

What Should Be the Main Principles for the Management of Health Organizations?

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Introduction

Management is a set of interactive processes through which the utilization of resources results in the accomplishment of organization objectives [1]. Managements have a daily responsibility of solving problems creatively and achieving goals and objective of a health organization through others. Management sees to the day to day running of an organization and create the best atmosphere in which people work efficiently and effectively. It is the responsibility of management to make the necessary job planning, organizing the needed resources, keep and employ the needed staffs for the job, control the affairs of the organization and evaluate work done. Every health organization requires good management in order to achieve its objectives of providing quality health serves to meet clients' needs/expectations.

Management principles is a broad and general guideline that provides a blueprint for decision-making in an organization [2]. The principles of management are the processes that supports the planning, organizing, and controlling of the main operations of work and leading to getting things done through others. It provides a benchmark for decision making, resource management, and works more on the behavior of staffs in the organization. Also serves as a guide on the general running of the organization, staff recruitment, promotions and demotions, work ethics and influence the achievement of set goals and objectives. Management principles is therefore required to influence the smooth and successful running of health organizations.

A health organization is a purposely designed, structured social system developed for the delivery of healthcare services by specialized workforces to defined communities, populations or markets. [3]. Examples of healthcare organizations are nursing homes, hospitals, clinics, laboratory and diagnostic centers, etc. Health organizations have the main aim of providing quality health services that meets the health needs of clients/patrons.

Objectives

This essay briefly describes the composition of health management team in Ghana, discusses the need for health management principles and mainly analyzes the main principles for the management of health organizations.

Methodology

Secondary research methodology was used in this essay with data from books, scientific papers digital libraries and journals. Website of Ghana ministry of health and surveys of other researchers broadened the horizon of writer.

Chapter One

Composition of Health Management Teams

Healthcare organizations are complex in nature and demands a high level multi-professional management team to coordinate, supervise and lead staffs to serve the growing needs of clients/patients. Healthcare management teams are appointed by higher authorities like government, health ministries, owners of facilities, etc., to manage the daily operation of the organization. They are tasked to plan, control, employ and develop existing staffs, set goals/objectives, etc. Health managers do not only ensure patients receives the best care but also address achievements of performance targets set each year. The composition of health management teams depends on the type of health organization and differ from country to country. In Ghana, the health ministry has many agencies such as Ghana Health Service, Christian Health Service, Private Health Services, Islamic Health Services, etc. (MOH, Ghana). Each of them has their own organizational structure but similar composition of management teams. The health management team of most of the health services in Ghana comprises of administrator, medical director, clinical coordinator, nurse manager, head of pharmacy, laboratory manager, human resource administrator, head of finance and other selected staffs with a tenure of office. The management team is carefully selected from each department of the health organization making information and communications with staffs very easy and faster.

The Need for Principles of Management

Healthcare management principles are much important and applied based on the needs and goals of the organization. It is the lenses through which managers see through the future and aid in strategic planning and transformation of the health organizations. The principles of management are important for the following reasons; to increase managerial efficiency, understand the nature of management, train managers, improve research, to coordinate material and human resources and to attain social objectives [4].

Although many researchers and scholars including Elton Mayo, F. W. Taylor, Henri Fayol, etc., have postulated several management principles, which can also be applied in health organization. Chapter two analysis seven main principles that can be applies to health organizations to help achieve the set goals of providing quality health services to mankind

Chapter Two

The Main Principles for Health Management are Discussed Below

Unity of Command

It states that every Junior Staff should receive orders and be accountable to one and only one superior [5]. The healthcare industry is complex with many departments with each having sub teams and their heads. It is essential that staff receive orders and information from one team head so as to avoid confusion. In hospitals, nurses, pharmacy/dispensing staffs, etc. have in-charges for each shift who also takes orders from/reports directly to their ward heads. The more staffs receive orders/report to specific heads the easier it makes in assigning responsibilities, fixing errors quickly, lessen instructional conflicts and increase loyalty.

Power Sharing and Co-Accountability

The decision-making process in care networks with the participation of the services/professionals involved and the managerial mechanisms promote co-accountability and articulation [6]. It builds an integrated system for communication and dissemination of information. This ensures management does not take decisions in isolation. In state-owned health facilities in Ghana, management yearly issues appraisal form to all staff to access their previous year's performance, their individual plans, objectives, strategies and any other suggestions for the year ahead. This helps prepare a comprehensive management target at collective interests leading to subordination of individual interest. Also, it helps build an articulated system of cooperation between healthcare staff/professionals and the healthcare managers, thereby ensuring effective teamwork, respecting varied knowledge and potentialities, and accountability for care shared among professionals, patients, community and managers. At the end of the day, each department's manager is able to account for their role in achieving the yearly targets of the facility.

