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ROLL NO: 1650

"Analysing Delay Factors in the Discharge Process of Insured Patients: Insights from a Multi-Specialty Hospital and Recommendations for Enhanced Turnaround Time"

Problem Statement:

The discharge process in healthcare facilities is a critical phase that directly impacts patient satisfaction, resource utilization, and overall operational efficiency. Despite its significance, delays in the discharge process persist, particularly among insured patients, leading to increased costs, overcrowding, and potential adverse effects on patient outcomes. This study aims to identify the underlying causes of these delays within a large multi-specialty hospital setting and propose recommendations to streamline the discharge process, ultimately improving turnaround times and enhancing overall healthcare delivery.

Research Question:

- "What are the key bottlenecks within the discharge process of insured patients in a large multi-specialty hospital, as evidenced by the Total Turnaround Time (TAT) calculation, and how do these bottlenecks impact overall efficiency?"
- "What patterns or trends exist in the queries received from external Third-Party Administrators (TPAs) regarding insured patient discharges over a three-month period, and how can analysis of these queries inform strategies to minimize query volume, thereby saving time and resources for in-house executives?"

Objective:

- The first objective is to calculate the TAT of overall discharge process of insured patients and to find out the bottlenecks in the sub process.
- The second one is to collect and analyse the queries sent by external TPA for a period of three months to suggest measures that are needed to be taken to reduce the number of queries, - which would result in savings of time and efforts of in-house executives.

Methodology

STUDY DESIGN: Cross sectional study

STUDY SETTING: Jindal Institute of Medical sciences, Hisar, Haryana

STUDY POULATION: 250 patients

1. INCLUSION CRITERIA:

Discharge of patients who opted for cashless hospitalization between working hours between (10 Am to 5 PM), Consideration of only private/GIPSA Insurance patients

2. EXCLUSION CRITERIA:

Discharge initiated in the time after working hours (from 5 pm to 10 AM), cash, ECHS, Haryana government patients not included in study

3. STUDY TOOL: MS Excel

DURATION OF THE STUDY: 3 months (20th March 2024 to 22nd June 2024)

SAMPLE SIZE: 250 patients

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE: Nonprobability convenient sampling technique

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE: HIMS of hospital (Aarogya), mail of the hospital and the registers maintained was used to check the time at which the authorization letter was sent to the respective insurance company, when was the approval received and when the patient was finally discharged respectively. Tracking sheet constituted of date of admission, date of discharge, UHID, patients name, insurance company and respective TPA, ward where the patient was admitted, time of discharge order, time at which file came at the TPA desk, time taken to send AL to the TPA, time of reverting and receiving query (if any generated), time to receiving the final approval, time of informing about the final approval to department, and time at which patient was finally discharged .

Data Collection Tools and Technique Used:

Turn Around Time	Elaboration	Data Collection Tool	Technique
TAT 1	Time Taken for discharge summary to reach the TPA department	Observation	Observation
TAT 2	Time taken to compile and send the final authorization letter to the external TPA	Through track sheet	Shadowing
TAT 3	Time taken to resolve query (if any)	Email timing	Shadowing
TAT 4	Time taken by the external TPA to give final approval after receiving AL	Email timing	Shadowing
TAT 5	Time taken for final patient discharge after receiving the approval from external TPA	Observation	Observation
TAT 6	Time taken for the overall discharge process, which starts from doctors' advice to discharge, with the patient emptying the bed	Addition of TAT 1, TAT 2, TAT 3, TAT 4, TAT 5	

Data Analysis:

1. Data analysis will be carried out using SPSS Statistics 26 to perform bivariate correlation to find out the vital sub processes affecting the overall TAT i.e. TAT6
2. Further MS Excel will be used to calculate Maximum, Minimum, Average time and Standard deviation of all TAT
3. For finding out vital categories of queries sent by the external TPA department, Pareto analysis is used.
4. Comparison between time taken by various private insurance company and GIPSA company to send approval after receiving authorization letter will be done using MS Excel
5. Comparison between standard time taken for each TAT and actual time taken for each TAT will also be done using MS Excel

Ethical Consideration:

- Informed consent will be obtained from all participants before data collection.

- Participant anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured throughout the study.
- Data will be securely stored and accessed only by authorized researchers.
- The study will adhere to ethical guidelines set forth by institutional review boards and regulatory authorities (Jatin, 2022)

References

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