

NRS 415 CLC - Health Care Organization Evaluation

Student Name

Program Name or Degree Name (e.g., Bachelor of Science in Psychology), University

COURSE XXX: Title of Course

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Health Care Organization Evaluation

Ascension Healthcare is a faith-based healthcare organization that is dedicated to improving its community through innovation (Ascension Healthcare, 2021). Ascension is a non-profit organization that focuses on the community and those living in poverty. The ascension healthcare system is nationwide, with over 2600 care sites and 146 hospitals. The mission of Ascension Healthcare is to follow in Jesus's footsteps as a healer and to commit to healing the poor and vulnerable. The vision of this organization is to be a strong organization that responds to the needs of its community. The values of Ascension are service to the poor, reverence, integrity, wisdom, creativity, and dedication.

Organization's Readiness

An organization's readiness is based on the quality of health provided, innovation, cultural competency, and ability to meet the needs of its community (Grand Canyon, 2018). Ascension's mission statement shows their desire to innovate and improve their community. However, upon searching for innovation or healthcare improvement projects I found it hard to find any advances in medicine performed by Ascension Healthcare. The organization opened a large-scale telehealth in response to the pandemic last year. The telehealth program was open a few years prior but was not operating at the same functionality until it was necessary (Ascension Healthcare, 2021). The organization seems to be reactive to problems versus proactively looking for growth.

Ascension Healthcare is the second largest healthcare system in America. They have over 146 hospitals within their network, several care sites, and nursing homes. To determine their patients' quality of care, each hospital would have to be evaluated. However, looking at only a few hospitals, it would seem they are achieving a high quality of patient care and safety. Several

of their hospitals received “A” grades in patient safety, as well as several five-star ratings from patients (Point Vedra Recorder, 2021). The organization also seems to provide culturally competent care by attempting to meet the needs of their communities regardless of their backgrounds. According to the Ascension Healthcare website, they aim to create a strong and diverse ministry (Ascension Healthcare, 2021).

Strategic Plan

Strategic planning is “the process in which organizational leaders purposefully look ahead into the future, outline goals for the organization, and develop a process to reach those goals (Ascension Healthcare, 2021).” Strategic planning needs to focus on network growth, nurse staffing, resource management, and patient satisfaction. The first step in this process would be to create organizational goals in each area and then create a plan to reach their goals. The organization's Network growth should focus on how it can reach more of its community. The organization is already among the largest in the United States; therefore, its growth should be focused on the number of patients treated. Ascension Healthcare should manage its resources by expanding care in the communities it already serves. They can reach more members of their communities by allocating resources towards health promotion and disease prevention. Each community should be evaluated for their needs.

Each community should address nurse staffing, and the needs of the community and the organization should be addressed. For example, several Ascension hospitals received great scores in patient safety; these hospitals should be evaluated to determine what they are doing right. The nurse staffing ratios in this hospital should be analyzed, as well as patient severities.

The hospitals within the organizations with higher patient satisfaction should also be evaluated to determine where improvements can be made.

Organizational Culture

One barrier to possibly serving their community is that Ascension Healthcare is an openly catholic organization. The organization does not provide contraception, sterilization, or abortion (Schorr & Rani, 2019). The organization has also banned physician-assisted suicide even though it is legal in several states. The culture of this organization is a devout catholic community that looks to serve its community. However, its beliefs may interfere with its ability to serve properly. One of the easiest ways to reduce poverty is to cut down on unwanted births, and over half of pregnancies in the United States are unplanned (Sawhill, (2015). If women were given easier access to contraceptives, we could reduce these numbers. Many people living in these hospital communities may avoid Ascension hospitals because they are faith-based and have strong convictions. I believe that it is an organization's right to refuse to perform procedures they do not believe are morally or ethically right. However, they also have an obligation to serve their community. Their cultural beliefs would interfere with the strategic plan because they are not culturally competent with their community's needs. Ascension is also missing out on reaching members of their communities who may also need their help.

Implementing the Strategic Plan

Issue-based strategic planning would be beneficial to the issues within Ascension's organization. SWOT analysis is based on identifying an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Grand Canyon, 2018). This would benefit the issues because several Ascension hospitals are strong in specific areas such as patient safety and patient satisfaction. The organization should identify the areas in which they are very strong as well as areas in which they are weak or need improvement. Once the organization has determined strengths and weaknesses, it can analyze the hospitals for opportunities for growth and threats that would

impair growth. Ascension should create a plan to yearly to analyze and implement changes. The SWOT model is the best for this organization because it allows the analysis of areas within the organization that are already working well and finds a way to use that across the network. This model also allows for analysis of ways that implementing this in other areas may fail.

Conclusion

Ascension Healthcare's focus is to help those who are less fortunate and provide them with the best possible care. However, their religious beliefs and their lack of innovation may stand in the way of providing that care. Many Ascension hospitals thrive and continually receive high patient safety and satisfaction scores. In order to continue to thrive, Ascension hospitals should focus on the areas with high scores and find ways to implement their policies in other hospitals. The organization should look to become proactive within their communities.

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