

Healthcare strategic plan report

[Health & Medicine](#), [Hospital](#)



Introduction

Healthcare is one of the industries that never see recession. No matter if there is economic slowdown or upturn people will always fall sick and seek medical treatment. In fact it has been seen that the number of medical cases increase in the hospitals in times of economic recession. First Medica is one of the hospital chains specialized in cardiovascular area operating along the west coast. I have made a strategic plan on the organization I work in – First Medica. I have touched upon the history of our organization, its mission and vision statement, its SWOT and the strategies followed to improve the organizational performance.

First Medica: History and Operations

Based in California, USA First Medica was founded way back in 1935 by the industrialist brothers Ronald and Donald Johnson. As of now, First Medica is one of the largest health care organizations in the US operating in 10 west coast states and Hawaii. First Medica specializes in cardiac treatment and conducts research on cardiovascular and coronary heart diseases suffered by people all across the world. The organization has its own health plan called Johnson and Johnson Health Plan which has over 8 million members, 14, 000 medical practitioners, 40 medical centers and 170, 000 employees. After our organization was established, the survival rate of people suffering from atrial septal defect or ventricular septal defect, hole in upper or lower part of the heart, has increased from 5% in 1950 to 80% today. Our organization has treated patients not only within USA but from over 60 countries (St. Jude Children's Research Hospital). First Medica offers an all-encompassing

cardiac rehabilitation program designed for heart patients including risk factor management, exercise training, health education, dietary screening, psychosocial support to family members and patients and emergency services. It also hosts an International Outreach Program aimed at augmenting the survival rate of heart patients all across the world through sharing of knowledge, skill and technology. Our core competency not only lies in our comprehensive cardiac rehabilitation program, but in our research oriented developments which have made complicated operations like open heart surgeries and bypass surgeries famous all across USA and abroad with patients coming from all over the world. Worldwide doctors consult the medical practitioners of our organization on complicated cases.

Mission

The mission of First Medica is to provide quality-driven, cost-effective, comprehensive and easily accessible healthcare services to patients suffering from deadly heart ailments. The Johnson brothers put their vision into practice by taking care that the organization does not deny treatment to anyone due to discrimination of race, color and religion.

Vision

First Medica aspires to lead the world in advanced treatment of cardiovascular diseases. It wants to set itself as a model organization for patients to receive healthcare by making sure to provide outstanding care by conducting clinical and translational research focused on identifying biological mechanisms, improving diagnosis, understanding the pathogenesis of ailments, improving the outcome of treatment and by giving

psychosocial support to patients and family members. Through such endeavors, our organization purports to cure and improve the quality of life for patients coming to treatment for cardiovascular related issues. First Medica also ensures to expand knowledge by sharing information of its treatment procedures with others to enhance the treatment of patients with cardiovascular diseases worldwide, simultaneously working on developing strategies to provide best medical facility to all the patients under its care.

Values

First Medica bears its utmost responsibility towards patients afflicted with serious cardiovascular diseases, their family members and the donors who support our mission by dedicating their personal resources to help us realize our vision. In order to carry out our responsibilities successfully, we conform to a set of values which determine the standards of behavior we ought to maintain in our decision-making and activities. In order to ensure adherence of these values we provide training to all the employees working in our organization and assess the leadership, staff and faculty members on the basis of their conformity to these values. We vow to provide our patients with a medical service of highest quality, and their family members with necessary information and moral support to make decisions and to become actively involved in the process of their children's treatment. We give a solemn promise to our donors that every penny donated to our mission would be spent in achieving the best of healthcare services, cures, research and treatment options. We also pledge complete honesty, accountability and integrity in our service (St. Jude Children's Research Hospital).

SWOT Analysis

Strength

- First Medica is number one specialist in cardiac treatment in the USA. The number one birth defect in children is congenital heart defects in the USA and First Medica is dedicated to the diagnosis, prevention, treatment and research focused on congenital heart defects. Not only patients from the USA, it has treated patients from all over the globe.
- Since its inception, First Medica has been a leading provider in cardiac treatment. It offers diagnostic catheterization of the coronary arteries, heart chambers, aorta, valves, PTCA, pulmonary circulation, angioplasties, atherectomy, valvuloplasty and rotator (Alenza, 2013). It has 24 hours operational facility for myocardial infarction medical intervention with efficient cardiologists, nurses and technicians tending to the patients.
- First Medica has a separate department for handling complicated heart surgeries such as bypass surgery, congenital heart surgery, valve surgery, minimally invasive heart surgery and hypertrophic cardiomyopathy surgery. There is a separate division for pediatric cardiac treatment which specializes in making detection of cardiovascular diseases in children; so much as babies still inside the womb of their mothers can have their heart defects detected through an advanced Foetal Echocardiography (Alenza, 2013).
- First Medica's dedication towards its mission reflects in its one of a kind International Outreach Program aimed at improving the heart health of all the people worldwide through sharing knowledge, technology and skill. It also holds different educational programs to spread awareness among people about the need of following healthy lifestyles to maintain heart in

good condition.

