LUMEN ET VIRTUS
ISSN: 2177-2789

HEALTH MANAGEMENT: MANAGERIAL PRACTICES FOR THE OPTIMIZATION OF SERVICES

https://doi.org/10.56238/levv15n43-136

Submitted on: 30/11/2024 **Publication date:** 31/12/2024

Daniel Melo da Silva Júnior[1], Josimá Lima Oliveira[2], Ana Luiza Macedo Feijão[3], Luiza Picanço Nunes[4], Pedro Henrique Ribeiro[5], Samuel Faustino de Oliveira[6], Flávia Pinheiro da Costa[7], Morise de Gusmão Malheiros[8], Julia de Oliveira e Silva[9],

[1] Environment and Development - Univates
Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Amapá
E-mail: daniel.melo@ifap.edu.br
BR 210, KM 03, S/N, Bairro Brasil Novo, Macapá-AP, CEP 68909-398
[2] Master in Science, Technology and Education
Vale do Cricaré University Center
São Mateus-ES
E-mail: josima@bol.com.br
[3] Graduated in Nursing
Vale Acaraú State University
E-mail: aluiza12@gmail.com
(Av. Gerardo Rangel, 4110 - Derby Clube, Sobral - CE, 62042-280)
Orcid:0000-0003-3557-1543
[4] Master in Intensive Care
Anhanguera College of Macapá
Rodovia Duca Serra, S/N. Alvorada. Macapá/AP
E-mail: luizax_nunes@hotmail.com
[5] Medical Graduate
E-mail: pedrohr097@gmail.com
Nove de Julho University - UNINOVE
[6] Post Graduate in Public Regulation and Competition
University of Coimbra-PT
R. do Norte 37, 3000-295 Coimbra, Portugal
E-mail: advsamuelfoliveira@gmail.com
[7] Master in Family Health
University: UNINTA - Tianguá
Rua Pedro Sales, s/n
Dom Timóteo/ Tianguá/ CE
E-mail: flavia.pinheiro@fied.edu.br
[8] Master of Science in Education
Nova Esperança Colleges - FACENE/FAMENE
Avenida Frei Galvão, n. 12, Gramame - João Pessoa/PB. Zip Code:58067-695
E-mail: morisegusma@hotmail.com
[9] Bachelor of Science in Nursing
University of Grande Rio - UNIGRANRIO
Rua Prof. José de Souza Herdy, 1.160 – Jardim 25 de Agosto, Duque de Caxias – RJ
E-mail: enfjuliaoliveiras@gmail.com

Antônio Ademar Moreira Fontenele Júnior[10], Kalyne Cunha Alves de Oliveira[11], Sernandes Rodrigues da Silva[12], Marcia Maria de Oliveira Pastor[13], Urandi João Rodrigues Júnior[14] and Francisco Silva Antônio de Carvalho[15]

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to analyze the management practices adopted in health institutions and how they can contribute to the optimization of the services provided. To achieve this objective, a descriptive and qualitative research was carried out, with a sample composed of 31 professionals from different areas of health, such as doctors, nurses and managers. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews, and data analysis followed the content analysis technique, allowing the identification of themes and patterns in the participants' answers. The results revealed that the scarcity of financial resources, work overload, lack of continuous training and ineffective communication were pointed out as the main challenges faced in the management of health services. In addition, the use of technologies and the management of internal processes were highlighted as important tools for improving the quality of care. The research also identified that the humanization of care and participatory management are essential for the optimization of services. In conclusion, the research pointed out that the implementation of more integrated management practices, focused on the well-being of professionals and the patient experience, in addition to the adoption of new technologies and training strategies, are essential to ensure the efficiency and sustainability of health services.

Keywords: Health management; Services; Health.

