

Editorial

Leadership Training in Aligning Departmental Objectives with Hospital Strategic Goals

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The best way to predict the future is to create it. The best way to create the future is by strategic planning. King Fahd Hospital in Hofuf (KFHH) is the leading provider of medical services in the province of Al-Ahsa (Eastern Region, K.S.A), since its inception in 1400. In KFHH, a system of Departmental Performance Indicators (DPIs) has been recently developed and introduced by the Hospital Director and Strategic planning unit of the hospital in consultation with Clinical, Administrative and Nursing Departments. Each department has a set of agreed upon indicators for monitoring the progress. A training program (workshop format) for converting the departmental/unit objectives in to Operational plans was conducted in KFHH in December 2013 on three consecutive days for leaders of Clinical, Nursing and Administrative departments of the hospital. Pre and post comparison of knowledge level of participants (self scoring) on departmental performance indicators showed a highly statistically significant improvement in knowledge level (Pearson Chi-Square=30.57, $p=0.002$). Aligning departmental tactical goals with the hospital strategic goals and making Annual Operational plans by departmental leaders would go a long way in improving departmental performance and realizing the hospital vision and goals.

Strategic planning is an organization's process of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy [1-3]. "The best way to predict the future is to create it" [4,5]. The best way to create the future is by strategic planning. Over three decades, King Fahd Hospital in Hofuf (KFHH) is the leading provider of medical services in the province of Al-Ahsa (Eastern Region, K.S.A), since its inception in 1400 and until this day. KFHH strategic plan prepared for the medium range of three years is in alignment with the Ministry of Health, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Strategic plan. Key components of strategic planning include an understanding of the organization's vision, mission, values and strategies and involves following the strategic planning cycle on an annual basis [3]. Vision outlines what the organization wants to be in the future. Mission explains who we are and what we do. Values are beliefs that are shared among the stakeholders of an organization. Strategy is a high level plan to achieve the goal [1]. Benefits of strategic planning are that; Helps managers understand the present, think about the future, and recognize the signals that suggest change, creates proactive rather than reactive atmosphere and encourages

innovation and change within the organization to meet the needs of dynamic situations.

In the health care setting in order to achieve the organization's strategic goals, it is imperative the departments/units outline their departmental/unit specific objectives, which should be in alignment with the hospital strategic goals. These departmental/unit specific objectives have to be converted into annual operational plans.

In KFHH a system of Departmental Performance Indicators (DPIs) has been recently developed and introduced by the Hospital Director and Strategic Planning Unit of the hospital in consultation with Clinical, Administrative and Nursing departments. The Departmental performance indicators are in alignment with the Hospital Strategic plan. Each department has a set of agreed upon indicators for monitoring the progress. Each department will prepare the 'Operational plan' in order to achieve the departmental objectives. Operational planning is the process of linking the Organizations strategic goals and objectives to departmental tactical goals and objectives. DPIs will be evaluated on a quarterly and annual basis using 'Balanced Score Card System'. This system will help us to make inter-departmental comparative analysis on select indicators as well as monitoring the progress of a specific department over a period of time.

A training program (workshop format) for converting the departmental/unit objectives in to 'Operational plans was conducted in KFHH in December 2013 on three consecutive days for leaders of Clinical, Nursing and Administrative Departments of the Hospital. The purpose of the training was to introduce & discuss the system of departmental performance measurement as a departmental planning and evaluation tool and to explain and discuss as to how the system of departmental performance indicators will be linked to the annual reward system and to practice making 'Operational plans' for their departments. Total of 93 departmental leaders participated in 3 days with 35 from clinical, 28 from nursing and 30 from administrative departments of the hospital.

Pre and post comparison of knowledge level of participants (self scoring) on departmental performance indicators showed a highly statistically significant improvement in knowledge level (Pearson Chi-Square=30.57, $p=0.002$) on a Likert scale ranging from none, basic, good, sound to expert. The pre-scores for knowledge levels were (None=4.3%, Basic=51.6%, Good=33.3%, Sound=7.5%, Expert=3.2%). The post scores for knowledge levels were (None=0%, Basic=1.1%, Good=37.6%, Sound=40.9%, Expert=20.4%).

Majority (90.3%) of the participants reported that they knew about their departmental performance indicators by the end of the workshop. Majority (89.2%) of the participants reported that they could make 'Operational Plans' for their department/unit at the end of the "Operational Plan Exercise" during the workshop.

Hospital strategic goals achievement is very much linked to the departmental/unit performance. Aligning departmental tactical goals with the hospital strategic goals and making Annual Operational Plans by departmental leaders would go a long way in improving departmental performance and realizing the hospital vision and goals.

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