- First Medica has invested extensively in information technology. It has instituted an eICU or electronic intensive care unit in all of its hospitals. The leadership of First Medica firmly believes that investment in information technology is crucial to improving efficiency and quality of service.

Weaknesses

- First Medica has been operational only in the west coast of USA and Hawaii since the time it was established. It has never ventured into the market of east coast as a result of which it is losing a lot of patients who choose nearby hospitals for treatment.

- In recent times First Medica has received a spate of complaints regarding the customer care service. Especially there were numerous complaints about the long wait time on phone of 55 minutes to an hour. Compared to the surge of patients getting treated here and coming for treatment, the number of people working on customer service is very limited in all the centers of First Medica. As a result during the peak hours of operation the phone line becomes jammed and customers face difficulty in contacting us.

- Keeping in with the mission of providing the best services to the patients, the employment strategy of physicians in First Medica is quite stringent with only the best of doctors with higher academic excellence being offered a position here. Due to the tough criteria for selection, the number of medical practitioners in our organization compared to the number of patients we are to handle is not adequate. Resultantly, we are always in shortage of physicians. Though recently our organization overhauled its earlier recruitment policy and has made it more lenient, there remains the chance

of having the quality of treatment compromised due to the recruitment of not so experienced doctors.

Opportunities

- First Medica has expanded its operation only in the west coast of US and Hawaii. Therefore, it has room for expanding its business towards east coast. If First Medica just like it has its centers based in some of prominent locations of west coast including LA, Seattle, San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose, San Diego, Portland, Sacramento and Malibu spreads in the prominent destinations of east coast like New York, Boston and Washington DC then patients from the east coast who earlier have sought treatment in nearby moderate heart care facilities would like to avail the best of treatment options in First Medica.
- Since First Medica is internationally reputed for its research and treatment services in cardiovascular diseases with patients coming from all over the globe, it can cash in on the demand by opening its centers in other countries including UK, Australia, France, and New Zealand to reach out to more patients needing heart care and thus increase its market share and revenue.
- Though First Medica holds a lot of educational programs for making people aware of the importance of following healthy life styles, it is yet to turn into a serious venture. So First Medica can use the opportunity to expand its service on a broad range of education and preventive services by forming collaboration with third parties. They can initiate programs focused on training people how to take good care of heart and how to look after patients with heart ailments.

- The leading cause of death in the US is heart disease which is attributed to the unhealthy food habit and life style followed in the country. Fast food, alcohol, smoking and drugs all increase the chances of developing hypertension and obesity which lead to serious heart diseases. If this trend goes on, then First Medica in near future will have more patients suffering from cardiovascular diseases adding to its revenue.

Threats

- The number one competitor of First Medica is Sunrise Medical Center which too provides world class heart treatment services to customers. Further, it has different divisions earmarked for men, women and children tending to different needs of each section of people. So far First Medica has not launched any separate treatment facility targeting women. In view of the fact that in the US cardiovascular disease is a leading cause of women's death over 25 years of age, it is important to start treatment facility especially designed for women keeping in mind their unique requirements or else competitor like Sunrise Medical Center would leave First Medica behind. Furthermore, the business expansion of Sunrise Medical Center is not limited to only west coast, it has its branches in prominent cities of east coast and therefore, it can pose a serious threat to First Medica in the endeavor of grabbing market share in east coast.

- In recent times First Medica has faced a number of lawsuits by patients due to several reasons like discrimination in treatment, negligence by the hospital staff members and improper diagnosis leading to wrong treatment. Though 99% of our patients go from our hospital satisfied, the unusual cases

of dissatisfaction has cast a pall over the reputation of First Medica which is definitely a serious concern facing us.

