

Role of accreditation in healthcare

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Accreditation stands for a process aimed at continuously reviewing participants in healthcare practice to ensure that they meet and adhere to set standards. In most cases accreditation bodies are set by experienced players in the industry as a quality assurance measure. In other instances, it is the government that takes upon the role of creating accreditation bodies, as a safety measure for the citizenry (Ransom, 2008). Accreditation plays a number of critical roles in the healthcare sector. Some of these roles are as below:

For starters, accreditation acts as a guide to patients on health facilities where they can receive the highest quality level of care (Hebda & Czar, 2013). Research shows that accredited health facilities offer a high level of patient care and service than unaccredited institutions. In essence therefore, by accrediting health facilities, government and registered healthcare accreditation bodies are offering patients with a map on where and where not to seek treatment. Without accreditation, people seek healthcare services would easily fall for quacks, and in the process endanger their health.

The second role of accreditation is that it acts as a basis for protecting and fighting for patient rights (Manley et al, 2008). What this means is that in case health provision goes wrong and harms a patient's health, the patient has a basis for seeking legal redress. For instance, a patient can seek legal help through the accreditation body. Alternatively, the patient can enjoin the accreditation body, when seeking legal redress from an accredited healthcare organization. Without accreditation and clear cut rules on how

healthcare facilities should handle their patients, it would be difficult for a patient to seek legal redress in case something goes wrong. This is because; there would be no set benchmarks against which, health care service is measured against.

The third role of accreditation in healthcare is statistics, budgeting and government fiscal planning. What this means is that through accreditation, the government is able to collect variable data on the current status of the healthcare sector (Sears et al, 2015). For instance, the government can easily collect data from accredited institutions on the prevalence of lifestyle diseases like diabetes. It can then act on such data and come up with measures for combating such diseases. Without accreditation, it would be difficult to know how many healthcare facilities are in operation leave alone collect valuable healthcare data from them. In essence therefore, accreditation is a source of statistical data for government planning and healthcare budgeting.

Moreover, healthcare accreditation acts as a form of quality control in healthcare human resource management. It is healthcare accreditation bodies that determine the level of skill and experience required to practice in a given line of healthcare provision (Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, 2004). For instance, accreditation bodies offer medical training schools parameters, which trainee healthcare providers must meet for them to practice medicine. In most cases, these bodies also offer additional accreditation exams for those who are through with medical school, just to ensure that their skill level is up to par with set standards. With accreditation, there would be numerous cases of unqualified medical

personnel gambling with patients lives.

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