

An Exploration of the Emergency Staff's Perceptions and Experiences of Teamwork and the Skills Required in the Emergency Department in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract : Teamwork practices have been recognized as a significant strategy to improve patient safety, quality of care, and staff and patient satisfaction in healthcare settings, particularly within the emergency department (ED). The EDs depend heavily on teams of interdisciplinary healthcare staff to carry out their operational goals and core business of providing care to the serious illness and injured. The ED is also recognized as a high-risk area in relation to service demand and the potential for human error. Few studies have considered the perceptions and experiences of the ED staff (physicians, nurses, allied health professionals, and administration staff) about the practice of teamwork, especially in Saudi Arabia (SA), and no studies have been conducted to explore the practices of teamwork in the EDs. Aim: To explore the practices of teamwork from the perspectives and experiences of staff (physicians, nurses, allied health professionals, and administration staff) when interacting with each other in the admission areas in the ED of a public hospital in the Northern Border region of SA. Method: A qualitative case study design was utilized, drawing on two methods for the data collection, comprising of semi-structured interviews (n=22) with physicians (6), nurses (10), allied health professionals (3), and administrative members (3) working in the ED of a hospital in the Northern Border region of SA. The second method is non-participant direct observation. All data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings: The main themes that emerged from the analysis were as follows: the meaningful of teamwork, reasons of teamwork, the ED environmental factors, the organizational factors, the value of communication, leadership, teamwork skills in the ED, team members' behaviors, multicultural teamwork, and patients and families behaviors theme. Discussion: Working in the ED environment played a major role in affecting work performance as well as team dynamics. However, Communication, time management, fast-paced performance, multitasking, motivation, leadership, and stress management were highlighted by the participants as fundamental skills that have a major impact on team members and patients in the ED. It was found that the behaviors of the team members impacted the team dynamics as well as ED health services. Behaviors such as disputes among team members, conflict, cooperation, uncooperative members, neglect, and emotions of the members. Besides that, the behaviors of the patients and their accompanies had a direct impact on the team and the quality of the services. In addition, the differences in the cultures have separated the team members and created undesirable gaps such the gender segregation, national origin discrimination, and similarity and different in interests. Conclusion: Effective teamwork, in the context of the emergency department, was recognized as an essential element to obtain the quality of care as well as improve staff satisfaction.

Keywords : teamwork, barrier, facilitator, emergencydepartment

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