[10] Graduated in Nursing, Master in Family Health
Federal University of Ceará
E-mail: demas.jr@hotmail.com
(Av. Gerardo Rangel, 4110 - Derby Clube, Sobral - CE, 62042-280)
ORCID: 0000-0003-2925-6475
[11] Master's student in the Professional Master's Program in Practical Psychology and Innovations in Mental Health
University of Pernambuco - UPE
Rua Cap. Pedro Rodrigues, 105 - São José, Garanhuns-PE
E-mail: kalyne.cunhaalves@gmail.com
[12] Bachelor of Science in Nursing
UniFacema - University Faculty of Science and Technology of Maranhão
Caxias
E-mail: nandorodrigorodrigues@gmail.com
[13] Dysphagia Specialist
Brazilian Company of Hospital Services - Ebserh/Hugv/ufam
R. Tomas de Vila Nova, 300 - Centro, Manaus - AM, 69020-170
E-mail: Marcia_mop@hotmail.com
[14] Dr. in Management and Strategy Positivo University
Federal University of Mato Grosso Sinop Campus - Department of Medicine
Avenida Alexandre Ferronato, 1001 Sinop MT
[15] Vale do Cricaré University Center
Master's student in Science, Technology and Education
Bachelor of Business Administration and Mathematics
Specialist in Business Management,
Finance and Business and Higher Education Teaching

INTRODUCTION

Health management is an essential field for the organization and continuous improvement of health services, which have a direct impact on the quality of life of the population. Over the past decades, the challenges faced by the health sector have intensified, requiring more efficient and innovative responses to ensure access to quality health care and services. The growing demand for health care, coupled with limited financial and human resources, has made evident the need to rethink management practices, which must be more flexible, dynamic, and results-oriented that promote public health in an effective and equitable manner (Abreu et al., 2023).

Health management involves the planning, organization, direction and control of all resources and processes necessary for the functioning of health institutions and services, whether in the public or private sphere. This sector is characterized by its complexity, which requires managers to have in-depth knowledge about the operation of health units, current legislation, the management of multidisciplinary teams, and constant adaptation to new technologies and care protocols. In a scenario of continuous change, the professionals responsible for management must be prepared to deal with the diversity of demands and the scarcity of resources, always seeking to optimize processes and improve the effectiveness of the service provided (Arruda; Siqueira, 2020).

One of the main challenges of health management is to balance the quality of care with the financial sustainability of health institutions. The growing number of patients, the expansion of the population's health conditions, and the advance of new diseases require managers to be able to make sound decisions regarding the allocation of resources, training of professionals, maintenance of infrastructure, and incorporation of new technologies. The efficiency of services is not only about reducing costs, but also about ensuring that resources are used in a way that provides maximum benefit to patients, which involves the constant search for innovative solutions and more effective management practices (Fernandes; Sousa, 2020).

In this context, practices such as process management and the analysis of health indicators become indispensable tools to improve the quality of the service. Process management involves mapping and analyzing the activities carried out within the organization, seeking to identify bottlenecks, eliminate waste, and improve workflow. In turn, the analysis of health indicators allows a continuous evaluation of the performance of health services, enabling managers to have a clearer view of the areas that need adjustments and investments (Gomes; Lima, 2023).

The use of these methods aims not only to improve patient care, but also to increase organizational efficiency. The use of technologies has also shown to be a promising way to optimize health services. Tools such as electronic medical records, telemedicine systems, and hospital management platforms contribute to improving communication between health professionals, streamlining care and reducing the risk of medical errors. In addition, these technologies favor real-time data management, allowing for a faster and more assertive response to emergency situations and treatment follow-up. Digital integration is, therefore, a fundamental step towards a more efficient and quality-focused health management (Guedes; Silva, 2023).

Another important aspect in health management is people management. Well-trained, motivated professionals aligned with the institution's objectives are essential for health services to be provided with efficiency and quality. Developing leadership, creating a healthy work environment, and promoting an organizational culture focused on collaboration and patient well-being are essential components for successful healthcare management. Talent retention, for example, is a constant challenge, since health professionals are often subject to stress and work overload, which can directly impact the quality of care (Guedes; Silva, 2023).

