from the hospital varies. Fernandes et al. (1994), Santos et al. (1994) identified that, the amount of time a patient waits to be seen, is of the one factors affecting the utilization and efficiency of health care services. According to Kurata et al. (1992), long waiting times are perceived as barriers to availing services by the patients. Patient waiting time and service time play important roles in attracting new business by the hospital. Mackey and Cole (1997) claimed that it is difficult for any health service organization, to sell services if patients are dissatisfied with waiting time. Moreover, waiting time becomes a factor in retaining existing patients. Fernandes et al. (1994) found that, a considerably large number of patients left outpatient departments because of extensive waiting times. Commonly cited factors affecting patient satisfaction in the literature include timely access to appointments, provider-patient relationships, academic versus private practice setting, overall wait times, and time spent with providers. Billing et al. (2007) and Zopf et al. (2008) have identified that, reduction in patient waiting times increases patient satisfaction in the outpatient department. However, some researchers have reported that the amount of time the medical staff spends with the patient may be a better predictor of patient satisfaction. Analysis of the data generated from the study, assessing the patients' waiting time in the outpatients' departments can be of use to hospital administrators, decision makers who address the issues of allocation human resources, logistics, infrastructures, scheduling and other internal standard operating procedures to ensure an effective health care delivery system.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research study was a cross sectional primary based observational study using a structured observational checklist in “Apollo Institute Of Gastrosiences & Liver” at Apollo Multispeciality Hospitals Limited, Kolkata.

A non-probability convenient sampling was used to select the patient entering in the hospital. The trained assistants to the research team were following/ accompanying in the patient care activities (starting from patients entering in the hospital till the disposal of the patients) during collection of data. A formal permission was obtained from the HR for conducting the study. **The study duration was of 9 week during busy days in the day shift.** The descriptive statistical method was used to analyze the collected data.

INTERNATIONAL PATIENT VISIT



IMPLICATIONS , RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSION

IMPLICATIONS:

- Long waiting times: One common issue in OPDs is long waiting times for patients to receive consultation. This can result in patient dissatisfaction and overcrowding in the waiting area.
- Inefficient appointment system: Ineffective appointment systems can lead to confusion and delays in patient scheduling, resulting in chaotic and disorganized OPD operations.
- Lack of coordination and communication: Poor coordination and communication between healthcare professionals in the OPD can lead to delays in patient care and fragmented services.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Streamline appointment system: Implementing an efficient appointment system can help reduce waiting times by ensuring proper scheduling, managing patient flow, and allocating sufficient time for each consultation. This can be achieved through digital appointment booking systems or optimizing manual appointment processes.
- Enhance communication and coordination: Implement effective communication channels and protocols among healthcare professionals in the OPD, such as regular team meetings, shared electronic patient records, and standardized referral systems. This will ensure seamless coordination and smooth transitions in patient care.
- Improve facility layout and patient flow: Analyze the physical layout of the OPD to ensure a smooth and organized flow of patients. Consider optimizing waiting areas, triage processes, and consultation rooms to maximize efficiency and minimize waiting time.
- Implement patient education and self-care initiatives: Educate patients about the importance of appointment adherence, self-care practices, and prevention techniques for common illnesses. This can help reduce unnecessary visits, optimize resource utilization, and enhance overall patient experience.

By addressing these implications and implementing these recommendations, OPDs can improve their operations, enhance patient satisfaction, and deliver high-quality outpatient healthcare services.

CONCLUSION:

Good service and timely treatment of the patient are necessary for the faster recovery of the patient. The outpatient department is a crucial first step for any medical treatment. It helps the patient recover or improves from a certain health condition.

Learning and value Additions done during internship:

- I learnt about the various processes in Operations of OPD, it gave me a different perspective to view how to handle so many patient at one time.
- Stress management.

Usefulness of internship:

- Personal and Professional growth
- Generally everyone forgets what they read theoretically but when applying practically, I was enjoying and learning as well.

Challenges faced during internship:

- Emotional and Mental Stress.
- Dealing with difficult patients or families: Interacting with patients or families who may be uncooperative, fearful, or distressed can be challenging.
- As an Intern I developed a strong interpersonal skills to effectively address their concerns, provide support, and maintain. I got to learn this from my mentor and the Doctors.

Difference between practical exposure and theoretical work:

- **Theoretical Knowledge** provides a foundation for understanding medical concepts, while **Practical Exposure** allows learners to apply that knowledge in real-world scenarios. A well-rounded healthcare professional should strive to strike a balance between the two, leveraging theoretical understanding to provide effective and evidence-based care to patients.

Suggestions to give to the organization

- Effective Communication with Patient is necessary and staffs can improve this.
- Implement Patient Triage: Utilize triage systems to efficiently prioritize patients based on their medical condition and urgency. This ensures that patients with critical conditions receive prompt attention while optimizing resources and reducing overall waiting times. Training of the staffs should be undertaken for regular intervals.

