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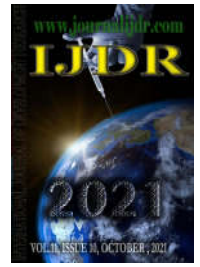
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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CONTRIBUTIONS OF HOSPITAL ACCREDITATION FOR PATIENT SAFETY: INTEGRATIVE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Patient safety is an important aspect of health care quality, since there is a need to develop strategies to improve service quality and minimize the occurrence of errors with the implementation of hospital accreditation programs. **Objective:** To analyze the contributions of hospital accreditation for patient safety of patient care in the hospital environment. **Methodology:** This is an integrative review of scientific studies published in SCIELO, MEDLINE, LILACS and BDENF between the years 2015 and 2020. Eleven studies were selected to compose the discussion of this study. **Results:** The study found that the main benefits of hospital accreditation for the quality of patient safety were increased safety for patients and professionals; quality of care; improvement of training and continuing education of professionals; strengthening of teamwork; continuous improvement; optimization of work processes; and cost reduction. **Conclusion:** Thus, it is important to highlight that the process of hospital accreditation provides an institutional commitment to improve the quality of care and patient safety in health services, especially in hospital organizations, through process mapping and standardization, team training and constant process monitoring.

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INTRODUCTION

Patient safety is an important aspect of the quality of health care and is also a topic that has drawn the attention of researchers from around the world and the agenda of the World Health Organization (WHO). Thus, many hospitals have realized the need to develop strategies to improve service quality and minimize the occurrence of errors, such as implementing hospital accreditation programs (BURSTON; CHABOYER; GILLESPIE, 2014). Thus, patient safety is an important aspect of the quality of care, since it corresponds to reducing the risks of unnecessary damage associated with health care to an acceptable minimum, in view of this, the process of hospital accreditation arises in order to assess the quality of health services

through accreditation and certification processes, thus contributing to risk management, time savings and cost reduction (DOMINGUES *et al.*, 2017). Given the above, accreditation is considered a systematic, regular and reserved evaluation process, based on the evaluation of the organization's reality, which can lead to quality certification. This is a management system, started in the 1950s with the creation of the Joint Committee for Hospital Accreditation (JCAH), now known as the Joint International Committee (JCI), which is the most representative certification body in the world (FERREIRA *et al.*, 2017). In this sense, the hospital accreditation process is carried out by the interest of the institution being carried out by periodic evaluations with the objective of verifying compliance with the quality standards established according to the National Accreditation

Organization (ONA) manual. It is done to promote improvement in the quality of care provided to users through the educational and training process for quality control (DOMINGUES, *et al.*, 2017). Kobayashi *et al.* (2010) add that certification is the procedure performed by an authorized entity that determines, verifies and attests in writing, personnel and process of items, according to applicable requirements. It is related to quality care, but it is based on the belief that hospitals should be safe places for professionals and patients and that certain actions must be taken for the hospital to be considered "a good hospital. From this vision, the quality of healthcare units and patient safety are considered fundamental issues that drive the search for strategies to ensure safe and harm-free care. In this perspective, healthcare institutions are always looking for ways to evaluate their work processes according to the needs and expectations of their patients, families and professionals, therefore, tools must be used to measure quality (BRAGA, *et al.*, 2018). Given the above, the objective of this research was to analyze the contributions of hospital accreditation for patient safety of patient care in the hospital environment.

