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PHC and health care from a system's thinking perspective

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The objective of this study was to highlight the system's thinking perspective to ensure quality health care, thereby transforming the healthcare delivery system, changing healthcare design, structure and processes to correct inherent structural deficiencies. Around the world, healthcare organizations are encountering growing pressures to simultaneously improve the quality and safety of health and well being of the public, cut costs and remain competitive. To achieve these goals, a number of assessment mechanisms have been used to address quality in medical care organizations. The most common are JCI/ISO/EFQM and another accreditation. However, evidence from hospitals and PHC-based studies, suggests that external evaluation may be effectively used to complement internal processes. The value added is optimal when there is a clear, mutual understanding of purpose, a teamwork approach and a commitment to use the results of all forms of evaluation to shape a change agenda. But the success of TQM is constrained by many variables such as, poor commitment from leadership and inadequate information system. There is also a decline of attention to the diseases, instead of addressing the patients' needs and experience. As a direct consequence, there is an increasing fear for lack of focus on patient-centered quality and safety. Nevertheless, implementation focuses more on the individual part, whereas organizational and managerial aspects are minimized or even neglected altogether. From system thinking perspective, the foundations of quality are functions of several variables. Accreditation programmers are most effective when they are in conjunction with other strategies to address patient needs, accessibility, information, service costs, accountability and compliance. The implementation of successful TQM requires a fundamental shift in thinking - from how to best provide a wide variety of independent services to how to effectively combine individual service components into an integrated health care experience that meets patient needs and preferences. Extensive redesign of the basic work processes, advocates may result in significant changes, in scope, task responsibilities, professional autonomy and reporting relationships. Health care/system redesign involves making systematic changes to primary care practices and health systems to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of patient care. The focus should be on two aspects, first understanding the interdependencies of different dimensions existing in the healthcare delivery experience and the changes identified to improve quality care which is measurable and accountable for. Conceptualizing the healthcare services as a structured system is the essential prerequisite to the management of effective changes and excellence. Second, is to drive change and improve healthcare performances, as it is critical and vital to know what matters to the customers by maximizing the patient's care experience, this not only includes respect, the bond of trust, the shared decision making, but also the well-coordinated correspondences and overall efficiency. It goes without saying that understanding your organization as a system is the essential prerequisite to the management of effective change, as it enables leaders and workers to understand that the majority of performance is caused by how the system has been designed.

Biography

Musfer ALshalawi joined Al Jafel International Hospital, Riyadh as an Executive Director responsible for overall business operation development and strategic plans. He has more than 20 years of experience in healthcare management in government, private and overseas hospitals, like the New Castle General Hospital/Royal London Hospital in UK, Royal Commission Hospital Yanbu KSA, Al-Hada Military Hospital Taif KSA, etc. Over the course of his career, he has taken over various roles such as Quality Director/Patient Affairs Director, Project Manager/Human Resources Director and other management positions. He graduated at John Hopkins University, as Quality Specialist and has participated in 27 international symposium and summits in the healthcare management as a Speaker (lecturer). He gives various lectures on healthcare and quality/leadership/strategy & planning/ communication/teamwork. He has also been giving lectures in all hospitals (CBAHI/JCI standards) as a part of his job. He is a member of ISQUA (International Society for Quality in Health Care) and Saudi Management Association.

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