

Original Research

Volume 06, Issue 1, page 111-118, June 2024

ACHIEVERS JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH*Open Access Publications of Achievers University, Owo*Available Online at www.achieversjournalofscience.org**Health Record Management Practice and Administrative Decision Making in
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Submitted: April 15, 2024; Revised: May 10, 2024; Accepted: May 12, 2024; Published: June 30, 2024

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.13268026

Abstract

Health Record management practices have always been the hospitals fundamental assets. Lacking it, the typical hospital basically cannot operate effectively and efficiently. More and more, hospital health management practice is being seen as a critical business practice which facilitates hospital administrators to establish a baseline for proper decision making, validate their business dealings and connected actions. Despite the importance of health records management in hospital administration, there are lots of problems constraining the use of health records by administrators for decision making, including lack of awareness. This study therefore seeks to assess the constraints of health records management practices in decision making among hospital administrators in Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife. The study adopted the survey research method with a population of 118 who are all departmental administrators in all functional departments at the hospital. The result of the survey on the level of awareness of the administrators on health records management practice for decision making revealed that 77.1% of the respondent have high level of awareness. Also, 93.2% of the respondent agree that health records management practice is critical for quality clinical and administrative decision making. Meanwhile, 93.2% of the respondent actually make use of health records in decision making. The study therefore concluded that, health records management practice is vital to administrative decision making in Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife.

Keywords: Administrative Decision Making; Health Record Management Practice,**1. Introduction**

Hospitals rely on quality data from the health records management practices for clinical and administrative decisions as Hospital

Administration cannot be done on intuition. A hospital administrator must be well aware of the scientific methods needed to run and evaluate the hospital functions and services in an objective fashion, one of which happens

to be the effective and efficient management of health records as a baseline for decision making. All stakeholders involved in health records management practices and decision making should have good understanding of hospital organization and management for better care of their patients. Moreover, they should also have enough knowledge for management of human, material and financial resources in a cost-effective way with optimum time approach. Hospitals are among the most complex organizations in modern society. The modern hospital itself is a universe, with a variety of objectives, and a scalar division of labor to achieve those objectives.

Health Record management practices have always been the hospitals fundamental assets. Lacking it, the typical hospital basically cannot operate effectively and efficiently. More and more, hospital health management practice is being seen as a critical business practice which facilitates hospital administrators to establish a baseline for proper decision making and validate their business dealings and connected actions. Every hospital institution is caught up in the making of health records in its processes. Health Information Practitioners according to the Adebayo (2019), see to the maintenance, collection, analysis, storage and presentation of data, which in turn assist greatly in the deliverance of quality health care

Records have a long history and use in decision making from various spheres of life. According to Mazikana (1990), records have always been a good source of information for decision making as such, have existed since man acquired the ability to record information in writing. Adebayo and Orimoloye (2019) also opined that Health information management practice is imperative in any health service providing institution in ensuring quality service delivery. The earliest keeping of records and

archives can be traced to the Ancient Civilizations when records of birth, property, law, money tax and official and private transactions began to be kept to facilitate the conduct of government business, and for education, religion and family purposes. Therefore, hospital records management practice is one of the byproducts of institutional processes. Collectively with the usually known organizational, past and archival purpose, organizations keep health records to realize lawful needs for their operations and protect the rights of stakeholders.

All countries have records laws that institute the call for effective records management, provide for the authority to dispose of records, and set up a structure for records management in the state. Even though not all records are uniformly essential, they are all records that must be authentically managed in accordance with state law. Health information management practice according to Adebayo and Gbabe (2021), is a cornerstone in supplying health care delivery system with a qualified and trained workforce to provide a quality services and specifically to provide high quality data. The prime undertaking of records management is to assist workforce administer the records very well. That involves helping employees to be acquainted with how to systematize materials so that those who require them (not only the employees) can locate them and to identify which records are of the essence and helpful to use (Danso, 2015). Adebayo and Orimoloye (2019) also opined that Health information management practice is imperative in any health service providing institution in ensuring quality service delivery

Statement of the Problem: An effective management of health records is a critical factor in providing capacity for hospitals' efficiency, accountability, transparency,

information security and good governance. Despite the importance of health records management in hospital administration, there are lots of problems constraining the use of health records by administrators for decision making, including lack of awareness. This study therefore seeks to assess the constraints of health records management practices in decision making among hospital administrators in Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife.

