

PATIENTS' PERCEPTIONS REGARDING HEALTH CARE SERVICES AT TSHILIDZINI  
HOSPITAL

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THE UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

2015

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## ABSTRACT

Patients' perceptions means the manner in which the client who receives medical attention, care or treatment regards understands or interprets the treatment they receive in health care.

Patients' perceptions of satisfaction are an aspect of health care quality that is being increasingly recognised for its importance.

The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of patients of between the ages of 18 and 65 years regarding health care service provision at a hospital in Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province, South Africa. The research design was qualitative, explorative and contextual. The sample was purposively selected and comprises of both male and female patients receiving medical care for chronic illnesses. Data was collected through in-depth interviews comprising 8 patients and analysed qualitatively guided by a six step process. Permission to conduct research was sought from the Ethics Committee of University of Venda, Thohoyandou.

The results of the study revealed that most of the respondents in the study were dissatisfied with the health care services they were receiving at the hospital. This dissatisfactions were mostly due to the unreliability of ambulances, not being able to access the hospital resources with ease, costs of transport when patients have to go to the hospital and unable to use public transportation e.g. taxis and therefore having to hire private cars, the cost of medication, and the disrespectful way in which they are treated by hospital staff.

Patients were also asked to give their views about how the services they receive in hospital can be improved. Some of the patients' views were that the hospital should hire more staff. Patients further recommended that they should not be made to wait too long in the queue before seeing a doctor.

Recommendations were made from the findings which included ensuring that there are enough ambulances in hospitals which are in good working conditions, hiring of more hospital staff to avoid staff being overworked and therefore not performing to the best of their ability, making sure that there are employee assistance practitioners at every hospital to assist staff to deal with

the personal and also work related issues, hospital staff improving their relationships with patients and the manner in which they interact with them and educating patients on a regular basis regarding their rights when they are in hospital.

**Key words: Patients**

**Perceptions**

**Health**

**Care**

**Services**