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AN IN-BARRACKS MEDICAL SCREENING PROGRAM
AT THE RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND,
NAVAL TRAINING CENTER, ORLANDO, FLORIDA

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. A Problem Solving Project
Submitted to the Faculty of
Baylor University
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Hospital Administration

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

The "real value" of the resources of the Department of Defense health care delivery system has, in recent years, been under constant resource constraints and has been shrinking. Concomitantly, both the beneficiary population and the services provided have continued to escalate. In order to follow the criteria of "doing more with less," each individual provider of health care must be concerned with the development of the most effective and efficient means of delivering that care to all eligible beneficiaries.

The typical system that the military employs to provide outpatient medical care to the active duty population is through utilization of the morning sick call. This system, designed around the early morning clinical visit, allows the military member, who is ill, the opportunity to be medically evaluated and treated prior to beginning his normal duty day. The impetus for the continued use of this treatment modality has been the expedient evaluation of an individual's illness, the appropriate treatment of that illness, and the expeditious return of the individual to a full duty status.¹

At the Naval Regional Medical Center, Orlando, Florida, the active duty patient is provided outpatient medical care at the Branch Clinic, Naval Training Center, Orlando, Florida. The relationship between the Branch Clinic and the rest of the regional medical center appears as Appendix A.

The Branch Clinic has been specifically tasked with providing and coordinating all of the services that are relative to the examination, diagnosis, care, treatment, and appropriate disposition of recruit patients, and to provide complete outpatient services, including physical examinations, to all of the active duty personnel assigned to the Naval Training Center, Orlando, Florida and to all of its component commands.² The organization of the Branch Clinic is depicted in Appendix B.

Administrative Branch, NRMC Branch Clinic

The Administrative Branch has the responsibility for administering the nonclinical functions associated with the day-to-day management of the clinic. In general, the Administrative Branch is divided into the three sections shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

Administrative Branch

1. Health Records Section
2. Medical Boards/Clinical Records Section
3. Administrative/Supply Section

Clinical Branch, NRMCC, Branch Clinic

The Clinical Branch is responsible for providing quality outpatient medical care to all active duty military personnel assigned to commands located and/or attached to the Naval Training Center. All of the sections of this branch have been authorized to consult directly with the various specialty clinics located at the regional medical center. This branch is divided into the eleven sections shown in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2

Clinical Branch

- 8. Physiotherapy Section
- 9. Pharmacy Section
- 10. Radiology Section
- 11. Laboratory Section

In general, research has shown that the multitude of all active duty patients seeking outpatient medical treatment arrive at the NRMC Branch Clinic during the first hour of the duty day. This local observation has been substantiated through studies in other services.³ When the medical treatment facility is inundated by this massing of patients an intensive queuing problem is created, especially in light of the fact that the health care provider is attempting to deliver expeditious, high quality health care in a timely fashion.

Considering all of the problems that are, or can be, associated with providing health care under the constraints inherent to this particular type of health delivery system, the one that appears to have the major impact on the mission of the military is the loss of time through queuing. Initial studies indicate that there appear to be three feasible solutions that would either alleviate the problem at the Branch Clinic, or at least allow a significant reduction in the problem: (1) to decrease the

number of patients that present to the Branch Clinic at any given time; (2) to devise a specific methodology to evaluate, treat, and schedule the patients throughout the normal working day; or, (3) to institute a combination of these two possible solutions.

In any attempt to reduce or control the workload of a specific population, the researcher must decide what comprises that workload. In this instance the Branch Clinic's Medical Services and Outpatient Morbidity Reports were screened in an attempt to select the major user of health services at the clinic.

These reports suggested that the principle user of health services at the Branch Clinic was the Recruit Training Command, Naval Training Center, Orlando, Florida.

Recruit Training Command

It is the primary mission of the Recruit Training Command (RTC), Naval Training Center, Orlando, Florida to conduct an extremely intensive, eight week training program, tailored to effect each individual recruit's smooth transition from civilian to Navy life. In order to accomplish this mission each recruit's program is controlled by an RTC master training schedule which is so rigid

unit for more than two scheduled training days, is re-assigned to another training unit.⁴

Under the present system of providing outpatient medical care to the Recruit Training Command, an inordinate amount of training hours are being lost through the queuing problems that are associated with sick call procedures at the Branch Clinic.

It is the purpose of this problem solving project, through the implementation of a medical screening program and an eight week trial period, to alleviate the present system's queuing problems associated with the provision of outpatient medical treatment to the Orlando recruit population.

Footnotes

¹LTC Barry W. Wolcott, MC, USA, and 1st LT Robert E. Stieneker, MSC, USA, "The Use of In-Barracks Screeners to Improve Military Sick Call," Military Medicine, (February, 1979), p.99.

CHAPTER II
STUDY OBJECTIVES
Problem Statement

The problem is to determine whether there is a valid need for an in-barracks medical screening program for the Recruit Training Command. The problem parameters involve three major areas within the proposed structure: quality of care rendered; provider and patient productivity; and provider utilization.

The first parameter, that of the quality of care provided, involves several elements within the present system of active duty, outpatient medical treatment. Presently there appears to be inordinate time lost between the patient's initial contact with the health care delivery system, with his subsequent evaluation and treatment, and with his return to a training status. It is during this time interval of approximately one to three hours that the recruit is in a non-productive status.

