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Accredited Philhealth Konsult Providers Service Quality and Diagnostic Examination Availability in Baguio City

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Abstract- The PhilHealth Konsulta program aims to improve healthcare access and affordability in the Philippines by offering full primary care services such as consultations, diagnostic testing, and prescriptions. This study looks at the quality and availability of diagnostic examinations provided by accredited PhilHealth Konsulta providers in Baguio City. A quantitative research approach was used, with a survey disseminated to staff and outpatients from various PhilHealth Konsulta facilities in Baguio City. The study used a Likert scale to assess satisfaction levels in 10 areas of service quality and diagnostic availability, ranging from 1 (least satisfied) to 5 (very highly satisfied). A total of 117 people responded, including 48 personnel and 69 outpatients. Findings indicate generally high satisfaction levels among both healthcare providers and patients regarding consultation services, queue management, and patient instructions within the PhilHealth Konsulta framework. However, moderate satisfaction was noted regarding the availability of medications and diagnostic tests, highlighting potential areas for enhancement in inventory management and diagnostic infrastructure. Disparities between staff and patient perceptions suggest a need for improved communication and alignment in service delivery expectations. While the PhilHealth Konsulta program in Baguio City typically satisfies the demands of patients with moderate to high satisfaction, there are several crucial areas that need to be addressed to increase service quality and diagnostic availability. The study emphasizes the importance of increasing diagnostic test availability through enhanced equipment procurement and supply chain management. Strengthening healthcare manpower by recruiting additional staff and implementing training programs to optimize service delivery efficiency is also advised. Furthermore, leveraging technology to streamline administrative processes and improve patient management systems can enhance overall patient experience and operational effectiveness. This research contributes valuable insights to policymakers, healthcare managers, and practitioners involved in optimizing primary healthcare delivery under the PhilHealth Konsulta program. By addressing identified gaps and leveraging strengths, this study aims to support efforts towards achieving equitable healthcare access and improving health outcomes for residents of Baguio City and similar settings across the Philippines.

Index Terms- Konsulta providers, service quality, Diagnostic availability, healthcare

I. INTRODUCTION

Access to quality healthcare is essential for promoting health and well-being among populations. In the Philippines, efforts to improve healthcare access and quality have been going, with initiatives such as the Philhealth Konsulta program aiming to enhance primary healthcare delivery. This research focuses on assessing the service quality and diagnostic examination availability of accredited Philhealth Konsulta Providers in Baguio City, recognizing the importance of these factors in ensuring effective healthcare delivery and patient outcomes.

The accessibility and quality of healthcare services, particularly in primary care settings, play a vital role in promoting population health and well-being. In the Philippines, The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) has introduced the PhilHealth Konsulta program

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to enhance access to primary outpatient health care services for all Filipinos, including those residing in Baguio City. This research aims to assess the service quality and diagnostic examination availability of PhilHealth Konsulta Providers in Baguio City, shedding light on the effectiveness of the program and identifying areas of improvement.

Baguio City, situated in the scenic Cordillera Mountains, presents a unique healthcare landscape characterized by a mix of public and private healthcare providers, geographic challenges, and varying levels of healthcare infrastructure. Against this backdrop, understanding the service quality and diagnostic examination availability of Philhealth Konsulta providers is crucial for ensuring equitable access to healthcare services and optimizing health outcomes for residents of Baguio City.

Literature Review

Access to healthcare services is a crucial factor influencing population health and well-being. In the Philippines, efforts to improve healthcare access and quality have been ongoing, driven by initiatives from the government and private sectors. The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) plays a pivotal role in expanding healthcare coverage through programs like PhilHealth Konsulta, which aims to enhance primary healthcare delivery and reduce health disparities across different regions. Primary healthcare serves as the foundation of healthcare systems, focusing on preventive care, health promotion, and early intervention. Effective primary healthcare reduces the burden on tertiary care facilities, improves health outcomes, and enhances overall population health (WHO, 2018). The PhilHealth Konsulta program aligns with global strategies to strengthen primary healthcare to achieve universal health coverage and sustainable development goals. The PhilHealth Konsulta program was launched to provide accessible and affordable outpatient services to all Filipinos, particularly those in underserved and marginalized communities. The program covers a range of services, including consultations, diagnostic tests, and essential medicines, aiming to remove financial barriers and encourage early healthcare seeking behavior among Filipinos (Basilio et al., 2021). Service quality in healthcare encompasses dimensions such as accessibility, responsiveness, reliability, and empathy, which collectively shape patient experiences and satisfaction levels (Donabedian, 1988). Studies have consistently shown that patient satisfaction correlates with improved treatment adherence, health outcomes, and healthcare utilization rates (Javier et al., 2022). Access to timely and accurate diagnostic examinations is crucial for disease prevention, early detection, treatment planning, and monitoring of patient progress. Disparities in diagnostic service availability persist, particularly in rural and remote areas, where access to specialized tests and medical equipment may be limited (Dullie et al., 2021). Despite progress, challenges remain in healthcare delivery across the Philippines. These include disparities in healthcare infrastructure, shortages of healthcare professionals, logistical constraints in medical supply chains, and varying levels of healthcare utilization and affordability (De Guzman et al., 2023). Research evaluating the PhilHealth Konsulta program has highlighted its impact on healthcare utilization, patient satisfaction, and health outcomes. Studies indicate that the program has increased outpatient consultations, reduced financial barriers to healthcare access, and improved early detection and management of chronic diseases (Basilio et al., 2021; Javier et al., 2022).

