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**The College of Graduate Studies and the College of Business and Economics
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DBA Dissertation Defense

Entitled

WAITING TIME AND PATIENTS' SATISFACTION

by

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Date & Venue

03:00 PM

Monday, 22 April 2019

Room 2021, H3 Building

Abstract

In line with Vision 2021, the UAE's National Agenda has six pillars: providing world-class healthcare is one of them. It is hence not surprising that the UAE healthcare industry is allocating substantial weight to the element of quality. Patient-centred care is internationally becoming part of the quality domain. Patient-centred quality may be defined as "providing the care that the patient needs in the manner the patient desires at the time the patient desires". This requires substantially more attention to learning about patients' preferences. One of the main dimensions of patient-centred quality is the timely access to care, which includes shorter waiting time and an efficient use of physicians' time. Long waiting time is a globally challenging phenomenon that most healthcare systems face; it is the main topic of this thesis. The thesis consists of two main studies. The first empirical study was conducted by interviewing a sample of 552 patients with the objective of assessing their satisfaction with their waiting experience in UAE's hospitals. The collected data allowed us to test several hypotheses that were formulated on the basis of an extensive literature study to better understand the relationship between waiting time and certain variables. In the second study, a simulation model for a typical clinic was built from real data obtained from a public hospital in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, considering two types of patients' arrival; by appointment and walk-in, to test the effect of delayed arrivals and number of resources on the waiting time. The objective of the simulation study was to determine effective strategies for reducing the patients' waiting time. The results of both studies are presented and discussed, as well as some recommendations, managerial implications and conclusions are provided at the end of the thesis.

Keywords: Waiting time, Waiting experience, Patients satisfaction, Patients perception, Patients expectation, Simulation model, delayed arrival, number of resources, Outpatient clinic, Walk-in patients,