In view of all the challenges mentioned, it is evident that health management needs to be constantly improved. Management practices must be adaptive, taking into account changes in the needs of the population, scientific advancement and technological transformations. Only through efficient management, which considers all these aspects, will it be possible to optimize health services, improving both patient outcomes and the efficiency of managers and work teams (Fernandes; Sousa, 2020).

In view of the above, the objective of this research was to analyze the management practices adopted in health institutions and how they can contribute to the optimization of services, focusing on improving the quality of care, efficient management of resources and the implementation of new technologies and processes. It sought to understand the challenges faced by health managers and identify effective strategies to promote sustainability and excellence in the services provided to the population.

METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted with a descriptive and qualitative approach, with the aim of understanding the managerial practices adopted in health institutions and how these practices impact the optimization of services. The choice of descriptive research allows a detailed and precise study of the observed phenomena, without direct manipulation of the

variables. The qualitative approach was adopted to explore the perceptions, experiences and opinions of health professionals, seeking a deeper understanding of the management processes and the challenges faced in the institutions (Lima; Domingues Junior; Gomes, 2023; File; Domingues Junior; Silva, 2024; File; Silva; Domingues Júnior, 2024).

The research sample was composed of 31 professionals who work at different levels and functions in health institutions, such as doctors, nurses, managers and other members of the health team. The selection of participants was made intentionally, seeking to include professionals with different experiences and profiles, in order to ensure the diversity of opinions and a broad overview of health management. The sample was considered sufficient to offer a representative view of the work environment and management practices within the institutions analyzed.

Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews, in which open questions were asked that allowed participants to expose their opinions, challenges and suggestions about management practices. The interviews were conducted on an individual basis, in order to provide a safer and more confidential environment for professionals to feel comfortable sharing their experiences in an honest and detailed manner. In addition, the interviews were recorded, with the proper authorization of the participants, and transcribed for later analysis.

The collected data were analyzed through the content analysis technique, which allows the identification and interpretation of patterns, categories and themes present in the participants' answers. The analysis was carried out in a careful and systematic manner, seeking to extract relevant information about management practices, the main challenges faced by professionals and the strategies adopted to optimize health services. The information was grouped into thematic categories, facilitating the identification of emerging trends and patterns based on the participants' statements.

The analysis of the data allowed us to identify not only the most common management practices in health institutions, but also the main obstacles faced by managers and the areas that need improvement. In addition, it was possible to understand the professionals' perception of the effectiveness of the management strategies adopted and the suggestions for improvements, providing a critical and constructive view on the subject. The participants' responses revealed both the good practices and the limitations of management approaches in health, contributing to the reflection on how to optimize services.

RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of the collected data revealed a diversity of experiences and perceptions about management practices in health institutions. According to respondents E3 and E01, the greatest difficulty faced in the management of health units is the scarcity of financial resources. E3 stated that "the lack of budget directly compromises the quality of care, as we often need to opt for low-cost solutions that do not fully meet the needs of patients".

Similarly, E01 highlighted that "budget limitations affect the acquisition of new equipment and the updating of services, which reflects on the efficiency of service and the morale of the team". In addition, people management was a recurring theme among the participants, being pointed out as one of the biggest challenges. E12 reported that "the lack of training and continuous training impacts the quality of the work performed. The team needs constant updating to deal with new technologies and changes in service". E10, on the other hand, emphasized the importance of talent retention strategies, mentioning that "we have a very high turnover, which impairs performance and continuity in care, directly affecting patients' confidence in the services provided".

Another aspect highlighted by several respondents was the work overload, which affects the quality of care and the well-being of professionals. E6 shared her experience by stating that "the excess of patients and the lack of time for each one of them result in rushed and often incomplete care". E15 corroborated this perception, saying that "health professionals are overloaded, which impairs not only the quality of care, but also motivation and job satisfaction".

