

## Research Paper

# Designing a Strategic Planning Model for Hospitals Affiliated to Islamic Azad University in Iran



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## ABSTRACT

**Objective** Not having a suitable planning model is one of the most important barriers to strategic planning in hospitals of Iran. This study aims to design a strategic planning model for hospitals affiliated to Islamic Azad University in Iran.

**Methods** In this applied study, the review, comparative, quantitative and qualitative methods were used. First, different strategic planning models were collected and, based on them, a conceptual model was designed. Then, a researcher-made questionnaire was designed based on the different dimensions of the model and validated according to a panel of experts. The questionnaire was completed by 30 experts and the results were analyzed using one-way analysis of variance, and the model was finalized by applying the Delphi method.

**Results** Regarding the steps of strategic planning, the factors "formation of planning team" ( $5 \pm 0$ ), and "creating the culture and scientific ability for planning in managers and employees" ( $4.87 \pm 0.34$ ) obtained the highest scores. Regarding the implementation steps of the plan, the factors "receiving and implementing the approved plan" ( $4.87 \pm 0.34$ ) and "monitoring of approved plans and their continuous evaluation" ( $4.87 \pm 0.34$ ) had the highest scores. Regarding the strategic planning team members, "hospital manager" ( $5 \pm 0$ ), and "one expert in planning" ( $4.87 \pm 0.46$ ) obtained the highest scores.

**Conclusion** The use of the presented strategic planning model based on its implementation steps by a team with the suggested members can improve the stages of developing and implementing plans in hospitals affiliated to Islamic Azad University.

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## Extended Abstract

### Introduction

Today, most of advanced organizations are involved in strategic planning for the development of their organization [1]. The increasing complexity of activities has made the use of strategic planning as a necessity in organizations [2]. One of the important necessities of health systems is to develop appropriate strategies and implement them effectively [3]. Hospitals are one of the most important components of the health system and, in terms of resources, account for about half of health care expenditures [4]. A teaching hospital is not only one of the important institutions providing healthcare services [5], but also is an educational environment for medical students [6]. The most important way to increase efficiency is the correct and logical use of available resources [7]. Therefore, to improve the performance of the hospital, appropriate strategies in all fields should be developed by hospital managers [8]. There are challenges and inadequacies in hospitals in Iran, such as the dominance of hospitals managers' tastes in hospital administration, the lack of evidence-based management decisions, the weakness in formulating, implementing, and evaluating the organizational goals and plans, and the lack of performance monitoring and program control systems [9]. In addition, not having a suitable planning model is one of the most important barriers to planning in the Iranian hospitals [10]. In this study, we aim to develop a strategic planning model for hospitals affiliated to the Islamic Azad University in Iran.

### Methods

In this applied study, review, comparative, quantitative and qualitative methods were used. In the review stage, valid models of strategic planning were collected by literature review, of which 7 models were selected. Then, the different dimensions of these models were listed in a comparative table; based on this table, the initial study model was designed. In the second stage, a questionnaire with items about each component of the initial model, implementation stages, and the planning team in the hospital was designed whose content validity was confirmed by 10 experts in strategic planning. In the next step, using the Delphi method, experts were surveyed about the proposed model. In the quantitative stage, in order to prepare the final model, the questionnaire was sent to 30 experts. The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale. To test the hypothesis, one-way analysis of variance was used. Finally, the experts' opinions were categorized and the data were analyzed in SPSS software, version 22. If the items had a score  $>3.75$ , they would be included in the final model.

### Results

The results of survey about the strategic planning team in hospitals are given in Table 1. The final model of strategic planning is illustrated in Figure 1.

### Discussion

The results of the survey showed that the components of "formation of planning team", "beginning of the planning process and agreeing to do it", "holding educational programs", "creating culture and scientific ability for planning in managers and employees" had

**Table 1.** Results of survey about the strategic planning team

No.	Items	Mean $\pm$ SD	Mean Difference	P	Result
1	Head of the hospital (leader)	4.87 $\pm$ 0.346	1.12	0.001	Accepted
2	Hospital manager	5 $\pm$ 0	0	-	Accepted
3	Quality improvement manager	4.87 $\pm$ 0.346	1.12	0.001	Accepted
4	Vice-chancellor for research and education	4.67 $\pm$ 0.758	0.92	0.001	Accepted
5	Financial manager	4.70 $\pm$ 0.466	0.95	0.001	Accepted
6	Administrative manager	4.57 $\pm$ 0.504	0.82	0.001	Accepted
7	Matron	4.60 $\pm$ 1.04	0.85	0.001	Accepted
8	A specialist in planning (not from the hospital), if needed	4.70 $\pm$ 0.466	0.95	0.001	Accepted