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework/Paradigm of the Study

The theoretical framework guiding this study draws on the Donabedian model of healthcare quality, which posits that quality can be assessed based on three interrelated components: Structure, process, and outcomes. In the context of PhilHealth Konsulta providers in Baguio City, the structure refers to the physical and organizational aspects of healthcare settings (Assessing the condition and availability of medical equipment in PhilHealth Konsulta providers). The process encompasses the delivery of healthcare services,examining how healthcare services are provided to patients, including the steps taken to diagnose and treat them. Lastly, outcomes refer to the results of healthcare services, which can include patient health, measuring how satisfied patients are with the services they received, including their perceptions of service quality and diagnostic availability.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of the study of this research are as follows:

- To assess the service quality of accredited PhilHealth Konsulta Providers: This objective involves evaluating various dimensions of service quality, including accessibility and responsiveness among Philhealth Konsulta patients in Baguio City. Though quantitative surveys, the study aims to gain insights into patient's experiences, perceptions, and satisfaction levels regarding the service quality received.

- To explore the availability of Diagnostic examinations: This objective seeks to examine the availability and accessibility of diagnostic examinations, including basic laboratory tests and other diagnostic procedures, at accredited Philhealth Konsulta facilities in Baguio City. By assessing the availability of diagnostic services, the study aims to identify gaps in service provision and potential barriers to accessing essential healthcare interventions.

- To identify factors influencing service quality and diagnostic examination availability: Through quantitative

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surveys, this objective aims to explore the factors influencing service quality and diagnostic examination availability at accredited PhilHealth Konsulta providers in Baguio City. By understanding the underlying determinants of healthcare delivery, the study seeks to inform policy decisions and quality improvement initiatives aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the PhilHealth Konsulta program.

This research endeavors to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on healthcare service quality and diagnostic examination availability, with a specific focus on accredited PhilHealth Konsulta providers in Baguio City. By addressing the identified objectives, the study aims to provide valuable insights for policymakers, healthcare managers, and practitioners seeking to optimize primary healthcare delivery and improve patient outcomes in the Philippines.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

To investigate potential drawbacks in patient experience within accredited Philhealth Konsulta facilities (Healthcare Centers) in Baguio city and in their quality of care, this study will make use of cross-sectional study with convenient sampling.

The study will target patients visiting the accredited facilities, gathering their perspectives on service quality (e.g., wait times, staff communication), utilization of diagnostic services, and overall satisfaction with care received. While convenient sampling offers a practical approach, researchers acknowledge the potential for bias towards individuals who more frequently avail their Konsulta benefits on the facilities is crucial. By analyzing the collected data, the study targets to identify specific areas for improvement in the program offered by accredited district health centers and its implementation within the city of Baguio.

Sample/Population of the Study
The study population comprises healthcare facilities in Baguio City accredited by PhilHealth under the Konsulta program. A sample of 8 out of 16 healthcare facilities will be selected through stratified random sampling to ensure a representative mix of different types of providers. The participants will include healthcare providers and patients who have utilized Konsulta services. We aim to survey 30 healthcare providers and 120 patients. Data will be collected through distributing questionnaires.

Data Gathering Tools
Questionnaire: Structured questionnaires will be developed for both healthcare providers and patients. The questionnaire has three parts, the first section includes the introduction to the survey where name of the respondent (optional), and name and location of konsulta provider (optional) were asked. Although the first section was included it was not used in analyzing the data gathered. The second sections ask about the program effectiveness. The third section asks about the suggestion and comments for improvement

To help assess the quality services, areas of improvement and ensuring better outpatient benefit availments, the researchers created an evaluative survey both beneficial for the healthcare staffs and outpatients. There are five (5) scales to choose from. These questions are subjected to reliability and validity test.

Treatment of Data
Quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics. Mean, Median, Mode, Standard deviation, and frequency distributions will be used to summarize the data related to service quality and diagnostic availability.

