

ABSTRACT: INNOVATIONS

Establishment of an uninterrupted service delivery in human resource-constrained Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital

Wijenayake PH¹, Hewage RA², Samararathne K¹

¹ *Post Graduate Institute of Medicine, Colombo*

² *Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital*

Introduction: Healthcare organizations' greatest challenge is the restriction of new recruitment and employee retention in the context of the prevailing economic crisis. Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital (SJGH) experienced a high turnover rate of employees leading to a great deficiency, especially in the minor category.

Objective: To reduce the adverse impact of minor staff shortages on service delivery at SJGH.

Methodology: Caregiver training was initiated in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) for unskilled recruiters awaiting foreign employment. SJGH was registered under the Tertiary Vocational Educational Commission (TVEC) and possesses the expected standard National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) frame level 3. Adhering to TVEC's standards, a comprehensive 12-module curriculum was formulated. The roles and responsibilities between SJGH and SLBFE were defined through a memorandum of understanding. Pre-placement Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted to identify the required units. Forty trainees were trained by competent trainers in forty-five days with real practical exposure under the supervision of unit heads.

Results: Service delivery disturbances of SJGH were minimized. The evaluation found that all forty trainees were competent in caregiving. Post-KIIs revealed high satisfaction levels of the patients and unit heads regarding the performance of the trainees. Assigned duties were well carried out by them according to the rules and norms. Trainees were also satisfied with the positive experience obtained. SLBFE possesses a competitive advantage over other recruiting agencies.

Discussion: As a relief for the current financial crisis, foreign currency inflow can be encouraged by deploying these skilled workers in foreign countries creating an improved positive image of the country. This project demonstrated how the challenges could be well addressed through inter-sectorial collaboration.

Conclusion and recommendation: Both parties benefited from this project achieving win-win status. Further, this cost-effective intervention assured uninterrupted service. Therefore, it can be recommended as an applicable alternative solution to mitigate service disruption due to the scarcity of staff.

Keywords: staff shortage, caregiver training, service interruption

Corresponding Author: Wijenayake PH

e-Mail: pwijenayake89@yahoo.com

Presentation at 29th Annual Scientific Sessions - The College of Medical Administrators of Sri Lanka on 26th November 2022

Competing Interests: Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.