

TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN HEALTH

AsenaTuğba EVREN SUBAŞI

PhD student Program «Business Administration»

SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY (IMBL)

a.tugbaevrens@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Total quality management (TQM) with its quality-focused approach supports the optimum improvement and development as in every sector as well as health sector and health organizations. In this respect, the primary goals of TQM in the field of health are to improve the performance in health facilities, to give training to the employees continuously, to observe the cost-performance balance and to provide the change and transformation of services in a way that is integrated with technology by means of using all resources when necessary. In this study, the purpose and outputs of TQM in the field of health are explained.

Key words: Quality, Total Quality Management, Health Sector

TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN HEALTH

The concept of quality in health involves the keeping the health of the individual and the community in a sustainable manner and the enabling them to regain health in the fastest way if they have health problems. According to Karabulut (2009), quality concept in this sense means the fulfillment of personnel and institutions giving health service their duties at an optimum level by providing a standard above certain norms as in all other sectors. According to Özdil (2010), the determinants of quality in the health sector can be evaluated from three different viewpoints. In this context, the technological qualities and the physical facilities of health institutions in which the service is provided and the technical qualities of personnel constitute the quality of the physical structure. The conformity of activities carried out in the health institution to current scientific data and developments in technology and establishment of an effective communication with the patients reveals the effective power of total quality management. Finally, accurate analysis of the results emerging after health services are supplied is also considered as the final dimension of quality.

While the quality in health sector has such a great importance; it has been desired to apply the total quality philosophy to health field because competition occurs among health institutions and individuals seek to obtain quality service with increase in their purchasing power and it offers a solution for cost-quality. According to Yalçın (2014), total quality management practices provide health institutions with advantages such as increasing in the patient satisfaction, making personnel more qualified, starting to use automation registration systems and establishing a more effective communication within the organization. According to Karabulut (2009), total quality management practices are carried out in health services indicated in the following stages:

Determination of quality policies: The quality level that the health institution wants to achieve forms a basis for its quality policies. The quality policy is carried out by the participation of the health workers and the incentives and motivations of the managers that are in conformity with health organization's policies. While quality policy is being determined, meeting the needs and demands of individuals who receive or will receive service in a health organization must be the most effective goal.

Strategic planning: The TQM strategy should have qualifications that will meet the quality policies of health institutions and the quality requirements in accordance with these policies. On behalf of quality applications, health institutions and organizations should design quality management strategies in this direction, taking the positive or negative points in their own structures into consideration. According to Aslan (2007), while these strategies are being prepared; a team setting the strategies should be established and customer surveys should be prepared and quality norms should be determined and studies should be made to solve the problems specific to the health organization and the organization should define quality improvement plan in accordance with its own positive and negative aspects.

Determining the areas of responsibility of employees: It is very important to provide the participation of employees in order to ensure that TQM practices are carried out in a healthy manner. TQM is possible with team work and the problems, which cannot be solved by those who are specialist in a single field, can only be recognized by different individuals who have different viewpoints and solutions may be offered in this direction. As a result of team work, each piece in the scope of quality management system provides career development, learning and authorization and thus job satisfaction is experienced. However, in order for teams to be successful in TQM, it is necessary to determine correctly the responsibilities and job descriptions of leaders, managers and subordinates and they should fulfill their missions in accordance with their responsibilities and job descriptions (Yalçın, 2014, Aslan, 2007, Karabulut, 2009).

Determination of the quality organization structure: The composition of quality groups established by the employees, who perform a duty in their own

units, creates the quality organization. One of the main objectives in the structure of organization is to increase the participation of employees and also to create the perception that employees have a share in the final outcomes of the quality works to be performed by the health institution. Thus, performance and job satisfaction of the employee are increased together with the development of quality (Yetginoğlu, 2009; Karabulut, 2009).

Customer definition, determination of expectations and requirements: One of the main objectives of desire for quality improvement is to provide customer satisfaction. Internal and external customer classes in health institutions are composed of patients, patient relatives and employees. At this point, communicating with internal and external customers in an accurate and good manner and receiving feedback from them is very important in terms of examining the customer satisfaction.

Establishment of quality assessment committees: In parallel with achievement, standardization and development of quality, the evaluation management is carried out by evaluation committees in health organizations. The process of setting up the evaluation committees and determining their responsible areas may vary depending on the physical structure and basic needs of the relevant health facility.

Training of Employees: It is possible through TQM trainings to ensure that employees understand the requirements and importance of the system by comprehending their roles and missions within the organization (Bektaş, 2013). The most basic aim of the trainings is to maximize the knowledge, skill and consciousness levels of the employees for the quality applications and development processes.

Establishing the accreditation system: Accreditation systems mean the assessment of given services by accreditation bodies in terms of complying with conditions, standards and regulations to meet the necessary requirements at a satisfactory level or not through various controls, analyzes and certifications to be performed. The accreditation bodies inspect and approve the health services in both managerial and technically in line with international norms (Yetginoğlu, 2009).

Data collection and their analysis process by using advanced methods: It is required to use advanced analysis techniques to collect data, to keep collected data and to analyze them via right methods after health services are given. According to Gencil (2001), the analysis is followed in seven phases. They consist of process design, creation of an idea, data collection, problem solving, analysis, benefitting from supportive ideas and implementation phases.

Monitoring, evaluation and development of quality performance: Achieving a high performance level in the health service is a managerial situation.

Health organization's managers should also set standards related with performance and the performance of each unit should be monitored and evaluated pursuant thereto. Quality performance studies should be carried out in units where quality performance are lower than other services in order to increase and later to improve the quality performance (Karabulut, 2009).

Measuring the service quality in health organizations: The quality of service at each phase and unit in health organizations should be measurable and evaluable. According to Sarp (2004), the principles established in order to measure the quality of service are as follows:

Adaptation to technological progress and supply and maintenance of medical devices: The use of the most appropriate medical equipment and technology to diagnose the diseases and to determine appropriate treatment methods is one of the priorities of quality applications. The availability of technological facilities and devices at optimum levels, when needed, is a result of the quality expectation of patients in providing the rapid diagnosis and treatment possibility. For this reason, health organizations need to follow accessible and sustainable technology along with the rising costs resulting from procurement and maintenance activities of medical equipment. Therefore, factors such as the suitability for purpose of the technologies and medical devices, the establishment of the performance-cost balance, periodic control of the performance of the devices and getting the local service support for the maintenance services are directly related to the objectives of TQM.

RESULT

Adoption of TQM philosophy in health institutions creates individual and societies that demand quality-oriented service and expect high quality. Aiming to find solution in a most effective and rapid way in order to help patients recover before and after preventive health services, TQM also supports the effective use of all needed resources and the supply of quality service at optimum cost. Health care services must be accessible and sustainable in TQM which aims at achieving the performance-cost balancing in health organizations and complying with relevant legal regulations in all services. During the course of treatment, the participation of the patient to the treatment consciously should be provided and patient records should be kept systematically with the help of automation systems. Employees should be subject to periodic trainings in accordance with current information systems and developments, performance data of health institutions should be collected systematically and it should be targeted to obtain the optimized quality by analyzing the outcomes including medical devices through the innovative technologies.

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