An Examination of Health Information Service Provision at Federal Medical Center, Katsina

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Abstract: This paper examined the Health information service provision at federal medical center, Katsina. A qualitative research method was used in carrying out this study. Interview was used as research instrument for data collection. The population of this study consists of medical doctors, nurses and midwives, pharmacist, laboratory technicians and scientists and radiologists. Two participants were selected from each of these groups, making a total of sixteen (16) participants. The findings of this study have shown that the sources of information resources at the center were mainly from the library, flairs from pharmaceutical companies, professional bodies, internet services, reports, conference proceedings, workshops and seminars. Also, the findings showed that the information services provided at the center were selective dissemination of information (SDI), current awareness services (CAS), Reference services, information searching, referral library services and library user education etc. The paper articulated some of the major factors that militate against effective health information service provision at the center which revolved around inadequate information service providers, lack of effective and virile library services, inadequate internet and ICT facilities, erratic power supply and poor health record management system. Finally, the paper came up with appropriate recommendations.
Keywords: health information, information service provision, federal medical center

1. Introduction

Health information service provision is seen as major ingredient that facilitates effective health service provision in a community. Both the health professionals and members of the community who are the consumers of health services need health information service provision for a healthy society. Ibegwam (2013) suggests that the access to health information should be considered as equally important as to access to drugs and equipment. According to him all are essential tools in the delivery of safe, efficient and effective care and /or advice.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) (2005) defined health information as "any information whether oral or recorded in any form or medium, that was created or received by health care provider, health plan public health. Employer, life insurer, School or University or Health care, Clearing house; and relates to the past, present or future, physical or mental health condition of an individual or individuals.

Background of the Study
Federal Medical Centre, Katsina was perceived and conceived by defunct Kaduna State Government as a specialist hospital for the state in 1974, within the same year, the land was demarcated. The paper work was completed by 1980, and by 1981/1982 construction commenced in earnest. By 1989, only two (2) out of nine modules have been completed. The Katsina State Government first approached federal government for the taking over of the hospital in 1990, but this could not materialize until 26th October, 1996, when officially, the taking over agreement was signed. This gave the birth of Federal Medical Centre, Katsina. (Federal Medical Centre News Bulletin 2000).

2. Objective of the study
The study is specifically designed to achieve the following objectives.
1. To determine the sources of health information at the Federal Medical Centre, Katsina
2. To identify the types of information resources available at the Centre.
3. To identify the users and their information needs at the Centre.
4. To find out the types of information services provided at the Centre.
5. To establish factors that militates against effective health information service provision at the Centre.
6. To provide possible suggestions on how to overcome the challenges.

3. Review of Related Literature
Health information has been variously described by many writers. The concept is sees as the "foundation for better health as 'glue' holding the health system together, and as the 'Oil' keeping the health system running.

Health information comes from different sources, Raban, Dandona and Dandona (2009) have identified to (10) essential sources of health information which include: Census, Birth, and Death registration; surveillance and response system; household surveys; services generated data; mapping of health facilities, behavioral surveillance, national health account, financial and management information; and modeling estimates and projects. These information sources according to them provide data at various levels, household, patient, health facility, and district, state and national. In Nigeria, Ibegwam (2013) postulated that the sources of health information include: the Federal Ministry of Health and other health parastatals like National Agency for Food Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC); Educational organization such as Colleges and Universities; Library resources such as health and Medical journals. Others

include free access to the following databases among others on the internet; MEDLINE, AISLINE, HISTLINE, HSRPRO), SOILINE, TORLINE and CANCER LIT.

Health information like any other information system is of different types that come in different format. Ibegwam (2013) has identified the following of information resources, which includes;

⇨ **Print materials**: - these include all printed monographs that are available in Medical libraries, Faculty libraries, Department resources and even the Medical Records Departments.

⇨ **Stand-alone-computing**; - these include information in digital storage devices like MEDLINE on CD-ROM, reference updates, provision of computers etc.

⇨ **Internet based computing**: - this category of medical information is stored on the Web and the internet, internet gateways eg. Health links etc.

⇨ Mobile Phones

⇨ **Mass Media**: - Television, radio, newspapers etc.

The Mary Land Health Care Commission (MHCC) (2010) recognized electronic health records as a type of information resources which stated that electronic health records have the capability to improve the quality, safety, and efficiency of health care by furnishing health information in a consolidated record to the health care provider at the time care is rendered. On the other hand Olatunji et al (2002) stated that "A general practitioner is likely to make request for information that border on general practice; while a pediatrician will request information on children's health condition. Thus, the obstetrics and gynecologists will be interested in women diseases related information.