Current and Future Service market

Population growth drives health care demand. Population of the west coast as well as the entire nation is slowly but steadily rising and that increases the scope of health care. As the baby boomer generation is aging, there is a substantial part of the population having chances of suffering from heart related problems. Also in last few years because of the change in law for healthcare and umbrella health care plans for senior citizens, more and more people will be able to afford better treatments in hospitals for their diseases. The economic condition is also showing signs of revival and the job market is slowly turning around so the average income of an individual is expected to go up and with that medical expenditure. First Medica currently only serves less than 2% of the total heart patients in the states it operates. There is huge potential to increase its band width.

Service Strategies

As the lifestyle of average American becomes more and more complicated the chances of heart related ailment will increase. The hospital should start some overall heart healthy campaign in the areas it operates. In this way it will be to take care of a lot of potential patients from very early stage of the disease and will be able to create a strong heart community. Currently some of the departments are being over utilized due to the constant inflow of patients and it may give rise to concerns related to privacy, safety and infection if the departments are not segregated from each other. For

example, some of the facilities house ER, daily patient care and research and development in the same building. This may pose some problem for the ER patients. The hospital chain plans to restructure its facilities in such a way that the safety, treatment and privacy of the patients get utmost priority. The hospital has received rave reviews from all corners of the news media in last few years. First Medica can take advantage of the media to build good community relations by organizing social medical events and donating back to the communities. This way it will create a clean and philanthropic image. It will act well with the people when they will choose a hospital for their treatments.

Quality Strategies

Quality of service offered to patients and their safety is a very important issue that most of the hospitals try to maintain. During late 1990s the medical board created a benchmark of maximum 3.7% medical errors in hospital admissions and also set similar parameters for errors leading to death and wrong diagnosis. To ensure all those parameters are within specified limits the hospital should tighten its comprehensive and integrated safety program. Continuous proactive risk assessment, proper reporting, fluid communication system and robust patient-doctor communication will ensure high quality. First Medica already gives information about some of its quality parameters in its website. In future it will start public reporting of its quality indicators like surgical infection rate, heart attack, congestive heart failure etc. The website will also publish customer satisfaction indices like clean environment, responsiveness of staff, discharge information and so on.

Employee Strategies

In healthcare employing and retaining a quality workforce can make a huge difference. The overall health care workforce has increased and now better medical professionals are available in the market. First and foremost getting high quality nurses is of utmost importance as most of the patient touch points are handled by nurses. Often nurses define the satisfaction level of any hospital for most of the patients. First Medica will devise a plan for recruitment of high quality nurses and doctors for its hospitals. It should also regularly check the employee satisfaction to ensure the staff is happy and their all needs are fulfilled. Creating efficient teams of medical practitioners and paying them at par with industry benchmark will keep employees motivated and happy. Along with recruitment, the hospital should also create its in-house training and continuous learning programs to develop its employees. This will enhance the knowledge of the employees and keep their morale boosted. Physician recruitment is one of the most important tasks for the hospital. Many patients are tied to good physicians and recruiting a good physician often means getting a new base of patients through the good work of that physician. However, recruiting and retaining a physician is often a costly affair. First Medica will continue to be smart in recruiting specialists, family practitioners and surgeons.

Financial Strategies

As there is a huge cost pressure to reduce the overall medical cost nationwide, it is becoming increasingly difficult to run the medical operation at a reasonably profitable margin. The insurance companies now have started paying fixed price for per service provided and our organization

would be at a loss if it spends more than the fixed amount on a treatment. To continue making profits always First Medica needs to create a system that would run seamlessly in all aspects from customer care to diagnosis to treatment. First Medica should create its own cost benchmarks for all of its operations and try to achieve them and monitor them regularly.

Conclusion

Healthcare is a growing industry. First Medica is a leading provider of specialized cardiac treatment operating along the west coast. Patients from all over the world and US come to First Medica for critical heart treatments. First Medica aspires to lead the world in advanced treatment of cardiovascular diseases. It bears its utmost responsibility towards patients afflicted with serious cardiovascular diseases, their family members and the donors. It is already one of the best in terms of cardiovascular treatment and wants to hold on to that position. It has a customer care service which probably needs to be improved as per patient feedback. The hospital has huge growth opportunity beyond west coast of USA and even it may venture internationally. First Medica needs to create a service and quality strategy for improving its quality of service. It also needs to revise its recruitment and retention strategy for doctors and nurses. Further, First Medica should employ stringent cost strategy to make its operation more profitable than others. If it can manage its talent well and retain them and then sticks to its strategy of growth and quality, then it will surely become one of the best and biggest cardiovascular facilities in the world.

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