
**SWOT ANALYSIS OF FACILITY MANAGEMENT: CASE STUDY OF SAMBURU
COUNTY REFERRAL HOSPITAL, KENYA.**

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ABSTRACT

The prime objective of the paper is to give a SWOT analysis of the facility management at Samburu County referral hospital. The management technique at the facility includes various mechanisms of general management of the infrastructures and a holistic harmonization of work environment. This is of great significance since it gives an insight of the current situation in the facility after the devolution of the health care systems to the county governments post the promulgation of the current constitution in 2010. The transition of the health care management in Samburu County have been characterized by enormous challenges such as but not limited to understaffing, chronic debts, brain drain, poor infrastructures, obsolete machinery and supply shortages. This paper also aims at establishing if the current management has the capacity to influence positively the most essential core values including accountability, equity, improved efficiency, empowerment as well as good stewardship.

Key words: Swot analysis, management techniques, devolution of health care, challenges facing health care system, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

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INTRODUCTION

The stewardship of Samburu County referral hospital is of great public significance for the residence of this county. This is pegged on the fact that it is the only medical institution that can offer advanced medical attention both for inpatient services and outpatient services in this region. Categorically, the profound managerial and financial system and policies at Samburu County Referral as a facility a sound facts and evidence. The issues of managerial of this facility have become topical since the adoption of devolution structures by the county. This is attributed to the ongoing reforms in the health sector that are being implemented by the national government such as the implementation of the universal health coverage for all. Currently, the management of this facility consists of a complex bureaucratic due to the assigned highest social function that this facility performs in the region.

The motivation for this study is due to the significance attached to the healthcare system and its influence on the lives of the people residing within the catchment area of this facility. Despite the very many local and international publications on the facility management systems, none has categorically made reference to Samburu County referral hospital.

METHODOLOGY

The paper adopted SWOT analysis as a methodology. It is very appropriate since makes it possible to do comparison and assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and the threats at a glance. Studies have shown that the usage of SWOT analysis in the facility management is the best analytical tool in the field of health care.

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE FACILITY MANAGEMENT

According to O'Sullivan (1) the adoption of facility management dates back to early 1970s in the United State and the United Kingdom. Its adoption was facilitated by the increased advent of cubicles in most offices and the introduction and use of computers. International Facility Management Association describes facility management as a profession that brings together various functionality by intergrading people, processes and technology.

The facility management is a key player in the delivery of health services to the built environment with the basic function being the provision of strategic management advice aimed at enhancing efficiency and the cost minimization of routine operations of the health facilities, Commonwealth of Australia.(2). Consequently, according to Lennerts (3) the main advantages of facility management include, well defined communication system with clear chain of command, maximum utilization of synergism between various services, elimination of conflicts between the internal and external players, integration of services and sustainability of various projects of the facility.

According to Lennerts (3) there are ten competencies of facility management as gathered from facility managers from over sixty countries worldwide as outlined below;

- ❖ Well defined communication pathway both internally and externally.
- ❖ Adoption of modern technology in the management such as bulk data storage.
- ❖ Operations and management.
- ❖ Emergency preparedness.
- ❖ Stable financial system
- ❖ Environmental leadership and continuity of projects
- ❖ Leadership and strategy.
- ❖ Project management.
- ❖ Manpower
- ❖ Quality services.

SPECIFIC FEATURES OF FACILITY MANAGEMENT

According to a study conducted by Rechel et al. (4) it found that it's very important for health care facilities to exercise high degree of flexibility to enable them to adapt shifty to the ever evolving needs and expectations of the society. The ageing population, current changing nature of diseases, technology, pharmaceuticals, increased expectations as well as introduction and utilization of new financial mechanisms are examples of factors that the facility managers are facing.

Health care facilities have a unique feature that distinguishes them from other organizations. The features include, twenty four hour performance or healing activities, seven days a week and three hundred and sixty five days a year, continual update of the technical base as well as the equipment with the aim of meeting the highest degree of quality services and security, an error or omission in the operation of a hospital could cost someone's life, Rechel et al. (4).

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SWOT analysis technique provides the best methodology of identifying and assessing the strengths and weaknesses, opportunity and threats of a health facility. This is because the technique combines both the outcomes of the strategic analysis of both internal and external environments of the health facility, Grezky (5).