The use of technologies in health management was also a central point in the interviews. E8 and E13 agreed that digital tools, such as electronic medical records, have contributed to the optimization of work and the reduction of medical errors. E8 explained that "the implementation of the electronic medical record streamlines care and allows professionals to have quick access to patient information, facilitating decision-making".

However, E13 warned about the need for adequate training, as "not all team members are familiar with the technologies, which can generate resistance and difficulties in adaptation". Another relevant point observed was the managers' perception of the efficiency of internal processes. E5, who occupies a leadership position, stated that "it is essential that processes are reviewed regularly to identify failures and waste.

However, the lack of time to carry out these analyses prevents improvements from being implemented continuously". E7, also a manager, added, saying that "process management is still a blind spot in many institutions. There is an urgent need to

professionalize this area, creating teams responsible for the continuous improvement of processes."

Regarding patient care, the respondents revealed that the humanization of care is a priority, but that the pressure for productivity often hinders this practice. E4 reported that "although there is a lot of talk about humanization, in practice, there is not enough time to dedicate to the patient in an individualized way". E2 added that "care often becomes impersonal due to the pressure to fulfill the workload, which affects the quality of the doctor-patient relationship".

Communication between members of the health team was also pointed out as a crucial factor for the success of the management. E9 highlighted that "poor communication between different health professionals can result in medical errors and delays in care". E14 suggested that "greater integration between teams, through periodic meetings and the use of collaborative platforms, could improve efficiency in service and reduce communication failures".

Adaptation to change and innovation was another topic widely discussed during the interviews. E11 said that "the introduction of new technologies and innovative practices should be seen as an opportunity, but it is critical that there is a change in mindset on the part of leadership." E3, who works directly with the implementation of innovations, commented that "more support from management is needed so that innovations are implemented efficiently, considering the specificities of each health unit".

In addition, some respondents pointed out that the lack of a long-term strategic vision in health institutions has hindered management. E1 reported that "many decisions are made immediately, without thinking about the long-term impact on the institution". E7 agreed with E1, adding that "an integrated view of management is needed, where the quality of care, financial sustainability and the well-being of professionals are considered together".

The issue of patient safety was also a constant concern among the interviewees. E16, who works in a large hospital, stated that "patient safety is one of the pillars of management, but often the lack of clear protocols and adequate training results in failures in the process". E13 added, saying that "a continuous effort is needed to ensure that all professionals are aligned with the best safety practices, which requires investment in training and review of protocols".

With regard to the evaluation of performance and the use of health indicators, E10 commented that "the analysis of indicators is essential to evaluate the quality of the services provided, but these indicators are often underused or misinterpreted". E12

indicated that "indicators should be more accessible and understood by all team members, not just managers, so that they can be used as tools for continuous improvement."

Patient satisfaction was another point addressed by the respondents, being considered a direct reflection of health management. E5 reported that "institutions that invest in patient satisfaction, through a more human-centered management, tend to have better long-term outcomes." E2, on the other hand, highlighted that "in some institutions, the concern with financial indicators ends up prevailing over the quality of care, which can harm patient satisfaction".

Finally, several respondents highlighted the importance of transparent and participatory management. E6 stated that "transparency in decisions and the participation of all team members in discussions about improvements can strengthen teamwork and increase the confidence of professionals in management". E8 agreed, saying that "participatory management is essential to engage professionals and achieve better results, as everyone feels responsible for the success of the institution".

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The survey revealed that, despite efforts to improve management in health institutions, there are many challenges that need to be faced to optimize the services provided. The scarcity of financial resources, the overload of work and the lack of continuous training for professionals were pointed out as the main difficulties faced by managers and health teams. People management, although essential, is a critical point, as the turnover of professionals and the lack of motivation directly impact the quality of service. In addition, the lack of long-term strategic planning and the pressure for immediate results make it difficult to implement sustainable improvements.