Division of Work

One of the principles postulated by Henri Fayol. This entails the

division of work among the different individuals in the organization to cause specialization in every activity [7]. Management should look out for the specific specialty areas that is highly needed by clients. In a hospital setting, management must do well to get specialized personnel to fill administrative, nursing, medical and other roles. The specialization of healthcare staff is essential as it increases their knowledge, experience and skills leading to the provision of quality care, work efficiency and increased productivity.

Transparency and Accountability

Management must be transparent in their communication with staffs, patients and community. There should be no hidden agenda/cover ups when dealing with especially staffs who are the main actors. Management must be able to present its decisions and account for services rendered to superiors and institutions involved in the healthcare network. Accountability for collective interests is expressed in the commitment to the health system's guidelines, respecting the diversity of perspectives and the promotion of social control. This promotes mutual trust among the staff, managers and the healthcare network the facility belongs to.

Focus On Health Needs and Comprehensive Care

The health needs of community must be paramount in decision making. Health management teams must conduct feasibility study of the location of their facility to know the immediate health needs and strategically plan a comprehensive health program that meets the needs of the community. Comprehensiveness of care as the guide to the organization of healthcare. For instance, if managers decide to provide dialysis and CT scan services in a rural community and overlook services such as hematological laboratory services which is more essential in a rural area where their main health problems are infectious diseases such as malaria and cholera, means a misplaced priority. If the primary care needs of the people and the community is not considered at first hand, the organization cannot serve its purpose. This principle in essence helps managers to make effective plans to provide quality, safer and improved care to the populace.

Focus On Outcomes That Add Value to Health and Life

The main aim of health organizations is to save and preserve lives. Management needs to employ standards and indicators that promotes the health needs of the people. Management can set a target and provide indicators such as increasing life expectancy of the people, reducing longer waiting hours, reducing maternal and infant mortality, etc.

Discipline

One of the principles postulated by Fayol which simply means obeying set rules and regulations. The quality of leadership and the enactment of laws are important in instilling discipline at the workplace. Discipline results from good leadership at all levels of the organization, fair agreements such as provisions for rewarding superior performance and judiciously enforced penalties for infrac-

tions. (Popper et al., 2018:809). Healthcare is governed by laws and ethics ranging from specific professional laws/ethics, company law (since its registered as a company) and national laws. All of these must be respected and adhered to for smooth running of the organization. In the era of many medico-legal battles, it is apparent that healthcare managers ensure staff remain disciplined by obeying all professional code of ethics especially when dealing with patients/clients to avoid legal implications. Rules instilling time consciousness, avoiding the use of mobile phones during working hours, among others, and punishing offenders directly affects the efficiency of services rendered at the healthcare organization. Chaos is the fruit of a healthcare organizations without principle of discipline and the end results is unsatisfactory patients/client care.

Conclusion

This essay discussed the main principles for the management of a health organization. It also looked at the need for these principles as well as explored the main composition of health management with reference to Ghana and their primary functions/responsibilities in the achievement of the set goal. Other key words such as management with its key function of leading and running the day-to-day activities of the healthcare organization and the need for it were also explained. Then, the essay critically analyzed seven principles which the writer believes are essential in the management of a healthcare organization and their relevance in the management of healthcare organizations.

The seven principles discussed are, unity of command, power sharing and co-accountability, division of work, transparency and accountability, focus on health needs and comprehensive care, focus on outcomes that add value to health and life and discipline.

It is worth noting that, these principles if well applied by healthcare organization management leads to effective and efficient use of resources, promotes free and participative decision-making process, improves working relations among healthcare staff, and promotes unity and increase the work rate of staffs. Also, these principles positively enhance management's capacity to plan, control, initiate, evaluate and transform their organization. Again, the essay found that the discussed principles help healthcare managers to understand and develop their staffs well, instill discipline, promote teamwork and as well promotes accountability and transparency [8-14].

Finally, these principles if well adopted by healthcare managers will help draw strategic plans, provide a benchmark for the provision of quality services for patients and improve the governance process and smooth running of the health organization. Successful governance of a healthcare organization depends highly on strong and effective management leadership who adopts the needed principles of management. A health organization without proper principles is like a nation without a culture.

It is my candid opinion that the adoption of these principles in the

healthcare industry whether in combination to others or singularly will be impactful in the current fast growing healthcare industry so as to meet the growing healthcare needs of the world as a whole. Further studies is important to develop more clear cut principles which is more specific to the healthcare industry and this essay can be as a basis for such further researches.

Henri Fayal's 14 principles of management can be found in figure I of appendix.

Appendix

The fourteen principles of management by Henri Fayol are seen in figure I

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