Librarians working in health institutions provide valuable information to consumers by marketing and creating awareness of their services. This is achieved through selecting, personalizing and filtering quality information to specifically meet their unique needs (Kamel 2003). This corroborates with what zippers et al (2006) stated, that Medical Librarians can play an expanded role in health provision by accessing and reviewing medical information and therefore, resources and strategy experts in identifying and disseminating reliable information to different heath information seekers.

However, despite the numerous benefits attached to the health information service provision, it is obvious that there are some factors that hinder effective provision of health information service. According to Covell et al (1985) there are those problems that arise as a result of inadequate resources, untrained human resources, infrastructural problems include power outages. Others are lack of awareness, access training and time. In addition, Broadnax (1995) in Milimo and Tenya (2013) observed that in many communities health libraries are struggling with slashed budgets, reduced staff and competing priorities.

4. Methodology

A qualitative research design was chosen in carrying out this study. Interview was used as research instrument for data collection. The population of this study was Medical doctors, Nurses and Midwives, Pharmacist, Laboratory technicians and Scientist and Radiologist. Two participants were selected from each of these groups, making a total of sixteen (16) participants which formed the sample size for this study. A descriptive analysis technique was used to analyze the data collected.

5. Findings and Discussion

Sources of Health information Resources,

The findings of this study showed that the sources of health information resources at the center were mainly the Medical Library, flairs from pharmaceutical companies, professional bodies, internet services, reports, conference proceedings, workshops and seminars. These were indicated by all the participants from the eight (8) groups of the respondents. These corroborate with what Ibegwam, (2013) has postulated, that in Nigeria sources of health information were library resources such as health and medical journals, others were access to internet databases such as MEDLINE, Health STAR, AISLINE among others.

Type and forms of Health information resources

From the data collected all the participants interviews indicated that books and periodical such as medical journals, newspapers/ magazines, flairs and pamphlets and e-sources from internet services among others form the types of health information resources at Katsina Medical Centre.

Users and their information needs

The data obtained from the interview conducted with sixteen (16) participants of this has revealed that the users of health information at Medical Centre were the Medical Doctors, Nurses and Midwives, Laboratory technicians and Scientist, Pharmacists, Rachologists. The sixteen (16) participants interviewed also indicated that the information needs of these users were mainly health information that facilitates health service delivery to the members of the community at various stages. In line with these Thompson et al (2004) asserts that information need of health professionals has three components, thus.

1. Information that is needed for decision making and that is already known by the health professionals.
2. Information that is not known by the health professional but he/she recognized it as being applicable to the decision making process; and
3. Information that is important to the circumstances at hand but the health professional does not realize in applicable.

Williamson, et al (1989) added that the information needs of health professional could be seen as;

1. Professionals begin their search for information to confirm/disconfirm existing knowledge.
2. Assist in solving a new or unfamiliar health care problem.
3. Obtain information from another specialty when dealing with a particular person with multiple problems.

Types of health information services provided
The findings of this study has shown that Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), Current awareness services (CAS), reference services, Information services among others form the health information services provided by the Medical Library to the health professionals at the centre. Beside these services there were other service provided such mobile phone services, internet services from which a pool of information services were sought an utilized as indicated by the participants interviewed. Because of the benefits attached to health information services provision Kamel (2003) stated that librarians working in health institutions provide valuable information to consumers (health professionals) by marketing and creating awareness of their services. This is achieved through selecting personalizing and filtering quality information to specifically meet their unique needs.

Factors militate against effective health information service provision
The findings of this study show that there were some factors negating effective health information service provision at Federal Medical Centre, Katsina. The participants of this study hinted that inadequate information service provider lack of effective and virile library services, inadequate internet and ICT facilities were among the factors that hinder effective health information service provision. Other problems as revealed by the participants include unstable power supply and poor health records management system among others.

6. Conclusion
In conclusion, it can be said that, there was health information service provision at Federal Medical Centre, Katsina, even though the service were inadequate and ineffective. The health professionals rely on the Medical Library, GSM, Conferences, professional bodies, internet resources among others for health information service provisions. The centre like any other health institution in Nigeria needs to overcome problems such as lack of effective library resources, inadequate service providers, inadequate internet and ICT facilities and many others for effective and efficient health information service provision.

7. Recommendation
1. There's the need for an effective and virile library services at the Centre. This could be achieved by adequately funding the library for human and material resources development.
2. There's the need for an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) centre that can provide an effective internet and other ICT facilities at the Centre.

3. There's the need for training and retraining opportunities for information service providers at the Centre.
4. Alternative power supply should always be ensured at the Centre.

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