

Summer Internship Program

Discharge Process at Apollo Hospital, Jayanagar, Bengaluru.



Apollo Hospital, Jayanagar, Bengaluru.

Apollo Hospital, Jayanagar, Bengaluru, is a super specialty hospital renowned for its comprehensive healthcare services and patient-centric approach. Established with a commitment to clinical excellence and affordable healthcare, it is a key institution within the Apollo Hospitals Group, one of Asia's largest healthcare providers. The hospital offers a wide range of medical specialties, advanced diagnostic facilities, and state-of-the-art infrastructure, catering to the diverse healthcare needs of the community in Bengaluru and beyond. Its dedication to quality and patient care has earned it a strong reputation in the region.

Vision and Mission

The vision of Apollo Hospitals is to bring healthcare of international standards within the reach of every individual. They are committed to the achievement and maintenance of excellence in education, research, and healthcare for the benefit of humanity. Their mission is to blend the best of technology and human compassion to provide comprehensive, cost-effective, and quality healthcare services that are accessible to all.



Problem statement

Discharge from the hospital is a very important indicator of the quality of care and patient satisfaction. There has been continuous striving to reduce the time of discharge to optimize the bed capacity and cut organizational costs besides achieving patient delight. It is thus an important area of research to identify the bottlenecks in the discharge process and suggest ways to resolve the issues.

Objectives

- To study the process of discharge of patients in the selected hospital
- To find out the time taken at each step of the discharge process
- To identify the factors leading to delay in discharge of patients and suggest solutions to reduce the discharge time



Methodology

- Study place - Apollo speciality Hospital
- Study population -All patients in the wards
- Study period-2 months
- Sampling technique- Quantitative techniques
- Inclusion Criteria - Cash and TPA patients
- Exclusion criteria - Day care/outpatients

SWOT Analysis: Hospital Discharge Process

Strength

- Defined Protocols : Standard operating procedures (SOPs) in place for discharge.
- Experienced Staff: Trained nursing and billing staff familiar with discharge formalities.
- EMR Integration: Use of Electronic Medical Records speeds up discharge documentation.
- Dedicated Discharge Desk: Separate unit/desk handling discharge cases streamlines communication.

Weaknesses

- Delay in Final Billing: Time-consuming billing processes, especially for insurance patients.
- Poor Interdepartmental Coordination: Delays due to waiting for final reports or doctor approval.
- Prolonged TAT (Turnaround Time).
- Lack of Discharge Planning: Patients and families not informed early about expected discharge time.

Opportunities

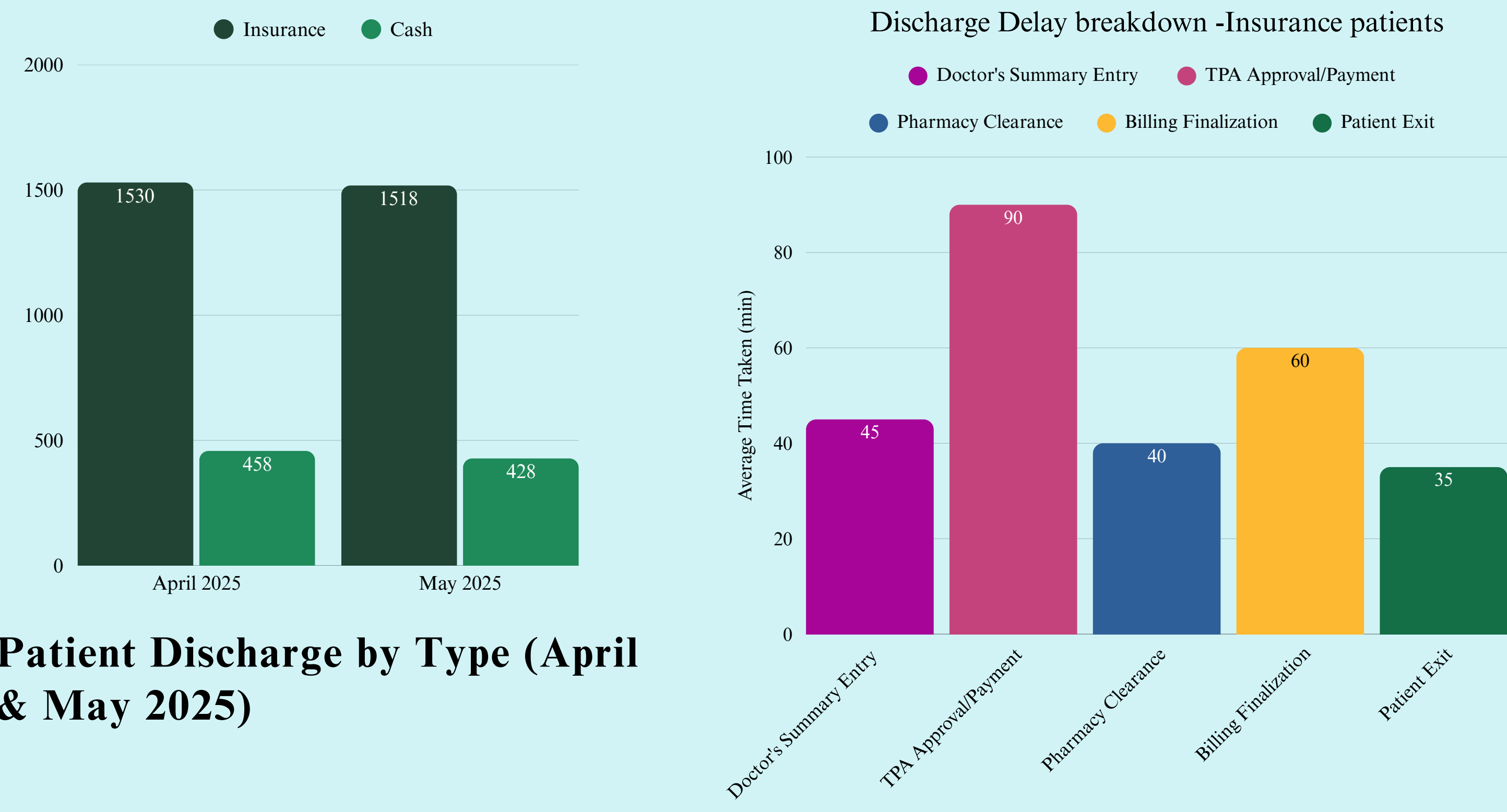
- Implementation of digital discharge forms.
- Enhanced patient engagement through mobile apps.
- Partnerships with home care services.
- Utilization of predictive analytics for discharge planning.
- Feedback mechanism

