

HOSPITAL AND ITS ORGANIZATION

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

On completion of this chapter, the student should be able to explain the organizational structure and functions of a hospital, its types and human resources. The understanding of the function and structure of a hospital will be useful for him to start his carrier as a hospital pharmacist.

DEFINITION

Hospital is an organization and institution of public health and welfare. It provides healthcare facilities to ensure the well-being of people through specialized equipment handled by a group of specially trained individuals. Contrary to the common perception, a hospital not only takes care of sick people, it is also responsible for keeping a check on the well-being and maintaining health standards of the people in general. In order to keep them disease-free and in good health, a hospital undertakes immunization, runs educational programs to spread information regarding personal and social hygienic practices.

Classification

Hospitals can be classified both on the clinical basis and non-clinical basis. The former classification may be either on the criteria of the system of treatment followed in a particular hospital or on the basis of specialization of a particular disease or part of the human body. On the other hand, the non-clinical method of classification is based on other general parameters. For instance, the classification can be done based on size, facilities offered, or ownership of the hospital.

To wrap up, hospitals can be classified based on the following criteria:

- I. Size and Facilities
- II. Ownership

III. System of treatment and

IV. Specialization.

I. Size

More conveniently, hospitals are classified on the basis of the size, that is the number of beds available for patients that it can intake and treat. There can be hospitals with following bed capacity and hence, they lie under categories.

A. Less than 20 beds

B. Between 20 to 100 beds and

C. Above 100 beds (up to 1000 and more)

As mentioned above, the hospitals are also classified according to the facilities they offer and based on that, there are three major categories: Primary, Secondary and Tertiary hospitals. They can also be referred to as small, medium and large hospitals. Many hospitals run by private practitioners fall under the first category of small hospitals. These usually have one or two general wards available for the patients.

Furthermore, there might be only a couple of doctors working here and these hospitals may not have several diagnostic facilities like clinical lab, x-ray, scan, etc. They refer their patients to third-party agencies for these services. Primary health centers (PHC) run by government can be classified under this category and they are all aptly called as primary care hospitals, where the majority of patients go to get treatment for their illness. Many of these hospitals are not open during the night time.

Medium sized hospitals are those operating in small towns like Taluk headquarters. Here, an approximate of 5 to 10 doctors may be working that also includes a couple of specialists. These hospitals also offer some of the diagnostic facilities. The cases that are beyond the working module of primary level hospitals are sent to these secondary care hospitals for treatment. In a few essential wards like a medical ward, surgical ward, pediatric ward, and maternity ward, up to 100 beds are available in these hospitals. These hospitals are operational during day and night alike.

Large hospitals are highly specialized healthcare institutions with almost all medical facilities available to the patients. Their bed strength ranges from 100 to 1000. The district headquarters hospitals, Teaching (Medical College) hospitals and most of the giant private, corporate hospitals fall under this category. They are also called as tertiary hospitals or referral hospitals because more complicated cases from the first two types of hospitals are referred here for further treatment. Usually, an estimate of more than 50 doctors and over 300 Paramedical professionals work in these hospitals in 3 shifts throughout the day.

II. Ownership

Hospitals can also be classified according to ownership. There are two broader categories for this type:

1. Government-owned hospitals and 2. Private hospitals

1. Government Hospitals

From Primary Health Centers in small villages to Taluk, District, and Medical college hospitals in cities, a large number of hospitals are owned by the state governments. Additionally, there are several quasi/semi-government hospitals that are going by different names like local body hospitals like municipal hospitals, (municipal) corporation hospitals and panchayat union hospitals. These are run by local bodies which get financial aid from the government to serve the purpose.

On a much larger scale, Central Government also owns some hospitals like the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) hospitals, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), etc. Some of these hospitals are run by the central government undertakings or corporations to serve a particular group of people like railway hospitals, port trust hospitals, military hospitals, ESI hospital, etc.

2. Private Hospitals

There are many private hospitals of the same size, if not bigger than the Government hospitals. They are established by trusts, societies, families, and even resourceful individuals. They are well-equipped with specialized medical equipment, facilities and doctors with different specializations. They are also called corporate hospitals. For instance, Apollo Group of Hospitals is one such hospital chain. Medium and small private hospitals are available in all the cities and towns of our country. These private hospitals offer facilities and standards that are on par with that of the Western countries, thereby attracting a lot of patients from abroad to come to India for medical treatment at very nominal expenses (medical tourism).

III. System of Treatment

These groups of hospitals are those in which different systems are followed for treatment. They are Ayurveda Hospitals, Siddha Hospitals, Unani Hospitals or Homeopathy Hospitals. The physicians in these hospitals are well-educated and/ or have experience in these specific methods of treatment. They use the medicines specific to these systems or methods for treatment. These hospitals or physicians are popular in rural areas because they have marked their existence even before the allopathic system of treatment was introduced by British Rulers in our country.