Ethical Considerations
The researcher will ensure all information gathered remains confidential, complying with the Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Further, the questionnaires were made answerable by both the quality providers and their service recipients retaining quality of distributing an easy and concise questionnaire answerable by both. This research is conducted solely to fulfill academic requirements.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The survey results indicate high levels of satisfaction among both staff and outpatients in most service quality indicators. Key strengths include outpatient care, queue management, and encouragement of PhilHealth registration. However, certain areas such as availability of diagnostic tests and facility manpower showed moderate dissatisfaction, suggesting room for improvement.

1. Consultation, Health Risk Screening, and Diagnostic Test Availability
$\bar{x}$ Md Mo σ
Konsulta Provider Staff 4.25 4 5 0.866
Outpatient 4.48 5 5 0.714
Total 4.365 4.5 5 0.79

Both staff and outpatients rated consultation, health risk screening, and diagnostic test availability positively, with mean scores close to 4 out of 5. Staff rated this aspect with a mean score of 4.25 out of 5, indicating a strong satisfaction level among healthcare providers regarding the services offered. Outpatients also expressed positive feedback, albeit slightly higher with a mean score of 4.48 out of 5. The mode score of 5 suggests that most respondents, both staff and outpatients, perceive these services as highly satisfactory. However, the slightly lower ratings by outpatients suggest some variability in satisfaction levels.

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2. Availability of Drugs and Medicines
x̄ Md Mo σ
Konsulta Provider Staff 3.83 4 4 0.916
Outpatient 4.32 4 4 1.108
Total 4.075 4 4 1.012

Ratings for the availability of drugs and medicines were moderate. Outpatient perceived availability more positively than staff did. The mode score of 4 indicates that this aspect is considered acceptable by many respondents, though there is a notable variance in perceptions.

3. Patient Instructions and Konsulta Package Utilization
x̄ Md Mo σ
Konsulta Provider Staff 4.5 5 5 0.899
Outpatient 4.58 5 5 0.794
Total 4.54 5 5 0.8465

Both staff and outpatients rated patient instructions and utilization of the Konsulta package positively. Staff rated this aspect with a mean score of 4.5 out of 5, reflecting a positive view of their role in providing adequate patient guidance. Outpatients rated this slightly higher with a mean score of 4.58 out of 5, indicating satisfaction with the information received. The mode score of 5 suggests that the majority find these instructions helpful and clear.

4. Queues and Check-Up Session Management
x̄ Md Mo σ
Konsulta Provider Staff 4.6 5 5 0.872
Outpatient 4.41 4 5 0.913
Total 4.505 4.5 5 0.8925

The management of queues and check-up sessions received high ratings from both staff and outpatients. Both staff and outpatients indicated satisfaction with the orderly fashion and patience observed during sessions. The mode score of 5 suggests that the majority find this aspect of service commendable.

5. Laboratories, Diagnostic Tests, and Medicine Availability
x̄ Md Mo σ
Konsulta Provider Staff 4.23 4 5 0.967
Outpatient 4.32 4 5 1.108
Total 4.275 4 5 1.0375

The mean scores above 4 indicate that respondents consider these services adequate. The mode scores of 5 highlight that a significant number of respondents view these aspects positively, aligning well with their expectations of timely access to essential medical resources. However, the wider standard deviation among outpatients suggests some variability in their experiences, potentially influenced by factors such as appointment scheduling, waiting times for test results, or availability of specific diagnostic services. To enhance consistency, the facility could consider strategies such as real-time inventory tracking, improved scheduling algorithms, or expanding diagnostic capabilities to better meet patient demand.

6. Manpower on Facilities is Not a Problem to Cater Daily Patients Who Wish to Avail Konsulta
packages.
x̄ Md Mo σ
Konsulta Provider Staff 3.6 4 5 1.172
Outpatient 4.35 4 5 0.814
Total 3.975 4 5 0.993

The perception of manpower adequacy among staff and outpatients shows a notable difference in ratings. Staff rate this aspect lower compared to outpatients, suggesting potential concerns about workload management or resource allocation within the facility. The higher standard deviation among staff responses indicates more varied opinions among healthcare providers regarding the sufficiency of manpower to meet patient needs effectively. This discrepancy highlights the importance of addressing staffing challenges through targeted recruitment efforts, workload balancing strategies, or leveraging technology to optimize operational efficiency. Enhancing staff satisfaction with workload management can contribute to improved patient care experiences and overall service quality.

7. Most People Who Cannot Afford to Go for Regular Checkups are Given Priority Which Serves its Program Purpose.
x̄ Md Mo σ
Konsulta Provider Staff 4.23 4 5 0.895
Outpatient 4.48 5 5 0.729
Total 4.355 4.5 5 0.812

Both staff and outpatients rate the prioritization of poor individuals highly. The high mean scores and mode values indicate strong agreement that the facility effectively serves its programmatic purpose of providing equitable healthcare access. The lower standard deviation among outpatients suggests a more uniform perception among patients regarding the fairness and effectiveness of the prioritization process.