Objective of the Study: The main objective of the study is to assess the perceived relevance of health records management practices to clinical and administrative decision making among hospital administrators in Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife, Osun State. The specific objectives are to: evaluate the level of awareness of hospital administrators on health records management practices in Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex.; ascertain the relevance of health records management practice to hospital administrators in Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex; and examine the constraints facing hospital administrators in the use of health records in decision making in Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex.

2. Methodology

Research Design: This research work adopted the use of descriptive survey research design. This is considered appropriate in order to establish variation and unionism between the variables of interest in the study.

Population: The target population for this study consists of one hundred and eighteen

(118) administrative staff particularly heads of departments and major decision makers of Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife, Osun State.

Sample size and Sampling Technique: total enumeration was adopted in place of sampling size and sampling technique because of the manageable size of the study population. Hence, a total of (118) questionnaires was properly filled and retrieved for this study after proper scrutiny.

Research Instrument: A close-ended and fixed alternative questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaires that were used are simple and constructive enough in order to avoid confusion and misunderstanding among respondents.

Data Collection Procedure: A structured questionnaire was used in the course of this study. This is because it is standardized and reduces interviewer's bias. The questionnaires were self-distributed to the heads of departments in Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife, Osun State after which they were retrieved and checked for consistencies.

Method of Data Analysis: This research work used Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 to analyze the data collected from the respondents. Descriptive statistics with the aid of frequency and simple percentage was used.

3. Results and Discussion

Socio – Demographic characteristics of respondents: The socio-demographic distribution of the respondents in terms of gender, age, department, qualification and working experience are thus presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 1: Demographic distribution of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	35	29.7
Female	83	70.3
Total	118	100.0
Age		
20-30	12	10.2
31-40	31	26.3
41-50	34	28.8
51-60	41	34.7
Total	118	100.0
Marital status		
Single	20	16.9
Married	98	83.1
Total	118	100.0
Profession		
Medical profession	11	9.3
Nursing	24	20.3
Pharmacy	20	16.9
Health information managers	20	16.9
Laboratory science	12	10.2
Hospital administrators	12	10.2
Others	19	16.1
Total	118	100.0
Qualification		
OND	1	.8
HND	12	10.2
BSc	39	33.1
MSc	47	39.8
Others	19	16.1
Total	118	100.0
Experience		
Below 10 years	20	16.9
11-20years	30	25.4
21years and above	68	57.6
Total	118	100.0
Designation		
Service chiefs	17	14.4
Head of department	15	12.7
Head of unit	59	50.0
Deputy director	27	22.9
Total	118	100.0

From Table 1, it was observed that the female health workers constitute majority of the respondents, it shows that female number of staff were more than male staff as at the time this project was conducted in the area of study: Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospital Complex. A close comparison of this result shows that majority

of the respondents are married. The respondents spread across both clinical and non-clinical department. From this table also it shows that majority of the respondents have an average qualification of HND and BSc. In addition, majority of the decision makers cut across all the department are experienced and cut across all designations.

Table 2: Level of Awareness of Hospital Administrators on Health Records Management Practices

Items	High	%	Average	%	Low	%
Level of Awareness of Hospital Administrators on Health Records Management Practices	118	100	0	0	0	0
Level of Awareness of other hospital staff	91	77.1	19	16.1	8	6.8
Level of how health records practices has been of help	110	93.2	8	6.8	0	0
Level of health records usage for decision making	87	73.7	31	26.3	0	0

Table 3: importance of health records services

	Uses of health records services	Frequency	%
1	preservation of patient care	55	46.6
2	decision making	55	46.6
3	Billing	8	6.8
	Total	118	100

Table 4: Functions of health records

SN	Variables	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	It provides quality data for decision making	118	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	It enables proper planning	99	83.9	19	16.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	It helps to know problems facing the hospitals	66	55.9	52	44.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Evaluation of the rate of utilization of hospital services is made possible	70	59.3	48	40.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Level of quality care rendered can be determined	81	68.6	37	31.4	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Is easily accessible when its need arise	81	68.6	37	31.4	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	The content is quite understood	81	68.6	37	31.4	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Discussion: This study was carried out using questionnaire to study on health records

management practices and its relevance on administrative decision making in Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex. The result from this research

indicates the subject matter of the research work. It has also helped in viewing the opinion of the respondents. Out of 118 respondents that filled and returned the questionnaire, it was observed female health workers constitute majority of the respondents. This indicated 70.3% while only 29.7% of the respondents are male. This implies that female staff were more than male staff as at the time this project was conducted in the area of study.

