

Patient satisfaction with outpatient health services in Hawassa University Teaching Hospital, Southern Ethiopia

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Background: The level of patients' satisfaction is one among the mechanisms used in assessing the quality of health care services.

Methodology: This cross sectional study was conducted in Hawassa University Teaching Hospital to assess level of satisfaction of patients with outpatient health services and factors associated with it. A total of 452 outpatient service users were included in the study and multiple logistic regression was used to assess the relationship between patients' satisfaction and possible predictors.

Results: Four-fifth (80.1%) of patients reported to be satisfied with the hospital's outpatient services. Respondents who claimed to have had a long stay in the hospital were found to be more satisfied than those who claimed to have had a very long stay (adjusted odds ratio (AOR) = 4.54, 95% CI: 2.38, 8.65). Furthermore, there was negative association between patients' satisfaction and not getting required services in the hospital (AOR = 0.78, 95% CI: 0.41, 0.96), lack of privacy (AOR = 0.52, 95% CI: 0.27, 0.78), and absence of good dialogue with outpatient service providers (AOR = 0.28, 95% CI: 0.12, 0.41).

Conclusions: This study revealed that satisfaction of patients with outpatient health services is related to financial and interpersonal factors. The interpersonal factors might have happened due to the fact that there are student medical practitioners providing services in the hospital who do not have previous skill and experience of handling patients. Thus, the interpretation of the findings of this study may not apply to other non-teaching hospitals. Health managers and service providers should devise innovative ways to reduce waiting time, ensure existence of good dialogue with patients, and maintain privacy of patients in order to improve the level of satisfaction of patients.

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