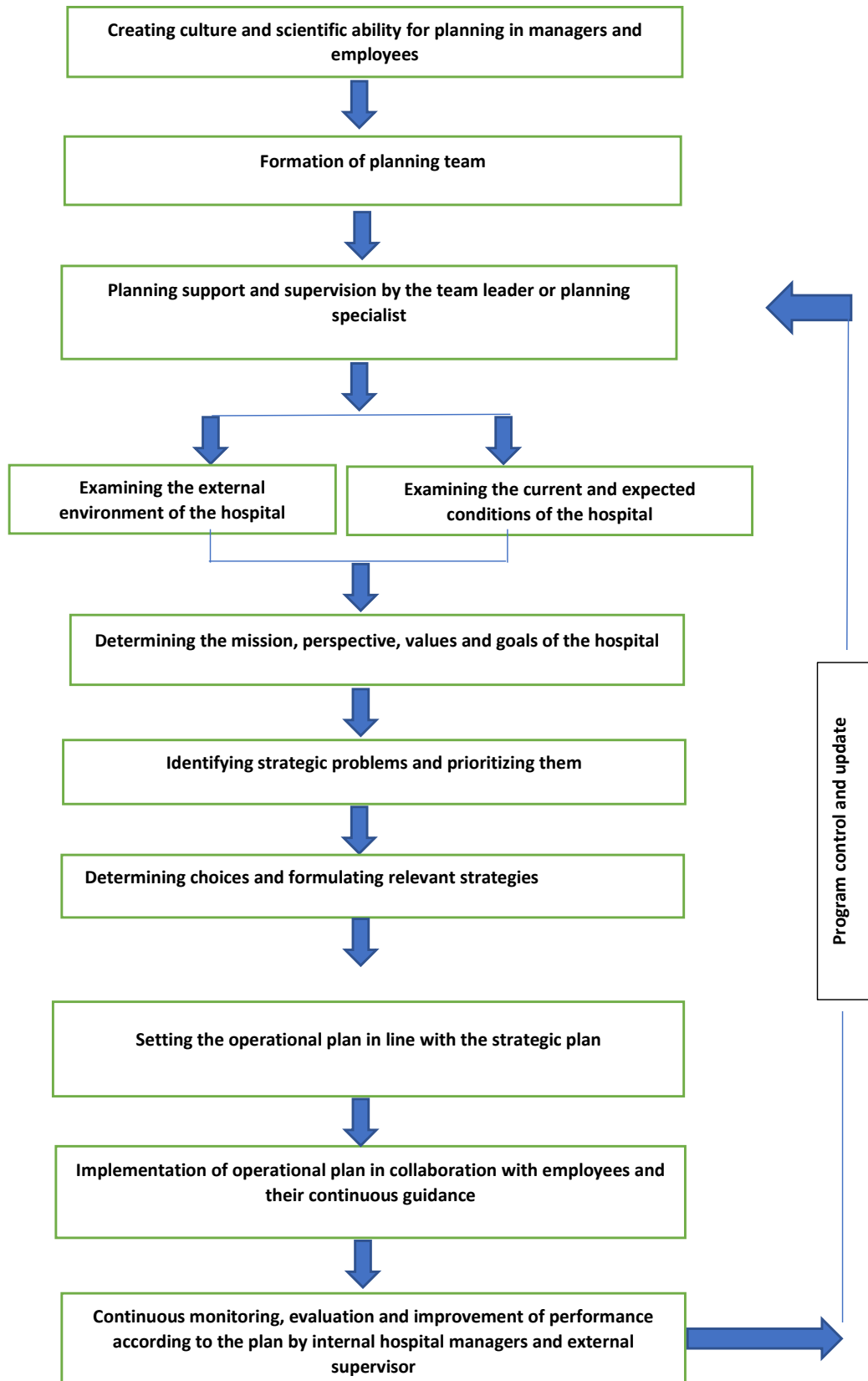


Figure 1. The proposed strategic planning model for hospitals affiliated to Islamic Azad University



the highest score according to the experts. In this regard, Jafari [3] and Bahadari [17] in their study also considered the awareness and participation of the head of the organization, organizational culture, creation and maintenance of team participation, and acceptance of employees and organizational structure to be important in the process of strategic planning. Another important components in the current study were the appointment of the head of the hospital as the team leader and the selecting an expert in planning from outside the hospital, if necessary. Khosravi also suggested the use of a person or institution to direct the strategic planning [21]. Examining the external environment of the hospital and the current and expected conditions of the hospital, identifying strategic problems and prioritizing them, and determining choices and formulating relevant strategies were other dimensions of the study model. These results are consistent with the findings of studies by Pourrashidi [24], Mostafapour [25], Shortell [26] and Khosravi [21]. Continuous monitoring, evaluation and improvement of performance according to the plan by internal hospital managers and external supervisor was another dimension. In this regard, Mosadegh Rad [10], Mostafapou [25], Rezaei [6], and Balqis Ferry [29] also concluded that the existence of employee evaluation systems and programs can take them out of the rhetorical and non-operational state.

## Ethical Considerations

### Compliance with ethical guidelines

This study was approved by [Mashhad University of Medical Sciences](#) (Code: IR.MUMS.REC.1401.068).

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### Conflicts of interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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