

OP_02

Patient Waiting Time, Consultation Time, and its effect on patient satisfaction at the Outpatient Department in Colombo North Teaching Hospital (CNTH)

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Introduction: Patient satisfaction is an important aspect of healthcare quality, and waiting time and consultation time are key factors that can impact patient satisfaction. The outpatient department (OPD) of a hospital is often the initial point of contact for individuals seeking medical care, and as such, its effectiveness is critical in facilitating timely and satisfactory treatment. However, in many developing countries, queuing and long waiting times pose significant challenges to the provision of high-quality care within the OPD.

Objectives: This study was carried out to determine the waiting time, consultation time and its effect on patient satisfaction at the outpatient department of Colombo North Teaching Hospital (CNTH).

Methods: The study was a cross-sectional survey conducted among patients who visited the Outpatient Department at CNTH. Researchers measured and collected data on waiting time, consultation time, and a self-administered questionnaire was used to assess patient satisfaction. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and logistic regression analysis.

Results: 310 patients participated with 54.19% males and 45.81% females. Mean Total Waiting Time (TWT) was 19min 19s (\pm 18min 59s), and mean Consultation Time (CT) was 4min 5s (\pm 2min 29s). Two satisfaction groups were formed based on satisfaction scores. Low Satisfaction group had mean TWT of 27min 30s and CT of 3min 22s; High Satisfaction group had mean TWT of 13min 1s and CT of 4min 38s. Statistically significant differences were found between Low and High Satisfaction groups for both total waiting time ($p < 0.001$) and consultation time ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: The study findings suggest that reducing waiting time can improve patient satisfaction, while increasing consultation time may also contribute to higher patient satisfaction. Therefore, efforts should be made to minimize patient waiting time and optimize consultation time in order to enhance patient satisfaction in outpatient settings.