INVESTIGATING CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM) IN INDIAN HOSPITALS

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Abstract:
The last few years have seen a spectacular development in the health and hospital consciousness of the Indian public. The general people are now more alert to their health and are accepting the role of hospitals in their daily life. People have gradually rid themselves of their old prejudices. Patients today enter the hospitals willingly with confidence and with hope of improved health and longer life.
The recent Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is about customer care and business strategy and the use of IT tools such as data mining to achieve the objective of profitability through enhanced customer relations.
Organizations are on the threshold of a shift from a transaction-based economy to a relationship-based economy. The main challenge in the near future will be for marketers, company executives to work closely with IT Professionals within the Company in order to understand the emerging CRM/eCRM methods and to see how it can be used to increase the profitability of the business.

Keywords : CRM, Patient, Healthcare, Hospital.

1. INTRODUCTION:

CRM is an important issue in healthcare service especially when there is a potential for healthcare providers to build ongoing relationships with patients. In the competitive, healthcare environment, many of the healthcare providers are now focusing on CRM with the help of information systems to deliver value over price.

According to Oliver (2008), the value of CRM is to create and maintain good and long term relationships with customers. Customer loyalty is a critical criterion for CRM. Loyalty refer to the repeated use of certain product and services by customers and even changes in business scenarios will not affect the purchase patterns or willingness to continue to use those products or services. Therefore, the core of the CRM in healthcare service is to satisfy patients' interest and needs to increase the patient loyalty level.

A healthcare system over-wrought with inconsistencies and errors can prevent even the best organization from developing strong relationships with its patients. Customer relationship management (CRM) for the healthcare industry sounds simple enough. In fact, experts are of the view that the concept of CRM is implicit in the practice of healthcare.

There are few relationships as important as the one-to-one relationship between a patient and his or her healthcare provider. When patients select hospitals, they believe that those hospitals to have accurate and complete information about their health. Patients no longer tolerate the excuse that errors and inconsistencies in their medical information are just an unfortunate side effect of dealing with large amounts of data.

A CRM system can help doctors, paramedical staff to view patient's demographic information, history of the patient. Using CRM they can also standardize and streamline processes. It also helps them to enable proactive communications. In short it helps them to improve their patients' overall health. Additionally, this indirectly will satisfy the patient as they receive additional services, which increases the likelihood they will make regular preventative healthcare an ongoing priority Hagland (2009).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW :

A lot of definitions of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) exist in the literature. Only definitions which are relevant to area of research are included.
CRM is not just a technology, but rather a comprehensive approach to an organization's philosophy in dealing with its customer. This includes policies and processes, front office customer service, employee training, marketing, information system.

According to Gartner, (2010), the three phases in which CRM helps to support the relationship between a business and its customers are, to:

Acquire: CRM is used to acquire new customers through excellent contact management, direct marketing, selling and fulfillment.

Enhance: eCRM is combined with customer service tools to offer customers excellent service using a team of trained and skilled sales and service specialists, which offers customers the convenience of one-stop shopping.

Retain: CRM software helps an organization to identify its loyal customers for rewarding them. It further helps in taking relationship marketing initiatives.

Hypothesis

a) $H_1 0$: CRM does not affect patient's loyalty.

$\mu > 2.0$

$H_1 A$: CRM affects patient's loyalty.

$\mu <= 2.0$

b) $H_2 0$: CRM does not address patient requirements and issues.

$\mu > 2.0$

$H_2 A$: CRM addresses patient requirements and issues.

$\mu < =2.0$

c) $H_3 0$: To identify the valuable patient is not significant in CRM strategy.

$\mu > 1.0$

$H_3 A$: To identify the valuable patient is significant in CRM strategy.

$\mu < = 1.0$

d) $H_4 0$: CRM does not affect process transactions.

$\mu > 1.0$

$H_4 A$: CRM makes process transactions faster.

$\mu < = 1.0$

e) $H_5 0$: CRM does not play any role in providing accurate and quicker information to the patient.

$\mu > 1.0$

$H_5 A$: CRM plays an important role in providing accurate and quicker information to

the patient.

$\mu <= 1.0$

3.   WORK PLAN AND METHODOLOGY

The following discussion, concentrates on the methodology to be used, elaborating upon the various aspects of research design, study area, samples size and methods of data collection and data analysis.

 Research Design: Many research designs are used for such type of investigations. For this study the descriptive survey is used .Data were scientifically collected, analyzed and presented to give a clear image about the state of customer relationship management in the study area. Using descriptive research a particular observable fact about the exiting situation can be observed. In shorts, a descriptive survey deals with the relationship among non-manipulated variables Alshawi (2005).

The rationale for descriptive survey may be seen as explaining current situation in a systematic manner. Specific procedures are followed in descriptive surveys. In it research questions are answered in a descriptive way. The tools used in it are easier for the collection of data.

The descriptive survey minimizes personality values; beliefs and predisposition of the researcher since there are laid down procedures to follow. The descriptive survey also provides the researcher with instruments, which are easier for the collection of data for the study.

The Study Area: The study was carried out in the Mumbai Metropolitan city of Maharashtra. For study purpose five big corporate private hospitals of the region were covered. It has many big private hospitals.

Data Analysis

Sample Description: Questionnaires were answered by 500 of respondents of five different hospitals.36% respondents were female and 64% were male. 69% respondents were above 45 years of age.71% of respondents were graduates, 17% of respondents were non graduates, 12 % of respondents were postgraduates.

The 500 older participants were asked to answer the questions related to hypothesis. After receiving their responses mean and standard deviation are calculated.

Major findings: Customer Relationship Management in Hospitals (CRMH) is about patients care and business strategy and the use of IT to achieve the objective of profitability through enhanced patient relations.

After data analysis, the results are tabulated below:

Table 1

Hypothesis	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
$H_1 0$: CRM does not affect patient's loyalty. $H_1 A$: CRM affects patient's loyalty.	1.85	0.85	Reject hypothesis $H_1 0$. Accept hypothesis $H_1 A$.
$H_2 0$: CRM does not address patient requirements and issues. $H_2 A$: CRM addresses patient requirements and issues.	1.95	0.9	Reject hypothesis $H_2 0$. Accept hypothesis $H_2 A$.
$H_3 0$: To identify the valuable patient is not significant in CRM strategy. $H_3 A$: To identify the valuable patient is significant in CRM strategy.	1.2	0.4	Reject hypothesis $H_3 0$. Accept hypothesis $H_3 A$.
$H_4 0$: CRM does not affect process transactions. $H_4 A$: CRM makes process transactions faster	1.15	0.35	Reject hypothesis $H_4 0$. Accept hypothesis $H_4 A$.
$H_5 0$: CRM does not play any role in providing accurate and quicker information to the patient. $H_5 A$:CRM plays an important role in providing accurate and quicker information to the patient.	1.2	0.4	Reject hypothesis $H_5 0$. Accept hypothesis $H_5 A$.

4. CONCLUSION:

From the above tabulated results it can be concluded that CRM implementation is essential in hospitals.CRM creates a win-win situation for both hospital administrators and patients. Using CRM a hospital can increase patient's loyalty ,can address patient's issues, and can identify valuable patient.At the same time patient can get accurate information very quickly. Most important aspects from patient point of view is that process transaction is faster because of CRM.

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