

## **1.2 CHALLENGES IN HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION**

Challenges to administrative abilities have come from within the health field as well as from the public:

1. Business and professional leaders who were initiated into the hospital scene as trustees of voluntary hospitals;
  2. The large number of physicians who are especially worry about the facilities and services available for the care of their patients;
  3. Professional organizations which prescribe various standards of hospital operation while granting approval to the hospitals;
  4. Academicians who are concerned about matching what they teach with the requirements of the patients and hospital administration;
  5. Labour demanding standards of employment and working conditions.
  6. Trustees of the Trust Hospitals, members of Registered Society Hospitals, shareholders of Corporate Hospitals, and other who have been their own masters and have been operating with no restraints so far will have to face increasing professionalism threatening their power and existence.
- The hospital CEO has to collect sufficient funds from patients rather than from trustees, society members, shareholders, etc. to run his hospital.
  - A new challenge is that of being environment friendly. Hospitals do not focus on safe environment.
  - The CEO of a hospital must be able to provide latest technology and vision. He should push for change when it is required in the interest of the patients, employees and the community.
  - The Chief Executive Officer of a hospital; will have to serve as a catalyst for relationship building between patients and employees, government agencies and his hospital and between hospitals and his own hospital;
  - It is also important for the hospital CEO to be a business practitioner first and then a technologist. His responsibilities include executive communication, budgeting, building relationships, management, problem solving etc.
  - CEO is primarily responsible to facilitate and communicate the hospital's philosophy and vision.
  - The administrators of earlier hospitals usually were nurses were nurses who combined their nursing tasks with the performance of supervision of supply of cloth, feeding of patients and

housekeeping. As the medical aspects of hospital service became more complex, physicians became administrators.

- There's no doubt a hospital administrator's job is difficult and demanding, and it's only getting tougher. Here are four challenges they must overcome in order to successfully improve patient care.

### **1. Compete for healthcare professionals**

There is a real shortage of healthcare professionals, and it's hurting the profitability of hospitals as they pay more for every employee they hire.

From 2008 and 2018, healthcare employment will grow by 23 percent, compared to only 9 percent in all other employment sectors, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. During that time, hospitals will be forced to compete for:

- Registered nurses (expected to grow 22.2 percent)
- Licensed practice and licensed vocational nurses (expected to grow by 20.7percent)
- Home health aides (expected to grow by 50 percent)
- Nursing aids, orderlies and attendants (expected to grow by 18.8 percent)
- Physicians and surgeons (expected to grow by 21.8 percent)

With this in mind, hospital administrators must put a plan in place to address the shortage and compete for the best employees. As they compete, they must be skilled at recruiting, hiring and retaining qualified healthcare professionals.

Hospital administrators need to build strong relationships with schools that offer healthcare-related degrees in their local communities and across the nation.

Additionally, they must make working at their hospital attractive, which means thinking beyond competitive pay and benefits to ensuring each individual employee feels connected to the hospital and has a passion for working for the organization.

### **2. Specialize for growth**

With the rapid growth of specialty hospitals, physician-run outpatient surgery centers and diagnostic centers, traditional hospitals are facing increased competition.

To compete for patients, hospital administrators must be prepared to set their hospitals apart through a specialized care strategy.

Benchmarking best practices is essential; hospital administrators must take time to investigate other specialty healthcare providers in their local communities, identify areas of opportunity and put a strategic plan in place for building renowned specialty practices. During this process, they typically take numerous factors into consideration, including local demographics and competitors' areas of specialization.

With a specialization strategy solidified, hospital administrators must focus their efforts on recruiting specialized personnel and building a local reputation for excellence for the practice area.

### **3. Prepare for the future**

As America's 78 million baby boomers come of age, hospitals are feeling the pressure to expand to meet growing demand. At the same time, hospitals are facing changes in the way they are paid. Reimbursements are shifting from a fee-for-service model to a model that is based on outcomes and overall quality of care.

When patient satisfaction plays a role in the way hospitals are paid, you can bet hospital administrators are making it a priority.

Therefore, hospitals are conducting extensive market research to ensure their expansion efforts are aligned with what consumers expect.

For example, with the knowledge that women make most healthcare decisions in a family, one hospital decided to build an 18,000-square-foot imaging center for women with a spa-like atmosphere and robes. One children's rehabilitation hospital built a massive facility that comes complete with therapeutic gardens, play areas and even an all-grades school for inpatients. Other hospitals are converting semi-private rooms into private rooms, and there is a great deal of emphasis on making them safe, comfortable and cozy.

Having modern facilities with up-to-date medical equipment is crucial for hospitals that are competing for patients. With this in mind, hospital administrators must be prepared to balance current financial strain while positioning for the future.

### **4. Improve patient care through technology**

There's not a corner or crevice of healthcare that is not being affected somehow by technology. Medical providers throughout the country, for instance, are spending millions of dollars on electronic medical record systems that allow physicians and hospitals to seamlessly share patient information.

Ensuring that EMRs are effectively implemented within the healthcare organization is a critical role of healthcare administrators.

Healthcare administrators need broad-based skills to integrate information and make evidence-based decisions. From electronic communication to order entry systems to the most advanced imaging technology, even the best technology is no good unless it's applied to improving organizational and patient outcomes.

Hospital administrators are responsible for making sure hospitals operate efficiently and provide quality medical care to patients.

As a result, they must keep up with advances in medicine, technology and government regulations and policy changes.