Exploration of Patient's Perception Towards Pharmacy Appointment Card System (PACS) in Major Specialist Hospital Setting: A Qualitative Study

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Value-added Services (VAS) was adopted and implemented by the pharmacy unit to shorten medication refills waiting time. The most popular Pharmacy VAS service in Hospital Tuanku Ampuan Najihah is the Pharmacy Appointment Card System (PACS). This study aims to explore patient's view, the belief and understanding of the PACS. **Methods:** Face to face, semi-structured interview involving 18 outpatients using PACS were conducted. Respondents were queried about the following: views, perceived advantages and disadvantages of PACS; and facilitators and barriers surround PACS. Thematic content analysis was used to identify insights from the data. **Results:** Identified themes included, 'Attitude', 'Knowledge and awareness' and 'Expectations'. Although dissatisfied towards the efficiency of PACS, respondents would still like to continue this service, citing it as being age-friendly, convenient and stress reducing. Respondents with logistical issues claimed that logistics remained a barrier to prescription refills, despite being subscribed to PACS. Poor service awareness and explanation resulted in low compliance rate towards prescription refills via PACS. This led to confusion among respondents on the implementation process of PACS. Expectations on PACS include, the allocation of a dedicated PACS counter, a personal reminder message and the presence of highly trained staffs. Similar to findings of other VAS studies, patients from rural areas expressed logistical barrier for prescription refills, despite being subscribed to VAS. **Conclusion:** Respondents were satisfied with PACS. Improvements in efficiency and service awareness can boost the adoption rate among patients.

Access to Public Primary Care Facilities During the Pandemic and Lockdown: How Can We Measure the Impact?

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: COVID-19 pandemic raises significant challenges on accessibility of people to healthcare services (PHC) especially assessing the primary healthcare services. The accessibility to public PHC facilities can be measured through availability, utilisation and timeliness indicators. This paper describes the methods used in assessing the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on the accessibility of public PHC services in Malaysia. **Methods:** The accessibility's domains and indicators were derived from the literatures and refined following stakeholders' engagement and consideration of data availability. Data on various services provided for January 2019 to June 2021 was retrieved using multiple databases at national, programme and state levels covering a total of 1131 public primary care clinics nationwide. **Results:** A total of 20 access indicators were identified to represent the three accessibility domains: (i) Availability (3 indicators; number of primary care facilities, opening hours and new services available); (ii)Utilisation (14 indicators; number of outpatient, laboratory test, X-ray, home visits, antenatal care, woman health care, postnatal care, postnatal care visit (> 2 times in 1 - 7 days of birth), gestational period at first time visits, women receiving oral or injectable contraception, child health care and vaccination (DTaP (booster), MR&DT(7 years old), HPV(13 years old) and (iii) Timeliness (3 indicators; defaulter rate for appointment of outpatient, maternal and child health. **Conclusion:** The methodology provides PHC accessibility trend and identify services that have been significantly affected during COVID-19 pandemic thus highlighting areas where more researches should be focused on and where improvement is required.