

NABH Accreditation and its status in the Country

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Abstract: National Accreditation board for hospitals and healthcare providers (NABH) is a national body responsible for providing accreditation to the hospitals. General accreditation programs appear to improve the structure and process of care, with a good body of evidence showing that accreditation programs improve clinical outcomes. General accreditation programs of health organizations and accreditation of subspecialties should be encouraged and supported to improve the quality of healthcare services [1-2]. One of the most important barriers to the implementation of accreditation programs is the skepticism of healthcare professionals in general and physicians in particular about the positive impact of accreditation programs on the quality of healthcare services. However with quality in healthcare an important aspect, healthcare accreditation has become a most important tool for improving the standard of the hospitals and thereafter benchmarking [2].

Introduction

Hospital Accreditation is a public recognition by a National Healthcare Accreditation Body, of the achievement of accreditation standards by a Healthcare Organization, demonstrated through an independent external peer assessment of that organization's level of performance in relation to the standards [1-2]. In India, Health System currently operates within an environment of rapid social, economical and technical changes. Such changes raise the concern for the quality of health care. Hospital is an integral part of health care system. Accreditation would be the single most important approach for improving the quality of hospitals. Accreditation is an incentive to improve capacity of national hospitals to provide quality of care. National accreditation system for hospitals ensure that hospitals, whether public or private, national or expatriate, play their expected roles in national health system. Confidence in accreditation obtained by a transparent system of control over the accredited hospital and an assurance given by the accreditation body that the accredited hospital constantly fulfills the accreditation criteria [1-2]

Currently there are 137 hospitals accredited in the country and 478 have applied for NABH and they are in process.

Benefits of Accreditation

Benefits for Patients: Patients are the biggest beneficiary among all the stakeholders. Accreditation results in high quality of care and patient safety. The patients are serviced by credential medical staff. Rights of patients are respected and protected. Patients satisfaction is regularly evaluated [2].

Benefits for Hospitals: Accreditation to a hospital stimulates continuous improvement. It enables hospital in demonstrating commitment to quality care. It raises community confidence in the services provided by the hospital. It also provides opportunity to healthcare unit to benchmark with the best [2].

Benefits for Hospital Staff: The staff in an accredited hospital is satisfied lot as it provides for continuous learning, good working environment, leadership and above all ownership of clinical processes. It improves overall professional development of Clinicians and Para Medical Staff and provides leadership for quality improvement with medicine and nursing [2].

Benefits to paying and regulatory bodies: Finally, accreditation provides an objective system of empanelment by insurance and

other third parties. Accreditation provides access to reliable and certified information on facilities, infrastructure and level of care [2].

National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) is a constituent board of Quality Council of India (QCI), set up to establish and operate accreditation programme for healthcare organizations. NABH has been established with the objective of enhancing health system & promoting continuous quality improvement and patient safety. The board while being supported by all stakeholders, including industry, consumers, government, has full functional autonomy in its operation.

NABH provides accreditation to hospitals in a non-discriminatory manner regardless of their ownership, legal status, size and degree of independence. International Society for Quality in Healthcare (ISQua) has accredited "Standards for Hospitals", 3rd Edition, November 2011 developed by National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH, India) under its International Accreditation Programme for a cycle of 4 years (April 2012 to March 2016). The approval of ISQua authenticates that NABH standards are in consonance with the global benchmarks set by ISQua. The hospitals accredited by NABH have international recognition. This will provide boost to medical tourism. ISQua is an international body which grants approval to Accreditation Bodies in the area of healthcare as mark of equivalence of accreditation program of member countries [3].

NABH is a member of ISQua Accreditation Council. NABH is an Institutional Member as well as a member of the Accreditation Council of the International Society for Quality in HealthCare (ISQua). NABH is the founder member of proposed Asian Society for Quality in Healthcare (ASQua) being registered in Malaysia. NABH is a member of International Steering Committee of WHO Collaborating Centre for Patient Safety as a nominee of ISQua Accreditation Council [3].