Also, 51-60 years age groups constituted majority of the respondents with 34.7% while 41-50 years age groups are 28.8%, 31-40 are 26.3% and 20-30 are 10.2 % respectively. This explains that most Decision makers Head of Departments, Head of Units and Service Chiefs are quite active and agile, to perform their duties efficiently.

Percentage distribution among various departmental administrators, are as follows; medical practitioners 9.3%, nursing 20.3%, pharmacy 16.9%, health information managers 16.9%, laboratory scientists 10.2%, hospital administrators, 10.2%, others 16.1% respectively, this implies that the findings cut across eight (8) departments consisting of both clinical and non-clinical. Furthermore, 0.8% has OND, 10.2% have HND, 33.1% have BSc, 39.8% have MSc and 16.1% have other qualification. It shows that majority of the respondents have an average qualification of BSc. It was observed that the working experience of respondents are as follows 10 years and below 16.9%, 25.4% are 11-20 years, 57.6 are 21years and above. This implies that majority of the decision makers cut across the entire department are experienced.

Furthermore, (100%) decision makers are aware of health records management practices, 77.1% of the respondent have high level of awareness, 16.1% are average and 6.8% are low.

Also, 93.2% of the respondent make use of health records management practices in

decision making while 6.8% do not, it also shows that 73.7% of the respondents make use of health records regularly and 26.3% often make use of it. This implies that in Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, health record is a vital tool in administrative decision making.

68.6% strongly agree and 31.4% agreed that the content of the health records is quite understood. It further revealed that 61.9% strongly agree and 31.4% agree they have access to information in health records while only 6.8% did not identify accessibility as a constraint, this percentage was traced that the respondents are health records managers. 32.2% strongly agree and 37.3% agree, 9.3% undecided and 21.2% strongly disagreed. This indicate that 69.5% strongly agreed and agreed that incomplete health record is identified as a constraint even thou 9.3 are undecided and 21.2% strongly disagree. 45.8% strongly agreed, 22.9% agreed and 31.1% strongly disagreed. This implies that majority of the respondents identified illegible hand writing as a constraint while the minority of the respondent that strongly disagreed deal with already processed and electronic data (information). 45.8% strongly agreed, 13.6% agreed, 31.4% strongly disagreed, and 9.3% disagreed. This implies majority of the respondents identify missing health records as a constraint. 48.2% strongly agreed and 23.7% agreed that inadequate manpower is a major constraint, while 10.5% undecided and 16.7% disagreed. 39.0% strongly agreed and 21.2% agreed that loss of vital information is a major constraint, while 23.7% are undecided and 16.1 disagreed. Also, 39.0% strongly agreed that information are mishandled, 33.1% are undecided, while 21.2% strongly disagreed and 6.8% disagreed that patients information are mishandled.

4. Conclusion

Health records management practices and administrative decision making of the projects scope of study was tested and the

result gotten was at high level of positive responses supporting that the administrators concerned are aware, have adequate knowledge of the importance and relevance and they also constraints facing health records usage in decision making. They make use of the health records as a basic tool of measurement, and to have basic information on the qualitative and quantitative proceedings of their day-to-day activities. The study also was able to discuss elaborately the records life cycle and the continuum model as cited in the literature and also indicated in the respondent's response. Most importantly, statistics generated are used for planning; staffing, and to validate if resources are utilized. In conclusion, members of staff of Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife Osun State are well experienced, aware and understand the relevance and constraints of health records management practices and administrative decision making. In the cause of carrying out this research work the following recommendation were made;

- i. Training and retraining of administrators should be conducted by the health information department to enlighten them of the importance of data collected and processed on regular bases.
- ii. Policy guiding handling health records document should be enforced to avoid incomplete, illegible and missing health records.
- iii. The management should employ more professional health information managers that have adequate knowledge of the importance and for prompt retrieval of health records document.

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