Threats

- Staff burnout due to high workload.
- Evolving regulatory compliance requirements.
- Competition from other healthcare providers.
- Legal/Documentation errors
- Patient dissatisfaction

Patient Discharge Data: April - May 2025

The following charts illustrate the total patient discharge for April and May 2025 at Apollo Hospital, Jayanagar, broken down by payment method (insurance vs. cash). This data provides valuable insights into patient demographics and financial trends influencing the discharge process.



Learnings and Value Addition

The internship at Apollo Hospital provided invaluable insights into the intricacies of hospital operations, particularly concerning patient flow and discharge management. A key learning was the critical importance of inter-departmental coordination in ensuring a smooth and timely discharge process. Understanding the various bottlenecks, from pharmacy delays to administrative clearances, highlighted the need for a holistic approach to process improvement. The value added through this internship includes identifying specific areas for improvement within the discharge workflow, proposing data-driven solutions, and contributing to a more patient-centric experience. By analyzing existing procedures and interacting with various stakeholders, a deeper appreciation for the operational challenges and opportunities for efficiency gains was developed. This experience is directly applicable to future roles in healthcare management and process optimization.

Proposed suggestions for Discharge Process

Based on the analysis and challenges identified, a series of proposed improvements are recommended to streamline the hospital discharge process at Apollo Hospital, Jayanagar, Bengaluru. These recommendations aim to enhance efficiency, reduce delays, and improve the overall patient experience.

Early Discharge Planning

Initiate discharge planning from the point of admission, involving patients and families in the process to set expectations and prepare for post-discharge care.

Automated Communication System

Implement an automated notification system to alert relevant departments (pharmacy, billing, transport) about impending discharges, minimizing last-minute coordination efforts.

Interim Billing

The main hurdle in the discharge if TPA patients was the delay in approval of the bills by the third party. Steps must be taken to ensure early approvals by discussing workable solutions with the stakeholders.

Standardized Medication Reconciliation

Develop and strictly adhere to a standardized protocol for medication reconciliation at discharge to prevent errors and delays.

Dedicated Discharge Lounge

Establish a comfortable discharge lounge where patients can wait for final clearances, freeing up hospital beds more quickly.

Staff Training and Empowerment

Conduct regular training sessions for staff on efficient discharge protocols and empower them to make decisions that expedite the process within guidelines.



Conclusion

- The SIP at Apollo Hospital, Jayanagar, Bengaluru, successfully identified critical bottlenecks within the patient discharge process, particularly delays stemming from pharmacy bill preparation and the final physical departure of patients. The data analysis highlighted significant areas for improvement, underscoring the need for enhanced inter-departmental coordination and streamlined procedures.
- The proposed recommendations, including early discharge planning, automated communication systems, and the establishment of a dedicated discharge lounge, offer a comprehensive roadmap to address these challenges. Implementing these improvements is anticipated to yield substantial benefits, transforming the discharge experience for both patients and hospital staff.
- Enhanced Efficiency
- Streamlined workflows will reduce administrative burden and optimize resource allocation.
- Improved Patient Satisfaction
- Reduced wait times and a clearer discharge process will lead to a more positive experience.
- Operational Excellence
- By addressing core issues, the hospital can achieve higher operational standards and bed turnover efficiency.