Organizational Structure

Accreditation Committee:

The main functions of Accreditation Committee are as follows:

- Recommending to board about grant of accreditation or otherwise based on evaluation of assessment reports & other relevant information.
- Approval of the major changes in the Scope of Accreditation including enhancement and reduction, in respect of accredited hospitals.
- Recommending to the board on launching of new initiatives

Technical Committee:

The main functions of Technical Committee are as follows:

- Drafting of accreditation standards and guidance documents
- Periodic review of standards

Appeals Committee:

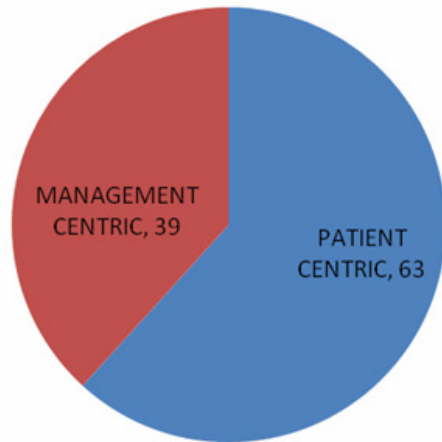
The Appeal Committee addresses appeals made by the hospitals against any adverse decision regarding accreditation taken by the NABH. The adverse decisions may relate to the following:

- Refusal to accept an application,
- Refusal to proceed with an assessment,
- Corrective action requests,
- Changes in accreditation scope,
- Decisions to deny, suspend or withdraw accreditation, and
- Any other action that impedes the attainment of accreditation [3].

NABH Standards

NABH Standards for hospitals prepared by technical committee contains complete set of standards for evaluation of hospitals for grant of accreditation. The standards provide framework for quality of care for patients and quality improvement for hospitals. The standards help to build a quality culture at all level and across all the function of hospital. NABH Standards has ten chapters incorporating 102 standards and 636 objective elements.

Outline of NABH Standards



Patient Centered Standards

- Access, Assessment and Continuity of Care (AAC)
- Care of Patient (COP)
- Management of Medication (MOM)
- Patient Right and Education (PRE)
- Hospital Infection Control (HIC)

Organisation Centered Standards

- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Responsibility of Management (ROM)
- Facility Management and Safety (FMS)
- Human Resource Management (HRM)
- Information Management System(IMS) [3]

Preparing for NABH Accreditation

1. Obtain a copy of NABH Standards (From NABH office)
2. Get accustomed to the standard & implement them (By health care organization)
3. Obtain a copy of Application Form
4. Fill and submit the Application
5. Pay the Accreditation fee

NABH Accreditation Procedure

Application for accreditation:

The hospital shall apply to NABH in the prescribed application form. The application shall be accompanied with the following:

- Prescribed application fee as detailed in the application form

- Signed copy of 'Terms and Conditions for Maintaining NABH Accreditation', available free on the web-site
- Filled in Self Assessment Toolkit, available free on the web-site.
- Quality/ hospital Manual (as per NABH standards) and other NABH relevant documents i.e. different policies and procedures of the hospital

Self-Assessment toolkit is for self-assessing itself against NABH Standards. The self assessment shall be done by the hospital in a stringent manner and if at the time of pre-assessment it is found that there is a significant difference between the self assessment and the pre-assessment report then the organization shall apply for final assessment not earlier than six months from the date of completion of pre-assessment. The applicant hospital must apply for all its facilities and services being rendered from the specific location. NABH accreditation is only considered for hospital's entire activities and not for a part of it [3].

Medical Tourism

When we talk about medical tourism patients and the health insurance companies do not come unless they see the mark of the quality assurance and safety and that through international accreditation. Traveling abroad for one's health has a long history for the upper social classes who sought spas, mineral baths, innovative therapies, and the fair climate of the Mediterranean as destinations to improve their health. The newest trend in the first decade of the twenty-first century has the middle class traveling from developed countries to those with emerging economies to avoid treatment delays, prohibitive costs for life-saving procedures, or simply high costs for elective surgery. NABH has now gone global and is making its mark internationally. I hope that today we bring the best of ourselves and come out better with a hope that we will be able to contribute to the improvement of the healthcare system by benchmarking our hospitals with international standards set by NABH [4].

References

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2. The Value and Impact of Health Care Accreditation: A Literature Review: Wendy Nicklin President & Chief Executive Officer: *Accreditation Canada*, July 2012.
3. Quality council of India, National Accreditation board for hospitals and healthcare providers, *www.nabh.co*
4. Harriet Hutson Gray and Susan Cartier Poland, Medical Tourism: Crossing Borders to Access Health Care, National Reference Center for Bioethics Literature.

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