

Making use of available health resources in Nigeria

Health care systems around the globe are struggling with limited resources.¹ These resources are not only financial but also resources in terms of personnel, competences, equipment, pharmaceuticals, facilities.¹ Hence, public health systems, which are those that provide publicly funded healthcare, are under a great deal of pressure from the global economic crisis, under-staffing, and budgetary constraints.² This has further been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic which has revealed the massive shortcomings of health systems globally, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria, with weak healthcare infrastructure and chronic high morbidity and mortality from both infectious and non-infectious diseases.³ Rising health care demand, an increase in the burden of diseases on infrastructure, technology improvements, shifting service models, rising customer expectations, and shifting service accessibility also place pressures that affect health systems globally.²

As a result of these challenges, there is a need to prioritize and allocate available resources for the general good of all the citizenry.¹ For hospitals, this would imply that they cannot continue to operate as they did in the past if they want to survive.⁴ The hospitals will have to learn to meet rising healthcare demands without a proportionate increase in resources.⁴ They will have to cope with higher expectations in relation to the quality of treatment and care rendered, but also increasingly of the quality of the patient experience and workplace environment.⁴

Hence, hospitals will have to become considerably more efficient in the way they operate.⁴ Effective capacity management is one of the key components that hospitals will require to achieve optimal resource efficiency and thrive in this harsh environment.⁴ It is key to achieving optimal resource utilization through aligning resources, processes, and planning across individual providers and networks as well as a fundamental component in any strategy to ensure that hospitals survive in a world where resources are scarce and there are higher demands.⁴ Effective capacity management is a

solution that encompasses the entire organization.⁴

In the context of Nigeria, it is recommended that there should be optimal allocation of scarce medical resources in ways that would maximize health care delivery benefits to the greatest number of people, give priority to those worse off, ensure equality and promote continued care provision for all conditions.³ Funding priority should be given to essential prevention and treatment services for communicable diseases, including immunizations; services related to reproductive health, including pregnancy and childbirth; core services for vulnerable populations, such as infants and older adults; provision of medicines; management of emergency health conditions and common acute illnesses; and auxiliary services, such as basic diagnostic imaging, laboratory, and blood bank services.³ Nigerian policymakers should also ensure that social protection services are instituted and maintained;³ and the government should ensure accountability for all funds released.³

REFERENCES

1. Holmér S, Nedlund AC, Thomas K, Krevers B. How health care professionals handle limited resources in primary care - an interview study. *BMC Health Serv Res* 2023 ;23(1):6.
2. Albalwei HSS . Maximization of resources in health care facilities: simple review article. *Haya Saudi J Life Sci* 2022; 7(12): 344-351.
3. Ilesanmi OS, Akande A, Afolabi AA. Prioritization of resource allocation amid the COVID-19 outbreak response in Nigeria. *Journal of Ideas in Health* 2021; 4(Special 1):334-336.
4. Madelung M. Hospital capacity management: making best use of available resources. Using effective capacity management to thrive in a time of resource scarcity. *IQVIA White Paper* 2023. Available from: <https://www.iqvia.com/>

/media/iqvia/pdfs/library/white-papers/hospital-capacity-management-making-best-use-of-available-resources.pdf. Accessed 27-10-2025.

Richard Chinedu Echem

Editor-in-Chief
Department of Surgery, Faculty of Clinical
Sciences, College of Health Sciences,
University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt,
Nigeria.
Email: richard.echem@uniport.edu.ng

This is an open access journal and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (Attribution, Non-Commercial, ShareAlike 4.0) -(CCBY-NC-SA4.0) that allows others to share the work with an acknowledgement of the work's authorship and initial publication in this journal.

Access this article online	
Quick Response Code:	Website: www.phmj.org.ng
	DOI: https://doi.org/10.60787/phmj.v19i3.220
How to cite this article: Echem RC. Making use of available health resources in Nigeria. Port Harcourt Med J 2025;19(3):135-136.	