IV. Specialization Basis

Hospitals can also be classified according to the specialized services offered in a particular hospital. For example, there are a few hospitals which only treat a particular part of the body or a particular disease. Thus, we have two groups:

Group I

- A. Eye hospital
- B. Dental hospital
- C. ENT hospital
- D. Chest hospital and
- E. Skin hospital

Group II

- (i) Psychiatric hospital
- (ii) Orthopedics hospital and
- (iii) Communicable and infectious diseases hospital.

All this apart, there are some other hospitals that offer treatment to a special group of patients like Children's Hospital, Maternity hospital, etc. In all these hospitals, doctors who are qualified in particular specialization are employed.

Thus, in a big country like India, there is a multiple variety of hospitals and practices followed for medical treatment. The Government of India has recently brought legislation, by name, Clinical Establishments Registration act, which envisage registration of all types of hospitals and clinics in the country. Hence, they can also be classified according to the facilities available in them into Grade I, II, III, etc.

ORGANIZATION

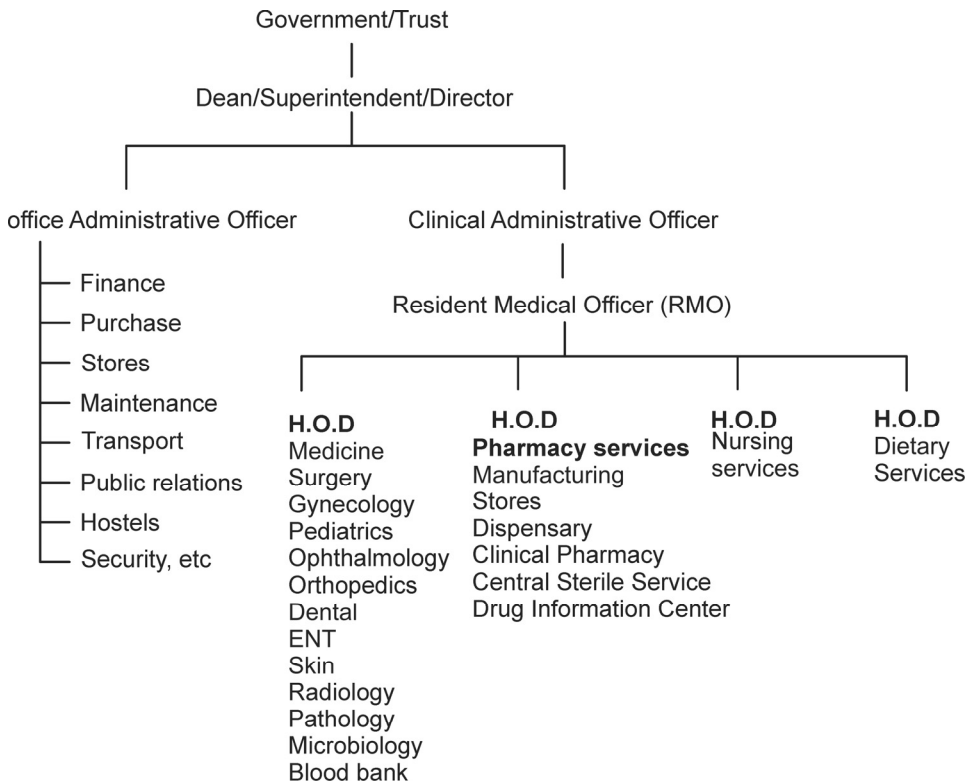
The nature and size of the organization of a hospital differ according to the requirement. The organization of a big hospital has two separate wings, one for the clinical administration and the other for office administration. The structure of these wings is given below:

The clinical administration and office administration both have multiple divisions or departments and every section is headed by a qualified person with specialization and experience in the particular subject. Needless to point out, large administrative bodies require individuals with special training and education in hospital administration.

Medium size hospitals like the Taluk hospitals and the ones in small towns differ when it comes to organizational setup. As already mentioned some of the sections/wings may not be available in these hospitals. They are added whenever necessary. Because these hospitals are too big to be managed by an individual, the Government or trust forms various committees to assist the Deans in their administration.

These committees are called Governing councils or Board of Directors. They have members from the trust and various departments of the hospital and even people from outside. People's representatives like MLA, MLC, MP or MC are often given membership in Government Hospital Councils to function effectively and to meet the medical requirements of the people.

Apart from this, various subcommittees are also formed at various levels of the hospital for the same reason e.g.: Finance committee, purchase committee, development committee, ethical committee, etc. Thus, big hospitals are well- organized and function smoothly.



