STUDY ON ACCEPTANCE OF NABH ACCREDITATION BY NURSING STAFF OF A TEACHING HOSPITAL.

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Abstract
Quality in health care is a worldwide phenomenon and commitment to quality is pre requisite from all healthcare professionals. Nursing service is an integral part of comprehensive health care delivery. They have an objective to provide safe, compassionate and comfortable patient care. Meeting the standards of NABH accreditation is not possible without the understanding and acceptance of the standards by the nursing staff.
A descriptive study was carried out in a teaching hospital on nursing staff, of which a purposive sampling technique was done to select 100 nurses who had an experience of at least one year. A questionnaire was prepared according to NABH guidelines to assess the level of Attitude of nurses on acceptance of NABH accreditation.
The study revealed 74.5% of the nursing staff had a positive attitude and felt that accreditation will improve the quality of healthcare. Whereas 25.5% of the nursing personnel had no knowledge on the benefits of NABH accreditation.
Nursing care is an important component of quality health care. It is a pre requisite that before implementing NABH standards, all the nursing staff needs to be trained and made acquainted with the benefits of accreditation.

Keywords: Nursing staff, NABH Accreditation, Attitude.

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INTRODUCTION:
The present healthcare sector is highly advanced when compared to that of the previous decade. There is a need for standardization and improvement in quality of health care delivery at all levels. Concerns on quality of health facilities have been generated lately because of increasing awareness among the consumers.

The nursing staffs play a pivotal role in the health care delivery system. The National Board for Hospitals and Health care providers (NABH) standards is today the highest benchmark standard for hospital quality in India.

NABH Nursing Excellence Standards for hospitals prepared by the technical committee contains complete set of standards for evaluation of nursing services. NABH Nursing Excellence Standards has 07 chapters incorporating 48 standards and 216 objective elements. The standards provide framework for quality of care for patients and quality improvement for nursing services.

Nursing care comprises of services to the communities such as promotion of health, prevention of illness by health education and the care for ill, disabled and dying. Key nursing role includes advocacy, promotion of a safe environment, research, and participation in shaping health policy and patient management.

The main objective of the nursing professional is to provide safe and competent nursing care with compassion, and collaboration with patients, the family, the community and the clinical care team. The Nursing professionals are the building blocks of any quality related programme in a health care organization. Their knowledge, critical judgment, skills, attitude, communication and other soft skills thus make all the difference in the ultimate delivery of health care to the patients.

The health related issues are being taken in to the hospitals in which the Nursing professionals should be trained in such a manner that they are capable of handling the cases with confidence. The Nurses should be aware of the ethical issues of what is right and wrong, their societal mission and their behavior towards the patients. This helps the organization in improving its standard of care given to the patients.

OBJECTIVES
To assess the attitude and acceptance of Nursing staff towards the implementation of NABH standards.

METHODOLOGY
A descriptive study was conducted in a teaching hospital that is on its way to NABH accreditation. A purposive sampling technique was done to select 100 nurses who had an experience of at least one year. The survey was conducted with the help of a questionnaire. A structured questionnaire was prepared according to NABH Nursing Excellence guidelines and administered to the nursing staff. The questionnaire had 24 questions; the 21st question had a four-sub question on Hospital Infection Control (HIC). Each question had 3 options: 'yes', 'no' and 'not sure'. The data was collected after 6 months of the initiation of NABH accreditation process. Statistical calculation was done using SPSS15 software and percentages were drawn.

RESULTS
The study showed a significant positive attitude towards accreditation.

Table 1 highlights the awareness on the needs for accreditation. It was observed that the 94% of the respondents felt that there is a need for accreditation, and majority of the respondents were of the view that accreditation would benefit the patients, the nursing staff and the organization on the whole. 89% felt that the accreditation helps in systematising the process in the hospital.

It is evident from table 2 that the respondents were of the opinion that accreditation has a positive effect on patient care. 83% of the respondents felt that the medication errors will be minimised which shall help in improvement in quality of care to the patients. 80% found that the communication system in patient care had been improved. 88% of the nursing staff felt documentation has been improved due to the guidelines of NABH accreditation. 93% felt that better processes and improvements in the health care delivery increased the satisfaction of the patients. 97% thought that standardization of the system would improve the image of the hospital.

Table 3 shows the attitude towards improvements in HIC practices. Most of the respondents were positive with regard to improvement in HIC practices i.e. use of isolation or barrier nursing facilities, use of gloves, masks during procedures. 97% were aware of the sterilization practices and 93% were aware of the biomedical waste management practices in the hospital. 90% of the nursing staff reported the management in case of any needle stick injury.

Table 4 highlights the effects of accreditation on the working environment. It was observed that the factors like employee benefits, better working condition, updating knowledge and need were of a positive attitude. A mixed opinion was observed about the legal impact i.e., 73% felt that there will be better protection against legal actions.
Meanwhile the 51% of the respondents felt the workload has been increased by unnecessary documentation and procedures. 54% felt that their stress level has been increased because of NABH Accreditation.

**DISCUSSION**

The study revealed that NABH Accreditation has enabled the duties to be carried out in an organized and systematic manner with proper documentation and maintenance of records. This results in improvement of the quality of service to the patients.

The need for Accreditation was seen as an affirmative requirement by the nursing staff, hence proving the acceptance.

Moreover it was not felt as an interference to the duties which proves that the nursing staff has a positive attitude towards Accreditation.

Knowledge of the nurses regarding their practices and duties have improved in regard to the newer practices carried out.

Hence, majority agreed the introduction of NABH Accreditation shall improve the working condition and gives better job satisfaction.

**RECOMMENDATION**

- The stress level of the nursing staff can be minimised by proper distribution of the work
- There must be a regular follow up meetings held by the particular departments in order to smoothly run the process of NABH Accreditation
- Trainings should be given monthly to make them understand the preparation of manuals of each departments
- Accordingly, the feedback forms are collected by all the nursing staff about the NABH Accreditation work.

**CONCLUSION**

NABH Accreditation helps in redesigning the job so that they are more challenging to the employee and have less repetitive work. This study has brought out the positive attitude of the nursing staff which helps in obtaining the NABH Accreditation. Nursing fraternity plays a crucial role in increasing the prestige of the institution which is pre requisite in modern era to provide a standardized care to the patients. Sensitization of the nursing fraternity about NABH standards is mandatory. Training based on the feedback for continual improvement in bringing excellence in nursing services must be a main aim of the quality programme.
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