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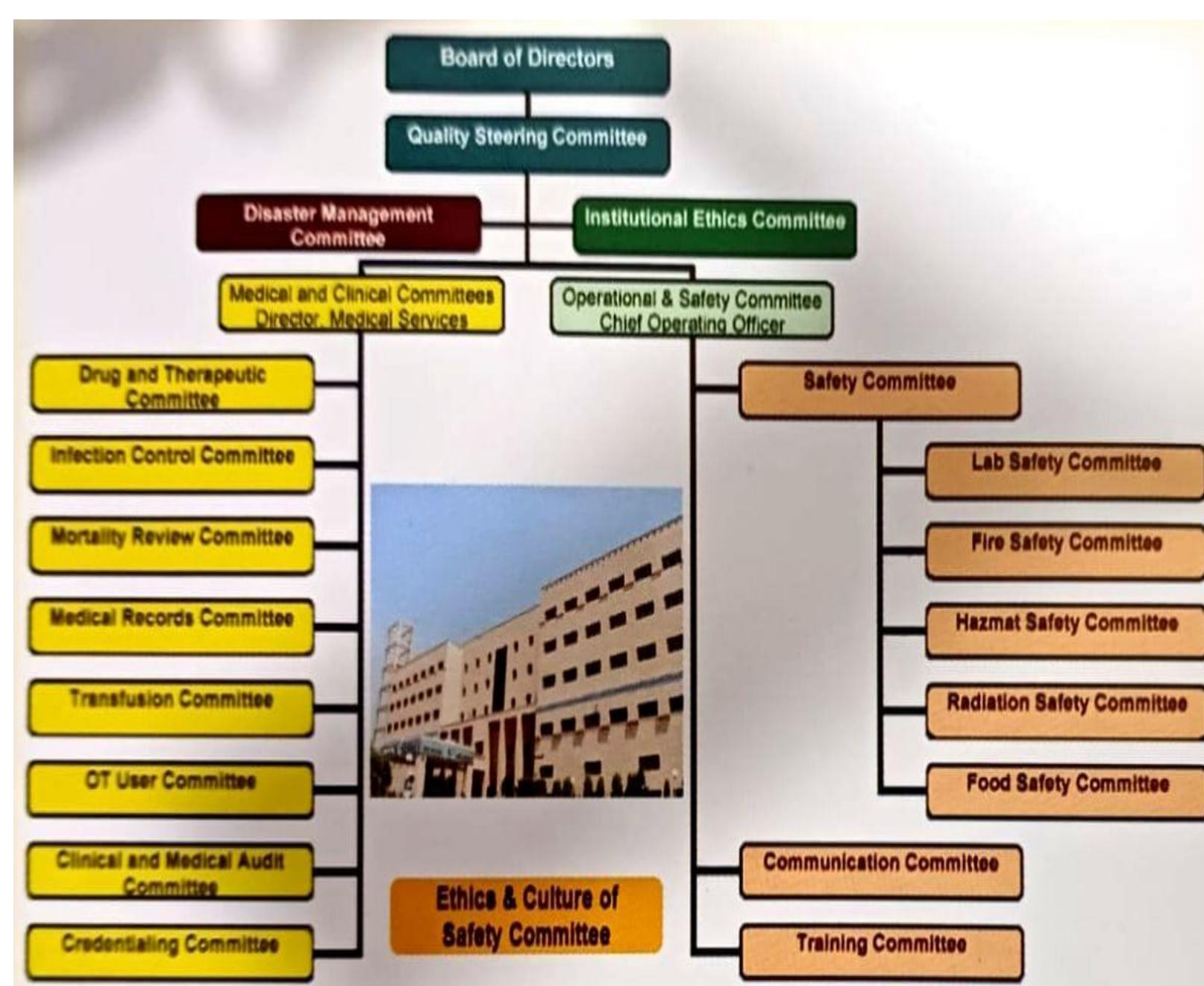
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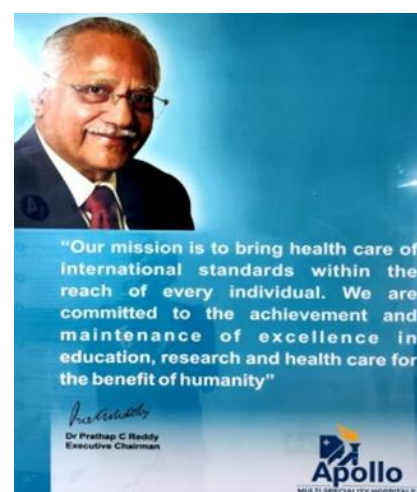
Organization Name: Apollo Multispeciality Hospitals Limited, Kolkata.



Organization Structure



About the Hospital:



Apollo Multispeciality Hospitals, Kolkata.

A 700-bedded multispecialty tertiary care hospital –Apollo Multispeciality Hospitals Kolkata, is a perfect blend of technological excellence, complete infrastructure , competent care and heartfelt hospitality – this is how the people, whom we have been fortunate to serve, define the hospital.

International & National Accreditations:

- ✓ **JOINT COMMISSION INTERNATIONAL**
- ✓ **NABL**
- ✓ **ISO 22000:2005 – HACCP CERTIFICATION**