METHODOLOGY

This is an Integrative Literature Review that aims to identify, gather, and synthesize existing literature, as well as collect relevant citations that underpin the topic addressed, indicating the development of theories, theoretical contributions, and their understanding on different occasions (VOSGERAU and ROMANOWSKI, 2014). In addition, it structures information from theoretical and empirical literature, and integrates a wide range of purposes, for example: definition of terms, review of theory and evidence, and content analysis of a specific subject (SOUZA; SILVA; CARVALHO, 2010). To carry out the Integrative Review, six steps were used: 1st step - elaboration of the guiding question; 2nd step - sampling selection in the literature; 3rd step - data collection; 4th step - evaluation of the included studies; 5th step - interpretation of results; and 6th step - presentation of the review and synthesis of knowledge (MENDES; SILVEIRA; GALVÃO, 2008 and SOUZA; SILVA; CARVALHO, 2010). The essential purpose of the study was to answer the guiding question: What are the contributions of hospital accreditation for patient safety? The literature selection was performed in the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SCIELO), Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online (MEDLINE), Latin American and Caribbean Literature on Health Sciences (LILACS) and Database on Nursing (BDENF) databases. The descriptors used in the analysis of the studies were "Accreditation", "Hospital" and "Patient", available in the Descriptors in Health Sciences (DeCS), combined through the application of Boolean operators "and" and "or". As inclusion criteria of publications, we considered complete articles free of charge, in Portuguese, published between January 2015 and October 2020. Repeated articles, monographs, dissertations, and theses were excluded.

The titles and abstracts of the selected articles were examined, and those that presented relevant observations of nursing auditing in health services were pre-selected for further reading of the study, which occurred in the next step. In order to synthesize the chosen articles, a data collection method was used for each article in the final sample, indicating the title of the articles, authors, year of publication, methodology, and objectives. Based on the advanced search filters, 697 studies addressing the topic in question were obtained. The distribution of studies found in the databases was as follows: 18 articles in the SCIELO database, 570 in MEDLINE, 77 in LILACS, and 32 BDENF. A total of 48 articles were filtered, and after reading the titles and abstracts, those that were not conclusive on the issue studied or did not meet the established criteria were eliminated. Then, 32 articles were selected because they fit within the period of analysis for further reading of their articles, the exploratory reading was performed aiming at a more detailed verification, among these, 11 articles were included in this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Eleven (11) studies were used to compose the discussions. Regarding the year of publication, it was found that the year with the highest number of publications was 2018 with four, followed by 2016 with three, 2019 with two, and the other years with only one publication each, and the year 2015 had no publications.

Chart 1. Distribution of the articles of the integrative review by year of publication. Teresina, 2020

Year of publication	QUANTITY
2015	0
2016	3
2017	1
2018	4
2019	2
2020	1
TOTAL	11

Source: Author

Taking into consideration the period that the articles were published to compose the discussion of these studies, it was observed that four (4) articles were published in the UFPE Nursing Journal, two (2) were in the Anna Nery School journal, and one article in each of the respective journals: Revista Baiana de Saúde Pública, O mundo da saúde, Physis: Revista de Saúde Coletiva, Revista Gaúcha de Enfermagem, Revista da Escola de Enfermagem da USP, thus demonstrating that nursing is the profession that is most closely linked to improvements in accreditation for patient safety.

Chart 2. Distribution of integrative review articles by journal. Teresina, 2020

JOURNAL	QUANTITY
Anna Nery School	2
Revista Baiana de Saúde Pública	1
The World of Health	1
Physis: Journal of Collective Health	1
Revista Gaúcha de Enfermagem	1
UFPE Nursing Journal	4
Revista da Escola de Enferm da USP	1
TOTAL	11

Source: Author

Thus, according to chart 3, the most used methodology was qualitative, followed by qualitative studies, with the studies' main objectives being to analyze the relationship of hospital accreditation in improving patient safety.

Category 1: Factors that reflect on hospital accreditation and quality of patient care. In the study by Aguiar and Mendes (2016) showed that organizational management focused on communication and information produces synergy between departments, which is essential to achieve the goal of process standardization and language homogeneity, necessary for hospital organizations in the certification process. However, even though it is beneficial for patient safety and makes the process of care possible, communication and information are still considered less important activities in the hospital environment. On the other hand, in the study by Freire *et al.* (2019) it was evidenced that organizational management presented more efforts for effective communication, since, the hospital adopted written and oral communication strategies when passing information about quality management and certification to frontline employees. In written communication, information is delivered via e-mail, intranet, whatsapp groups, bulletin boards, wall newspapers, face-to-face management boards, and desktop wallpapers, with each coordinator responsible for accessing this information by his or her team.