Another crucial factor is the integration between health team members and effective communication, which, when it fails, compromises patient safety and the quality of care. The use of technologies, although recognized as a valuable tool, still lacks adequate training to ensure effectiveness in health units. The humanization of care was also mentioned as a priority, but, in practice, professionals face difficulties in dedicating time and quality attention to patients due to work overload.

However, the survey also pointed out viable solutions to improve health management, such as the need for continuous training, encouraging innovation, the efficient use of health indicators, and the creation of more efficient internal processes. The implementation of participatory and transparent management practices was identified as an important strategy to engage professionals and improve results. The analysis of the data

showed that a more person-centered management, both for patients and professionals, can be the way to optimize services.

It is important to highlight that health management requires a holistic view, which considers not only the financial and operational aspects, but also the well-being of professionals and the experience of patients. The success of a healthcare institution depends on the ability of its managers to balance these different factors and ensure that all available resources are used efficiently and strategically. Institutions that are able to implement more integrated and quality-focused management practices will be more likely to offer excellent and sustainable service.

The research contributes to the understanding of the main challenges faced by health institutions and suggests directions for the implementation of improvements. Effective management practices are essential to overcome current difficulties and ensure the optimization of services. The continuity of the improvement of health management depends on a joint effort between managers, teams and stakeholders, with a focus on adapting to the needs of the population and the intelligent use of available resources.

Finally, it is believed that the implementation of strategic changes, along with the adoption of technologies and the improvement of people management, is essential for building more efficient, humane, and sustainable health. Research, by analyzing health management practices, provides a solid basis for the development of solutions that meet current challenges and prepare institutions for the future.

REFERENCES

1. Abreu, C. R., et al. (2023). Qualidade de vida dos profissionais de saúde da atenção básica: uma revisão narrativa. Revista Master - Ensino, Pesquisa e Extensão, 8(15).

2. Arruda, J. S., & Siqueira, L. M. R. de C. (2020). Metodologias ativas, ensino híbrido e os artefatos digitais: sala de aula em tempos de pandemia. Práticas Educativas, Memórias e Oralidades - Rev. Pemo, 3(1), e314292.

3. Fernandes, V. C., & Sousa, C. L. (2020). Aspectos históricos da saúde pública no Brasil: revisão integrativa da literatura. Journal of Management and Primary Health Care, 12(1).

4. Gomes, E. R., & Lima, T. B. (2023). Fatores mediadores na articulação entre metodologias ativas e tecnologias digitais no ensino remoto emergencial: um olhar docente do curso de administração de uma instituição federal de ensino superior no Brasil. Revista Gestão Universitária na América Latina, 16(1).

5. Guedes, T. A., & Silva, F. S. (2023). Gestão de saúde pública no Brasil à luz da teoria da burocracia: escassez de médicos especialistas e desigualdade regional de acesso. Boletim de Conjuntura (BOCA), 13(37), 111–129.

6. Lima, L. A. O., Domingues Junior, G. O. V. O. (2023). Saúde mental e esgotamento profissional: um estudo qualitativo sobre os fatores associados à síndrome de burnout entre profissionais da saúde. Boletim de Conjuntura Boca. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10198981

7. Lima, L. A. O., Domingues Junior, P. L., & Silva, L. L. (2024). Estresse ocupacional em período pandêmico e as relações existentes com os acidentes laborais: estudo de caso em uma indústria alimentícia. RGO. Revista Gestão Organizacional (Online), 17, 34-47. https://doi.org/10.22277/rgo.v17i1.7484

8. Lima, L. A. O., Silva, L. L., & Domingues Júnior, P. L. (2024). Qualidade de vida no trabalho segundo as percepções dos funcionários públicos de uma Unidade Básica de Saúde (UBS). Revista de Carreiras e Pessoas, 14, 346-359. https://doi.org/10.23925/recape.v14i2.60020