

Basic Management Case Studies

1. You have noticed an increase in dispensing errors in your pharmacy over the past six months. The occurrence at one time was less than 1 error per 2-3 months. Now, the rate has increased to 1-2 errors per week, and some are serious mistakes. You have recently increased your staffing (both pharmacists and technicians) to meet the demands of a new long-term care facility that you are providing services for now. Also, there has been a volume increase of 15% over the past 6 months. How could you as the owner/manager use the principles of continuous quality improvement (CQI) to assess and impact upon your current situation?
2. As a pharmacy owner, you have seen an erosion of the satisfaction with pharmacy services in your practice. Several long time customers have suggested that your pharmacy is not as "friendly" as it once was. You have been traveling to several meetings this past year to learn new skills (disease management training programs, NIPCO seminars, and a compounding school). You have faith in your staff, but something is amiss in your practice. How could you use CQI as a guide to gauge and improve patient satisfaction?
3. You have decided to begin offering home intravenous infusion services from your busy practice. This is whole new area of emphasis in your pharmacy, and a dramatic shift in how your pharmacy will be perceived. Show how a project management approach to this additional service offering can be accomplished?
4. You are burned out; a continuous stretch of working 80 hours per week over a four- month period has taken a toll on your spirit and drive. Staffing is not an issue; you have wonderful colleagues to cover your time. You just cannot seem to pull yourself away from your pharmacy. You feel guilty when you take a lunch break. You desperately want to regain your positive attitude toward your practice and your patients. Describe the varying types of self-development activities, the benefits of each, and what you would suggest as a means to recharge your career.
5. You have begun several disease management programs in your practice; this change is a threat to some of the younger pharmacists in your practice who feel uncertain about their role in these expanded practice opportunities. How can you bring your staff along in this time of change in your pharmacy?

6. You need to hire an additional two pharmacists for your busy compounding specialty pharmacy. You have never had to hire a pharmacist before. The staff was in place when you bought the pharmacy from the previous owner. Recently, two pharmacists have retired after long careers in the pharmacy. How would you focus your training efforts on the new hires after they come on board?

7. How can climate (weather) influence the practice of pharmacy in your community pharmacy? You live in an area that has been projected to experience torrential rainfall during the spring. What can you do to plan for practice interruptions due to potential flooding?

Discussion Questions

1. Describe the basic elements of management principles that a leader needs to understand.
2. What are controllable factors that a leader can deal with? What are examples of uncontrollable factors with which a leader must contend?
3. What are basic management actions?
4. What are the several management functions?
5. Describe the characteristics of a good manager?
6. What professional skills are required of managers?
7. Describe several threatening unresolved issues that affect managers.
8. What are the several self-development methods that a manager can consider to enhance self-development?
9. Describe the process of strategic planning?
10. What is a SWOT analysis? How does it fit into strategic planning?
11. Who needs to be involved in a strategic planning process?
12. What applicability does project management have to pharmacy practice services?
13. Describe quality management, and detail several applicable principles.
14. Describe how problem-solving techniques can be used to influence dilemmas occurring in pharmacy practice.
15. Detail a model for problem solving.
16. Describe continuous quality improvement (CQI).
17. How can CQI be used in pharmacy practice?
18. What are the "seven tools" of CQI?

19. Describe the influence of change on a leader or manager.
20. How can a leader affect change in an organization? How do personnel need to be involved in change activities?