

# Doctoral study topic

Business



Human Resources Deficiency in the Healthcare Industry in the US

Compromises the Quality of Service Affiliation Author note with more

information about affiliation, research grants, conflict of interest and how to contact

Human Resources Deficiency in the Healthcare Industry in US

Compromises the Quality of Service

An Overview and Context of the Topic:

The main problem that a Healthcare Manager or Administrator encounters in the healthcare industry in US in the present day is the shortage of human resources, especially nurses. Though deficiencies exist in almost all categories of hospital staff, the focus of this paper will be shortage of nurses and how this problem compromises the quality of service being provided by the US hospitals. This topic is relevant for healthcare managers because healthcare industry is a service based sector and any shortfall in the quality of service will adversely affect the reputation as well as the profitability of the organization.

Studies conducted by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and the American Hospital Association (AHA) during the early 2000s project that there will be “ shortages of at least 124, 000 physicians and 500, 000 nurses by 2025” (Ziwiak 2010 pg 1). The ever increasing demand for care, in terms of escalating growth in the population, aging and enhanced life expectancy, places a hefty onus on the healthcare sector to cater for an exponentially growing number of patients. However, the country is finding it difficult to recruit sufficient number of human resources to meet the requirement.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), taking into account

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the reports of the AHA (July, 2007) and the American Health Care Association (AHCA) (July, 2008), puts the “ total RN vacancies in the US to more than 135, 000” (Rosseter 2012 Pg 2). Thus, it transpires that there exists an acute shortage of nurses in the US and that this trend will rather continue unabated than checked. Though the US government is taking steps to enroll more nurses and trying to increase the age of retirement, these measures hardly seem adequate to fetch the intended results in addressing the issue. Alternatives like recruiting overseas nurses also come with certain disadvantages.

#### Business Related Problem(s):

Healthcare Industry being service oriented, it becomes imperative that hospitals should have sufficient number of nurses to provide quality healthcare to the patients. In this context, it is relevant that when staff shortage exists in a hospital, the services of available personnel gets overstretched, which may entail in compromising the quality of care to the patients. Thus, the main concern of a hospital manager or administrator is to ensure that the organization has sufficient number of human resources to meet the demands of quality patient care. Besides, eliminating delays in care should be one of the top priorities of hospitals for which such organizations should have sufficient number of caregivers to meet the exigencies of services bestowed on them.

However, in the present day, hospitals encounter the challenge of delivering “ high quality care with limited resources” because of the shortage of nursing staff (Hall 2006 Pg 1). When a hospital has staff vacancy, its entire system becomes congested and it results in crowding by patients at various departments. This entails delays in extending proper medical facilities.

Delays in “accessing needed equipments and delays in providing medication can all add to patient suffering” (Hall 2006 Pg 11), which will compromise the quality of care being provided by that hospital

There is no doubt that hospitals must assume a social responsibility and remain committed to providing proper care to the community. However, one cannot deny the fact that in order to provide efficient patient care the organization must have proper equipment, other infrastructures and human resources. To facilitate this, it must have proper funding, which will only derive from the profit it makes. Thus, it becomes incumbent on the hospital manager or administrator to make sure that the organization achieves the required level of profitability. However, when the quality of patient care gets compromised the organization’s reputation will be tarnished and its profitability will suffer. Therefore, the first task of the manager is to make sure that the hospital has sufficient human resources to meet the demands of providing quality care.

#### Relevant Data and How to Collect the Same:

Relevant data for a research paper of this nature can be obtained through literature already published on the topic. Information can also be obtained through the web sites and other publications of Bureau of Labor, Department of Health, various organizations in the healthcare sector etc. There is a huge plethora of sources available on the topic and finding information, therefore, is not a problem. Besides, if necessary, primary data may also be obtained by interviewing healthcare managers, providers etc.

#### Reference List

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