Flow chart of a Hospital Organization

Administration

The above committees regularly conduct meetings and forward their recommendations to the Governing Council or Board of Directors, where these recommendations are considered, approved, modified or rejected. The approved decisions are then implemented by the Deans, either through their office administrative or clinical administrative wing.

Only policy matters and/or the decisions involving a huge sum of money are thus routed through the governing council. While the other small issues and day to day affairs are decided by the Deans themselves and implemented accordingly. However, Deans report all the important matters to the Council or Trust or Government through on a periodic basis.

Functions

The major functions of a hospital are,

1. Treatment of patients
2. Prevention of diseases and
3. Education of public

As pointed out above, hospitals are not only treating the patients but also preventing the disease from occurring and spreading. They undertake large scale immunization programs by vaccination drives and other programs like oral polio drop campaign, health camps to identify and prevent diseases in a particular area or demographic. As we know, prevention is better than cure, the Government of India gives more importance to these health related drives and programs. Many public health programs like mosquito eradication, chlorination of drinking water, etc, are promoted through various Government bodies.

To carry out all the above functions, various categories of personnel are employed in hospitals which are described below:

Medical Staff and their Duties

As already given in the organizational structure of the hospital, there are scores of medical and paramedical departments in a hospital. For all practical purposes, both these departments can be referred to as medical departments, as there are a significant number of non-medical staff working in any hospital who are not directly involved in the treatment of patients.

Medical staff list of the hospital starts from the top administer -- the dean or superintendent or director of the hospital and goes on to include HODs, Surgeons, Assistant surgeons, and House surgeon, who are listed at the bottom of the hierarchy. Similarly, there are a number of individuals heading the departments of non-medical and Paramedics, with junior pharmacists, nursing orderly or Lab technicians working according to the authorities they have in these departments. They all work in coordination with the sole aim of giving the best treatment to the patients coming to the hospital.

If it is a teaching or a medical college hospital, senior doctors teach the medical students during and after the hospital hours. They teach by demonstrating the conditions of patients that come to the hospitals and also via lectures in medical colleges in the afternoons.

Among all the departments, medical and surgical departments hold the major share of functions and responsibilities of the hospital. The concerning medical professionals first attend to the patients in the out-patient department and either start the treatment right away or refer the patient to other specialization departments like skin, Gynecology, etc. If required, they admit the patient in the wards. After conducting the required diagnostic tests, the prescription is given if it is an outpatient or documented in the case sheets of in-patients in the ward. This is done after the OP hours during the ward rounds. After performing similar tasks in the surgery department, surgeons perform surgeries programmed for the day. These patients are then transferred to the post-operative wards. There, they are taken care of until complete recovery or whenever they are fit enough for discharge. Thus, treating outpatients in OPD, inpatients in the wards, performing surgeries, and other clinical procedures are the routine functions of the medical staff. That apart, they attend to the administrative functions of the hospital and all the important meetings of staff or management.

Most of the time, junior staff of both medical and non-medical departments work during the night shifts and seek the help of the senior staff if required during the functional hours. Occasionally, staff also perform special tasks assigned to them like organizing and conducting

medical camps in villages. They also organize and attend seminars and conferences in their fields of specialization.

While performing all these functions, Paramedical staff are contributing their expertise routinely. Nurses take care of inpatients in the wards; administer drugs to patients both in OPD and wards. Pharmacists procure and keep the required drugs ready, dispense them to patients and perform the clinical pharmacy services [as described in a separate chapter later in the book]. Physiotherapists offer required therapy to the patients which are referred to them and the lab technologists help the doctor by performing diagnostic tests prescribed for a patient and their work is complemented by Radiology technicians in x-ray, scan, etc. Dieticians order and supervise the preparation and distribution of nutritious food required for all inpatients and also advises the food regimen to be followed by selected outpatients. All the staff members of the hospital work as a team and ensure that the patient is cured as early as possible and thus, the disease is contained and not allowed to spread or damage the society. That's why the medical profession is called a noble profession by the people.

In order to achieve the aim of 'Health for all', prevention and treatment alone are not sufficient unless the general public is aware and cooperative with the medical schemes. Hence, large scale education campaign is carried out to create awareness among people about diseases, preventive methods, nutrition, and personal and social hygienic practices via multiple communication methods like posters, cinema, TV and other media by the hospital and public health authorities.

QUESTIONS

1. Define hospitals.
2. Draw a flow chart of Hospital Administration.
3. What are secondary care hospitals?
4. What is the significance of the term referral in referral hospitals?
5. Classify hospitals and explain each one of them in detail.
6. What are the functions of a hospital? Explain.
7. How are big hospitals administered? Enumerate the role of various committees formed in hospitals.
8. Explain the functions of Medical staff of a hospital.