Chart 3. Description of the articles included in the integrative review according to title, author, year, methodology and objective. (2015 a 2020)

N	TITLE	AUTHOR	METHODOLOGY	OBJECTIVE
1	Acreditação hospitalar: a importância da comunicação e da informação para a segurança do paciente	Aguiar e Mendes, 2016	Qualitative approach, exploratory and descriptive in nature.	To discuss the importance of Communication and Information for the processes of Hospital Accreditation and patient safety.
2	Ambiente de trabalho da enfermagem, segurança do paciente e qualidade do cuidado em hospital pediátrico	Alves e Guirardello, 2016	Quantitative study, with a cross-sectional cross-sectional and descriptive approach.	To describe the characteristics of the work environment, the safety attitudes, the quality of care measured by the nursing team of the pediatric units and to analyze the evolution of the care and hospital performance indicators.
3	Uso de ferramentas de gestão da qualidade com foco na segurança do paciente neonatal	Fioreti, et al., 2016	Descriptive study with a qualitative approach	To analyze the use of quality management tools with a focus on patient safety.
4	Acreditação hospitalar e seus impactos nas boas práticas em serviços da saúde	Terra e Berssaneti, 2017	Qualitative approach, with multiple case study	To analyze how the actions adopted by the hospital accreditation processes impact the good quality practices in health services.
5	Acreditação no âmbito da assistência farmacêutica hospitalar: uma abordagem qualitativa de seus impactos	Bouças, et al., 2018	Qualitative approach, with multiple case study	To identify and describe the effect of the accreditation process on pharmaceutical assistance in pharmacy services of private hospitals from the perspective of health professionals.
6	Métrica de indicadores assistenciais de hospitais certificados	Braga, et al., 2018	Quantitative, documentary, retrospective and descriptive study.	To verify the association of care indicators and the level of certification of the institutions.
7	O que significa trabalhar em hospital acreditado? Percepções da equipe de enfermagem	Braga, et al., 2018	Quantitative, exploratory and descriptive study, with 563 professionals.	To know the perception of the Accreditation process in the daily routine of the Nursing team of a university hospital in the evaluative dimensions of structure, process and result.
8	Segurança do paciente e a atuação do enfermeiro em hospital	Silva, et al., 2018	Qualitative, descriptive study, conducted with 42 nurses from a hospital institution.	To analyze the performance of nurses in patient safety in a hospital institution.
9	A comunicação como estratégia para manutenção da acreditação hospitalar	Freire, et al., 2019	Single case study of qualitative descriptive approach.	To analyze the communication strategies adopted by a General Hospital, which contribute to the maintenance of accreditation with excellence.
10	Fatores contribuintes para consolidação da cultura de segurança do paciente no âmbito hospitalar	Heidmann, et al., 2019	Qualitative study	To understand the factors that contribute to the consolidation of the patient safety culture, from the leadership's perspective, in an accredited hospital.
11	Interface entre acreditação e segurança do paciente: Perspectivas da equipe de enfermagem	Oliveira, et al., 2020	Descriptive-exploratory study of qualitative nature.	

Fonte: próprio autor.

