

Chapter-17

A STUDY ON THE DELAY IN DISCHARGE PROCESS IN BABYLON CHILDREN HOSPITAL, JAIPUR

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INTRODUCTION

Discharge in the medical context refers to the release of a hospitalized patient from the healthcare facility after receiving necessary medical care from the hospital's healthcare professionals. The process of patient discharge signifies the ultimate phase in the treatment journey during the patient's hospital stay. Timely discharge is achieved when a patient is sent home or moved to an appropriate level promptly upon reaching clinical stability or fitness for discharge. This stage represents the final interaction between the patient and the healthcare professionals at the hospital, capturing the comprehensive record of the treatment experience and its results. Improving the discharge process in any healthcare facility plays a pivotal role in elevating patient satisfaction. Unnecessary delays in discharge result in occupied beds and rooms without valid reason, leading to a lower hospital bed turnover rate and an escalation in organizational costs. A swift and punctual discharge process facilitates the early availability of patient beds, reducing patient admission waiting times. Patients and their relatives are keen to resume their normal lives, and any undue delay in discharge can result in dissatisfaction for both the patient and their family members, tarnishing the hospital's image despite successful and satisfactory treatment experiences.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the discharge procedure.
2. To identify the causes of delays in the discharge process.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection for this study employed two main methods: primary data collection and secondary data collection. Primary data were gathered through observational methods and interactions with hospital staff at nursing stations. On the other hand, secondary data were obtained from the hospital's organizational patient discharge policies. The sampling technique utilized was simple random sampling, wherein subjects or a sample group is selected from a larger population for the study. In simple random sampling, each individual is chosen by

chance, ensuring an equal probability of being selected in the sample. The tools utilized for analysis included tables, percentages, bar diagrams, and pie diagrams.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The discharge process experienced various delays, primarily attributed to factors such as the untimely availability of discharge summaries. In particular, for Third Party Administrator (TPA) patients, the discharge process was inherently time-consuming, often extending into the second half of the day, with additional delays in their physical departure. Delays in the bill submission process arose when the General Duty Assistants (GDAs) were assigned other tasks before submitting bills to the counter. Patients also experienced delays while waiting for their vehicles or ambulances, prolonging their stay in the room until transportation arrived. Pharmacy-related delays could occur due to the return of medicines. Moreover, inefficiencies stemming from inadequate coordination among hospital staff could contribute to delays in the discharge process. The complexity of the discharge process was compounded by inadequate patient awareness of the procedures, resulting in time wasted during bill clearance and subsequent discharge delays. Additionally, delays were noted in the preparation of bills at the reception counter.

CONCLUSION

Patient discharges often experience delays, and an examination of the reasons behind these delays was conducted, followed by recommendations to mitigate them. Implementation of these recommendations has the potential to significantly reduce discharge delays. Delays in patient discharge are a frequent cause of dissatisfaction among patients, emphasizing the importance of enhancing the discharge process to increase overall patient satisfaction. Achieving an effective discharge process requires seamless coordination and collaboration among all hospital staff, including doctors, nurses, General Duty Assistants (GDAs), and the patient's family.

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