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Introduction

The world faces a major shortage of health care professionals.

Here in the US the average wait time for an appointment with a health care professional (gynecologist, dermatologist, cardiologist, obstetrician etc.) is more than two weeks. This evidences the fact that the world is in serious need of these professionals and that small health care centers are suffering due to this shortage. The ABC hospital is no exception and it is experiencing a shortage of surgeons (Crane, 2009, p. 1). This paper evaluates the stated shortage of surgeons in the ABC hospital and gives possible solutions to the problem.

Causes of healthcare personnel shortages

The aforementioned shortage of healthcare professionals in health centers has a number of causes.

First of all, professional healthcare jobs like surgery are characterized by a limited number of qualified people. This leads to a serious personnel shortage in most health centers which force the few qualified personnel to work for more than one health center. Secondly, most health care centers suffer a shortage of healthcare professionals due to employee turnover (Quach, 2009, p. 1). The shortage is also caused by the limited number of trainers/professors in the industry which is usually due to the demand of professionals in health care which forces virtually all qualified medical personnel work in hospitals. Narrowing our discussion to the situation in ABC hospital, the most probable reason for the shortage of surgeons is the fact

that qualified surgeons are few and thus just like the other health centers; the hospital finds it hard to get qualified surgeons.

A number of qualified surgeons are also in private practice performing general surgeries (Robert, 2008, p. 1). This has also contributed to the shortage of surgeons and other health professionals in most health centers.

Another contributing factor in the shortage of surgeons in the ABC hospital is the risk involved in surgeries. This is because fresh medical students find it difficult to get the required expertise and experience required in surgery since they are only allowed to handle minor surgeries. This makes entry to the surgery profession a challenge.

Let us have a look at the effects that the shortage of surgeons has had on the ABC hospital.

Effects of healthcare personnel shortages

The shortage of surgeons in the ABC has had tremendous effects on the hospital and the community at large. Many patients have had their conditions worsen while they wait for their appointment with the surgeons. Others have even lost their lives due to lack of immediate attention by the surgeons. This means that the hospital loses millions of dollars due to the stated problem of inadequate surgeons. The inadequacy of the surgeons also means that the available surgeons are overworked (Larson, 2002, p.

1). The surgeons spent most of their time in the hospital and thus they may provide mediocre services due to fatigue. This may in turn have effect on the number of surgery patients visiting the hospital. With this discussion, it is

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apparent that the inadequacy of the surgeons in the ABC hospital has had a lot of effects on the hospital and the society. It is thus desirable that appropriate solutions to the problem should be found in order to mitigate the aforementioned effects.

Solutions to health care personnel shortages

The personnel shortage can also be reduced by proper utilization and motivation of the existing workforce, whereby, cheap methods like the polishing of the management of the hospital can be used. This will lead to better and friendly supervision which can possibly act as a motivation to the workers.

The management of the hospital should also ensure that the job descriptions of the hospital workforce are clearly stated in order to avoid conflicts that increase employee turnover. Provision of safe working conditions would be particularly helpful to the ABC Hospital surgeons since it will help in preserving the health of the surgeons and thus ensure that they are fit to perform their duties (McSweeney, 2010, p. 1). This will help in reducing absenteeism and therefore help substantially in the fight against surgeon shortage. The problem can also be addressed by hiring people with perfected multiple skills such that they can multitask.

For instance, the hospital can hire surgeons with perfected post-operative care skills. Another strategy that can potentially change the situation in ABC hospital is the increment of employee benefits and the hiring of more professionals. Employees will definitely be motivated if their work is rewarded by good salaries and allowances like overtime allowances, risk

allowances etc (“ Media center”, 2010, p. 1). On the other hand, the hiring of more surgeons will ensure that the facility does not run out of surgeons in the short run and once they are in the organization, they will be retained by the proposed increase of benefits.

The hospital may also invest more in the backing of health education and give support to their workers. This will help in the motivation of the workers and it will assist medical students (surgeons) in getting the experience required in order to successfully attend to patients. The stated strategy will help in reducing the aforementioned shortage of surgeons in the U. S.

Justification

There are many reasons why the proposed strategic solutions to the surgeon shortage problem in ABC are feasible. The suggested perfection of the management of the hospital will be helpful since an improvement of inter-patient delays and other inconveniences to the surgeon will be reduced with good management.

It will also ensure that the surgeons they have are not overworked in ABC by stating their duties clearly. Additionally, the suggested motivation of the surgeons they have will help in the retention of the surgeons and thus it will ensure that the hospital does not run out of surgeons. As discussed earlier, the provision of safe working conditions will ensure that the surgeons working with the hospital are fit to perform their duties and thus this will definitely mitigate the inadequate-surgeons problem (Fuhrmans, 2010, p. 1). The suggested benefit schemes and investment in the support of surgeons

will definitely act as a motivation to the current employees and it will also act as an attraction to new surgeons.

Conclusion

Health care professionals are highly demanded by health care centers but the number of professionals like surgeons graduating from medical schools is limited. This is partly due to the challenging nature of health care jobs and the limited number of professors in this field. The two stated reasons have worked in unison to make medical schools have a limited number of schools hence the shortage of health care professionals.

There is no immediate solution to this problem but a number of strategies are suggested to help the ABC hospital in mitigating the effect that the shortage has had on the hospital and the society at large.

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