8. Transactions are Smooth and Less Trouble Due to Use of Technology
x̄ Md Mo σ
Konsulta Provider Staff 3.96 4 5 0.963
Outpatient 4.33 4 5 0.919
Total 4.145 4 5 0.941

Overall, ratings for transactional efficiency due to technological use are positive. Both staff and outpatients

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indicate satisfaction, though there is some variability noted among outpatient responses.

9. Primary Care Awareness is Informed to all Visitors Queries Regarding Konsulta are Answered Promptly

	$\bar{x}$	Md	Mo	σ
Konsulta Provider Staff	4.48	5	5	0.761
Outpatient	4.45	5	5	0.825
Total	4.465	5	5	0.793

Ratings for transactional efficiency due to the use of technology reflect generally positive perceptions among both staff and outpatients. The mean scores above 3.5 indicate satisfactory experiences with technological tools in facilitating healthcare transactions. The mode scores of 5 suggest a strong consensus among respondents who find these tools effective and user-friendly, contributing to streamlined administrative processes and reduced operational friction. The slightly higher standard deviation among outpatient ratings indicates some variability in experiences, potentially influenced by factors such as familiarity with technology, ease of use of digital interfaces, or specific transactional challenges encountered.

10. Unregistered Philhealth Members are Encouraged by the Facility to Avail Packages for Pjilhealth Konsulta.

	$\bar{x}$	Md	Mo	σ
Konsulta Provider Staff	4.65	5	5	0.789
Outpatient	4.62	5	5	0.825
Total	4.635	5	5	0.807

The high mean scores and mode values for both staff and outpatients indicate a robust understanding and effective communication of primary care awareness and Konsulta program details. Respondents express high satisfaction with the clarity and promptness in responding to queries related to healthcare services. The lower standard deviation among staff and outpatient ratings suggests a consistent and positive perception of the facility's efforts to inform and engage visitors on primary care options and program benefits.

IV. CONCLUSION

PhilHealth Konsulta providers in Baguio City generally provide high-quality services, with high satisfaction levels across most indicators. Konsulta program represents a significant step towards improving healthcare access and affordability for Filipinos. The data reveals a generally positive perception among both staff and outpatients regarding consultation services, patient instructions, and queue management, reflected in high mean scores and predominantly favorable mode ratings. These aspects indicate effective operational practices and a commitment to patient satisfaction and care. However, notable discrepancies and areas for improvement also emerged. Concerns over medication availability, as indicated by moderate mean scores and varied perceptions, suggest a need for enhanced inventory management strategies to ensure consistent supply. Similarly, while technology integration has streamlined transactions, further improvements and training are necessary to fully leverage its potential in enhancing service delivery efficiency.
The data also underscores disparities between staff and outpatient perspectives, particularly concerning diagnostic availability and staffing adequacy. Addressing these discrepancies through improved communication channels and feedback mechanisms can facilitate a more unified approach to addressing patient needs and expectations comprehensively.

Recommendations

Increase Diagnostic Test Availability. Invest in more diagnostic equipment and ensure regular supplies of necessary tools to improve the availability of laboratory and diagnostic tests. This will address the moderate dissatisfaction noted in this area.

Enhance Facility Manpower Immediate steps should focus on recruiting additional healthcare personnel and providing sufficient support to existing staff. This includes training, workload management, and incentives to mitigate burnout and improve overall service delivery.

Streamline Transactions. Implement advanced technological solutions to streamline transactions and patient management systems. This includes ensuring compatibility, user friendliness, and reliability to streamline processes and improve data management. This will enhance the smoothness of transactions and reduce the moderate dissatisfaction observed.

Focus on Drug and Medicine Availability. Ensure a consistent supply of essential drugs and medicines to primary care patients. Addressing this will further enhance patient satisfaction and trust in the Konsulta program.

Strengthening Patient-Centered Care: Continued emphasis on patient education, clear communication, and responsiveness to patient needs is vital. Regular feedback mechanisms and training for staff in patient engagement can enhance satisfaction and healthcare outcomes.

Scaling Program Reach and Awareness: Efforts to expand the dissemination of the Konsulta program, particularly in underserved areas, should be prioritized. This involves community outreach, partnerships with local organizations, and awareness campaigns to ensure all eligible individuals can access services.

Improving Coordination and Collaboration: Strengthening coordination between clinics, health facilities, and governmental bodies can optimize resource allocation, share

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best practices, and foster a cohesive approach to healthcare delivery.

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