

Abstract 34

Parental and guardian satisfaction with paediatric inpatient care at the Teaching Hospital Jaffna

Senavirathna WRGWI¹, Nirusika S¹, Kiruththiha K¹, Kajiparan M¹, Suhirthan M¹, Thirumahal S², Umasankar N³

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna

²Regional Directorate of Health Services, Kilinochchi

³Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna

Background and objective: Patient satisfaction is a key measure of healthcare quality, reflecting both clinical outcomes and the patient–provider relationship. This study aimed to assess the satisfaction of parents and legal guardians regarding the care provided to their children when admitted to the paediatric wards of the Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

Methods: A hospital-based descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted from 9th August 2023 to 30th November 2024 among parents and legal guardians of children who were admitted for more than three days. The required sample size was 148. Participants were selected using a systematic random sampling method with a sampling interval of 5; every 5th patient in the admissions register was included. Data were collected using an interviewer-administered, pre-tested questionnaire, which was validated prior to the study. The instrument evaluated satisfaction related to communication with doctors and nurses, ward facilities, and the overall care process. Statistical analysis was performed using descriptive statistics and mean satisfaction scores; associations were analysed using the chi-square test, with a significance level set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: A total of 148 participants were included, of whom 93.9% were mothers, 2.7% fathers, and 3.5% other legal guardians. The majority (85.1%) were housewives in the age group 24 to 64 years (mean 35.3, SD 7.0 years). The mean global satisfaction score was 4.93 ± 0.31 , indicating high overall satisfaction. Item-wise analysis showed that 96% of respondents were highly satisfied with doctors' communication, 94% with nurses' communication, and 91% with the care process. However, satisfaction with ward facilities was relatively lower (82%), mainly due to inadequate space and ventilation.

Conclusion: Parental and guardian satisfaction with paediatric care at Teaching Hospital, Jaffna was generally high, particularly regarding communication and responsiveness of healthcare staff. However, aspects such as ward space and ventilation need improvement. Enhancing the physical environment and maintaining clear, compassionate communication between healthcare providers and caregivers are recommended to sustain and further improve satisfaction levels.

Keywords: parental satisfaction, guardian satisfaction, paediatric ward, Teaching Hospital, Jaffna