CHAPTER 1

Health Delivery Fundamentals
Pretest (True/False)

- A patient who has surgery at an ambulatory care facility is required to remain overnight.
- The emergency department is considered an outpatient service.
- The average length of stay in a long-term care facility is greater than 30 days.
- If a patient is readmitted to a hospital, the hospital will use the same patient chart it used for that patient previously, rather than starting a new chart.
- The size of an outpatient facility is determined by the number of patients it sees each day.
Types of Facilities

- Ambulatory (Outpatient)
- Acute (Inpatient)
Ambulatory Care Facilities

• Also called outpatient care facilities
• Provide care to patients who do not require an overnight stay
• Privately or publicly owned, but mostly privately
• Examples: doctor’s offices, medical clinics, public health departments, walk-in clinics, urgent care centers, outpatient surgery centers, and diagnostic centers
• Healthcare provider’s office is the most logical example.
Acute Care Facilities

- Treat patients (inpatients) with more serious illnesses or injuries
- Keep patients overnight or longer
- Owned by either for-profit corporations or not-for-profit organizations
- Typically called a hospital
- Examples: acute care hospital, not-for-profit hospital, for-profit hospital, long-term care facility, and rehabilitation facility
Hospital Departments

- Surgery
- Radiology
- Pediatrics
- Laboratory
- Emergency (ED or ER)
- Trauma centers
- Intensive care units (ICUs)
Subacute Care Facilities

- Offer services appropriate for patients whose nursing care needs are less frequent and intensive than offered in an acute care facility.
- Examples: (1) physical rehabilitation facilities, (2) long-term care facilities, and (3) home care.
Subacute Care: Rehabilitation Facilities

- Offer inpatient care
- Help patient return to maximum functionality possible
- Specialize in physical medicine, physical therapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT), and addiction recovery
Subacute Care: Long-term Care Facilities

- Offer inpatient care at less intense level than acute care facility
- Provide LOS greater than 30 days
- Patients referred to as *Residents*
- Examples: skilled nursing facilities, nursing homes, residential care facilities, and rehabilitation hospitals
Subacute Care: Home Care

- Offered regularly in patient’s home, not in a facility
- Provided by home health agencies
- Includes the following healthcare providers:
  - Nurses
  - Physical therapist (PT)
  - Occupational therapist (OT)
Comparing Inpatient (Acute) and Outpatient (Ambulatory) Facilities

- Length of Stay (LOS)
- Facility Size
- Admission/Discharge
- Organizational Charts
- Patient Charts
Length of Stay (LOS)

- **Outpatient facility:**
  - Patients do not stay overnight
  - Note: multiple visits on the same day are considered to be only one visit

- **Inpatient facility:**
  - ALOS less than 30 days (acute care)
  - ALOS greater than 30 days (long-term care)
  - Count day of admission but not day of discharge
Facility Size

- **Outpatient facility:**
  - Number of patient encounters per day

- **Inpatient facility:**
  - Number of licensed beds (i.e. capacity)
  - Bed count
Admission/Discharge

- **Outpatient facility:**
  - No formal process

- **Inpatient facility:**
  - Formal process for hospital admission and discharge
  - Doctor must perform physical exam within 24 hours of admission
  - Discharge requires doctor’s order
  - Date and time of hospital admission and discharge determine LOS and number of days for billing
Organizational Charts

- Inpatient care facilities generally have more complex organizational structures
- Outpatient care facilities generally have a simpler management structure
Figure 1-5  Organizational chart for an acute care hospital.
Figure 1-7 Organizational chart for a group medical practice.
Patient Charts: Outpatient

- Single chart per patient
- Contains records of all visits, plus associated reports or results from other providers
- Focuses on longitudinal care of patient
- Used primarily by physician, nurse, and billing staff
- Includes detailed physician’s notes about each visit
- Has smaller quantity of data than inpatient chart
- May contain correspondence and billing information
Patient Charts: Inpatient

- New chart started each time patient admitted
- Focuses on information related to current stay
- Used extensively by wide number of caregivers and administrative personnel
- Includes brief physician exam notes
- Includes doctor’s orders and nurses’ notes as main elements
- Contains greater quantity of data than outpatient chart
Healthcare Providers/Professions

- Direct Care Providers
- Allied Healthcare Professions
Direct Care Providers

- Provide healthcare services directly to patient
- Require state license to practice
- Actions regulated by professional or licensing boards
- Must document patient care, including time spent with, observations, and actions
- Depend on accuracy and completeness of health record to make patient care decisions
- Examples: doctors, nurses, and physician assistants
Direct Care Providers: Doctors

- Include several different types of healthcare professionals
- Require specialized training and licensing
- Oversee patient’s care
- Order medications, therapy, diagnostic tests, referrals, and consults with other physicians
- Authorize medical orders and patient documentation
- Examples: chiropractors, dentists, psychologists, osteopaths, and medical doctors (American boards of specialties and subspecialties)
Direct Care Providers: Nurses

• Spend largest amount of time in direct patient care
• Several levels of nursing licensure:
  – LPN (licensed practical nurses)
  – RN (registered nurse with either an ADN (associate degree) or BSN (bachelor of science degree)
  – CRNA (certified registered nurse anesthetist)
  – Nurse midwives
  – Nurse practitioners
Direct Care Providers: Physician Assistants

- Work under supervision of physicians
- Conduct physical exams
- Diagnose and treat illnesses
- Order and interpret tests
- Counsel patients
- Assist in surgery
- Can write prescriptions (in most states)
Allied Healthcare Professionals

- Provide care directly to patient
- Operate based on orders of licensed provider (doctor, nurse practitioner, PA)
- Examples: physical therapists (PT), occupational therapists (OT), respiratory therapists (RT), clinical laboratory technicians, phlebotomists, diagnostic technologists, pharmacists, registered dieticians (RD), audiologists, speech pathologists, social workers, clinical medical assistants, and home health aides.
Clinical Professional Organizations

- American Medical Association (AMA)
- American Nurses Association (ANA)
- American Hospital Association (AHA)