

ABSTRACT

Outpatient services evolved in hospitals in line with patient's needs, demands and expectations from a limited service offering basic and minor clinical services to a highly evolved and organized service. It includes Emergency OPD, General OPD and Referral or Specialty OPD.

A cross sectional descriptive study based on secondary data from OPD and Record office of TGH (500 bedded hospital and one of tertiary hospital) was conducted in August 2018 to determine utilization and challenges of outpatient department in TGH and qualitative interview among health staff and patients was done with KII and IDI guidelines. This study emphasized and described the organization set up of OPD, infrastructure and facilities, trend of total utilization of outpatient services for the year of 2013-2017, monthly outpatient attendances and police cases in 2017, catchment area and challenges of OPD at TGH. It has seventeen kinds of specialty departments and six clinical supportive departments. This study found that the waiting area was over-crowded. Exam rooms did not have adequate space and privacy. There was no observation room at OPD. Medical equipment placed at OPD was only one set for each type. The annual utilization was doubled in 2017 compared to that of 2013. To explore the challenges of OPD, key Informant Interview has been carried out with eight health staff and IDI has been carried out with five patients. The challenges faced by patients were long waiting time, small OPD room, no adequate chairs and toilets. The patients suggested increasing the number of facilities including toilets and chairs. The challenges faced by health care providers are shortage of manpower, no availability of medical equipment adequately, not adequate space and privacy of examination room for patients. They suggested establishing observation room, proper space and enough equipment for the patients, assigning permanent specialists or PG students at OPD.

Although there are shortages in manpower and the need for health care facilities and infrastructures at OPD, the OPD of TGH is providing services to patients. In accordance with findings, records and reviews, it will be beneficial to develop future plan like modification of manpower and infrastructures in OPD.