Table 1: facility management product list in the hospitals

Outside the facility	Guard and security
Building and offices maintenance	Bed conditioning
Basic rents for building and offices	Maintenance of medical equipment
Technical maintenance	Management of automobile park
Electricity supply	Information technology services
Water supply	Patients transport
Heating supply	Logistics
Hygiene maintenance	Catering
Equipment cooling service	Laundry
Office supplies	Printing and reprographic services
Sterilization services	Mail and telephone services
Waste disposal	Pest control

Strengths are the representation of the factors or activities whose combination culminates into successful operation of the facility. They include application of the modern technology, modern medical equipment and very competent medical staff. Weakness on the contrary represents activities whose combination lowers the quality of the health care services provided. They include the use of obsolete medical equipment, adulterated drugs, minimal application of information communication technology and use of unqualified staff. However, the existing new ideas are viewed as opportunities for the health facility. They include collaboration with other health care providers both state actors and non-state actors, development of new programs in health care and maximization of the use of information communication technology. Consequently, factors that reduce the operationalization and functionality of the health facility are considered to be threats. Such factors include economic and political unpredictability, increased demand for very expensive technology in health care provision and low budget allocation by the national government for the health sector.

RESULTS

1. Strengths

- ❖ Availability of various functional departments within the facility.
- ❖ More qualified healthcare providers in Samburu County are stationed in this particular facility.
- ❖ Availability of support services around the facility.
- ❖ Higher number of patients' hence high consumption of retail services within this facility.

2. Weaknesses

- ❖ Use of obsolete machinery in the facility.
- ❖ Absence of parking space for the visitors and facility workers.
- ❖ Absence of centralized information management system.

3. Threats

- ❖ Stiff competition from private facility within the region.

- ❖ Inadequate hospital beds.
- ❖ Misappropriation of hospital funds by the management.
- ❖ Ever increasing debts.

4. Opportunities

- ❖ Rehabilitation of current infrastructures.
- ❖ Adoption of centralized information management system.
- ❖ Transparency and accountability.

DISCUSSION

The Samburu County Referral hospital offers a series of health care services in different departments such as laboratory services, pharmacy, comprehensive care Centre, child welfare clinic, maternity department, eye clinic, ear clinic, dentistry clinic amongst others. Availability of these departments within the same compound makes the patients to receive all medical attention that they need within the shortest time since no time is wasted moving from one placed to another. Nevertheless, the large numbers of patients who seek medical care in this facility regularly are consumers of retail services within the facility. In addition, Patients seeking medical attention in this facility have the opportunity to be treated by highly qualified practitioners compared to the other sub-county hospitals within Samburu County. Moreover, the availability of banking services few meters from this facility enhances the payment of various services both by the patients and the hospital management.

The use of obsolete machinery reduces the efficiency of health care delivery in this facility. In addition, inadequate number of modern ambulances for emergency services has reduced the rescue operations especially in the scenes of accidents resulting into deaths that could otherwise be abated. Some of the available ambulances lack basic life support equipment in them while others have since been grounded due to lack of proper maintenance. Consequently, absence of a centralized information centre within the facility reduces the efficiency in information dissemination between various departments.

The facility is facing still completion from private facilities such as Bliss that in Maralal town situated as some patients show preference to other available health care providers within the area due to the high quality services they receive in these alternative facilities hence tarnishing the reputation of the referral hospital. Nevertheless, inadequate number of hospital beds at times force patients to share beds or in extreme cases get discharged before the recommended hospital stay advised by the doctors hence a reduction in the duration of time a patient stays in the hospital. In addition, misappropriation of the hospital funds by the management have resulted in ever increasing debts to external suppliers such as the Kenya medical supplies agency and the Kenya power running into millions of shillings.

There is a very big opportunity for constant development and rehabilitation of the current infrastructures to meet the current demands as well as adoption of a centralized information centre for easy relay of information between departments. Furthermore, the management of this facility still has the opportunity to exercise high levels of transparency and accountability in the handling of the facility finances and win back the trust of the general public by bringing the lost glory of this facility.

Facility management is a very complex and enormous that calls for operational structures and functional algorithm. At Samburu County Referral Hospital, organization, personnel, equipment and associated infrastructures are the key contributors to the provision of high quality health care services. In summary, we recommend that relevant studies on the quality of the facility's activities should be carried out based on the patients' point of view and satisfaction and that it should be made compulsory whenever the patients are discharged from the facility.

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