The second parameter, that of patient and provider productivity, there appear two facets that seem to be inherent in the problem. First, compromised provider productivity occurs when a specific time space, i.e.,

appointment, is not available for a definitive number of patient visits. An unpredictable influx of patients automatically overloads the system during the morning sick call hours. Secondly, the assignment of a sufficient number of providers to accommodate the peak load of patients is impractical. The patient's productivity is affected when the individual recruit is removed from his intensive training schedule for a time consuming visit to the medical treatment facility.

The third parameter, that of provider utilization, closely parallels that of provider productivity. The concern that must be addressed here is whether or not a lower-level of treatment/medical care rendered could have been utilized at this particular stage of the patients illness or injury. It is through this type of protocol that would allow the in-barracks medical screener to evaluate whom the patient needs to see, and when he needs to be seen.

Research Methodology

The following methods for problem resolution are proposed for this study; (1) direct site analysis, (2) modeling and flow charting, (3) direct and indirect

research, (4) recurring data analysis, and (5) cost-benefit analysis.

The direct site analysis will involve examining the existing system as well as the prospective system. This examination will include, but not be limited to, on-site visits, examination of the cybernetic systems involved, and methodological investigation of structural parameters. Modeling and flow charting will occur throughout the project, and in general, will be used in a conceptual sense to describe and manipulate the real-life systems that are being studied.

Direct and indirect research, including historical research on the existing system, will be integrated with recurring data analysis in an attempt to produce information that will best achieve the objectives of the study. Finally, cost-benefit analysis will be employed to consider the interactions of the alternatives with both the expected controllables and uncontrollables and to explore those interactions in both subjective and objective terminology. This information will then be matched against evaluation criteria for comparison data.

Study Outline

The hypothesis of this research effort is that the establishment of an in-barracks medical screening program will significantly reduce the problems associated with the present system of active duty outpatient medical treatment.

The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the number of recruit training units that can be effectively managed by the model corpsman team.
2. To identify billets and positions that will be necessary to adequately staff an in-barracks medical screening program.
3. To decrease the number of recruits that present, often inappropriately, to the Branch Clinic for sick call.
4. To reduce recruit sick call non-productive time, thereby increasing actual training time.
5. To increase the productivity of the Branch Clinic physicians and physician extenders by more effectively utilizing their levels of expertise.
6. To establish an appointment system for routine non-emergency, outpatient medical care.

Center, Orlando, Florida,

2. That comparing the Navy's Clinical Assistant Program to the Army's Amosist's Program is valid,

3. That the expected workload will approximate the normal workload encountered in an individual's eight weeks in recruit training.

4. That the control recruit population will approximate the test recruit population, both in average strength and in average number of sick call visits.

CHAPTER III

THE PILOT PROJECT

In order to be able to test the proposed hypothesis it was necessary to first devise the guidelines and parameters of the pilot project itself, for it was this project that would enable the researcher to take the findings of the study and apply them to the research methodologies, and thus investigate the details of the hypothesis. This chapter will describe both the universe and the environment in which the pilot project took place as well as the basis of the project itself.

The Universe

The universe of this study includes the entire Recruit Training Command, Orlando, Florida. RTC is composed of a maximum of ten training divisions, with each division being housed in separate barracks. Each training division is comprised of as many as 12 training companies with approximately 80 recruits assigned. On 1 January 1980, there were five active divisions of ten companies each at RTC, Orlando. These divisions are presented as Table 1.

TABLE 1

UNIVERSE OF RTC

Division 4	Male Recruits (10 companies)
Division 5	Male Recruits (10 companies)
Division 7	Female Recruits (12 companies)
Division 8	Male Recruits (10 companies)
Division 9	Female Recruits (12 companies)

The Environment

The Recruit Training Command staff is composed of 34 officers and 508 enlisted men and women.¹ The staff administers a training program which provides each recruit with a curriculum established by the Chief of Naval Technical Training which is augmented by RTC, Orlando orders, regulations and instructions. The educational curriculum is rounded out with military drills, inspections, physical training, damage control/firefighting, small arms familiarization and basic naval orientation subjects.

must be examined from the prospective of including the other ancillary services that are provided through the Branch Clinic.

Figure 3 represents selected data gathered from calendar years 1977 and 1978. This data shows that in 1977, 30,922 recruits completed the training program with a male to female ratio of graduates of 85 percent.

FIGURE 3
SELECTED RECRUIT STATISTICS

	CY 1977				
	<u>1st</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>2nd</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>3rd</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>4th</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>Totals</u>

FIGURE 4

SELECTED RECRUIT STATISTICS

CY 1978

	<u>1st</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>2nd</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>3rd</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>4th</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Total Recruits Graduated	6765	5251	6881	6551	25,548
Male Recruits Graduated	5202	3925	5460	4927	19,574
Female Recruits Graduated	1563	1			

discharges over CY 1978.

FIGURE 5
SELECTED RECRUIT ATTRITION STATISTICS

CY 1977					
Male/Female	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	Totals
Unsuitable	497/95	475/115	576/72	465/66	2015/348
Medical	168/18	92/13	116/14	146/26	572/71