In the study by Bouças *et al.* (2018) it was verified that the reintroduction of pharmacists in the care program as a result of the implementation of hospital accreditation allowed pharmacists to gradually stop being only suppliers of medications and materials, and to start acting as integrated members of multiprofessional teams. These reports clearly showed that the focus of pharmacists' work has shifted from the basic perspective of drug allocation to monitoring patient care. However, this increased the level of demand for pharmacists to participate in the care process, raising the criticality about hospital pharmacy processes, these results point to the growth of professional involvement as one of the effects of hospital accreditation. Another factor that reflects in hospital accreditation are the actions of the nurse as a leader, which are loyal not only in the nursing area, but also by the other hospital professionals who experience or have experienced the accreditation process. Therefore, the investment in people's potential must be encouraged in order to keep the team stimulated and updated and to establish an organizational culture that leads to quality and patient safety. (BRAGA, *et al.*, 2018). Corroborating with this study was addressed in the study by Terra and Bessaneti (2017), where it showed that the support of senior management is related to the process of continuous improvement and service productivity, and the level of patient safety is related to improving the quality of care. When associated with accreditation, it can increase productivity, improve patient satisfaction, and add value to the organization. On the other hand, Alves and Guirardello (2016) in the result of their study showed that the low score in the field perception of hospital and unit management indicates that the institution should strive to strengthen the training of managers in leadership positions, being pointed out the role of organizational and care leaders as a key factor for the development of the organization, Being a positive environment for professional practice and quality of care, thus, characteristics such as accessibility, visibility, team participation and support in team decision-making, recognition and flexible management for the team and other characteristics are related to improved job satisfaction, retention rate of qualified professionals and lower intention to leave the job. According to BRAGA, *et al.*, (2018), some factors can interfere negatively with hospital accreditation because of the pressure and work overload generated during the hospital accreditation process, and pointing out that the reason for work overload occurs during the performance of common and bureaucratic tasks, while charge and stress belong to the needs for quality and perfection. Therefore, these changes in the institution for the development of the safety culture demanded a lot from the teams. The collective effort to achieve a positive satisfaction with the service was accompanied by a lot of work. The nursing staff is immersed in an intense daily workload, and they are the most demanded, needing the ability to adapt and overcome. They can show occupational fatigue, which is the body's regular response to this stress. Even when there were more demands, the team was satisfied, motivated and supported to keep working (HEIDMANN, *et al.*, 2019). Most of the studies presented in Table 3 revealed that there are factors that reflect on hospital accreditation bringing results that benefit this process as well as what this generates of consequences for those working toward accreditation. The results are presented in Category 2.

Category 2: Benefits of hospital accreditation for patient safety

As reported by Sillva *et al.* (2018) it was found that the use of safety culture provided accountability and ethical commitment from professionals. It was observed that the nurses when reporting on the reporting of adverse events and the awareness of the team, disseminated important points to their performance and the dissemination of a just culture. Thus, it is essential that health organizations structure themselves by helping professionals not to make mistakes, making safe strategies improve quality and health care. Braga *et al.* (2018), recognizes as benefits of accreditation for both managers and workers changes in operational, structural, financial, and cost aspects, both in senior management and for quality management, being considered broad and positive changes, and can be exemplified by the standardization and mapping of care processes; the increase in the physical structure and work organization;

improvement in hospital cost management; strategic market vision positioning; inclusion of participatory leadership among others. Corroborating, the research of Heidmann *et al.* (2019) shows that the factors that contributed to a positive patient safety culture are job satisfaction, increased salary remuneration, feeling of pride for working in an accredited institution, bringing as a benefit professional growth, these factors, motivated the team to play an important role in promoting patient safety, since, it makes work pleasurable, developing a positive individual and collective identity that makes it possible to provide safe and excellent care. The certification brought improvements in the physical environment, more comfort and safety for the professionals, who realized the results of their collective work and the satisfaction of performing their tasks under safe conditions. Following this line in Oliveira *et al.* (2018), it is postulated that positioning patient safety as a product independent of the accreditation certification is not only positive, but also ethically important for the nursing team, this is because, it provides the use of wristbands and identification plate, prevention of falls through the use of bars in all beds, In addition, patient safety is sometimes seen as dependent (through the cross moments of maintaining the quality seal) and sometimes independent of the certification, with patient safety measures being more important than the certification itself. Finally, the subjects of the study by Frioreti *et al.* (2016), pointed out as a benefit of accreditation the need for process management as a methodology for evaluating, analyzing and advancing the performance of techniques that can be defined as a set of successive and or parallel operations that provide a well-defined outcome or a customer value outcome.

CONCLUSION

The contributions of hospital accreditation are essential for patient safety. It was verified in the study that the main benefits of hospital accreditation for the quality of patient safety were increased safety for patients and professionals; quality of care; improvement of professional training and continuing education; strengthening of teamwork; continuous improvement; optimization of work processes; and cost reduction. Thus, it is important to highlight that the hospital accreditation process provides an institutional commitment to improve the quality of care and patient safety in health services, especially in hospital organizations, through process mapping and standardization, staff training and constant process monitoring. Above all, it is denoted the importance of the results presented in this review, in such a way that it is suggested the production of other researches that demonstrate the interface between accreditation and patient safety, as a means of complementing the present study and supplying the lack of knowledge about the interconnection between these two themes.

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