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Healthcare Expansion of Scope

Steve Adkins
Franklin University

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FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

A few reasons why OhioHealth was selected for this capstone project is that it has the biggest presence of any healthcare provider in central Ohio, it has a reputation for delivering high quality care, and there are many opportunities to expand its scope and offer services to new customers and patients. OhioHealth has an excellent image in the service area, but there are still opportunities to improve. A common problem for healthcare organizations today is offering services to underserved populations, without increasing the costs. This results in the need to be efficient without reducing quality of care. An organizational change strategy can be implemented to address these problems. This research discusses how OhioHealth can implement a change strategy and what the critical issues are as it makes these changes.

OhioHealth is a not-for-profit healthcare system that was founded in 1891 and is based in Columbus, Ohio (OhioHealth, 2014). OhioHealth was named the 35th best company to work for in 2014 (Fortune, 2014). There are over 15,000 employees throughout the system, which includes 8 acute care hospitals, 9 community hospitals, 20 health and surgery centers, and a total of about 2,000 beds (Hoovers, 2014).

An ethical challenge at OhioHealth is acting in the best interest of the patient. The complaints filed by patients are documented by the Better Business Bureau (BBB). OhioHealth has received a B- for a number of complaints that have been filed by patients. From August 2011 to January 2014, there have been 12 complaints about billing and collection issues, parking charges, and poor service (Better Business Bureau, 2014). The use of new technology could eliminate some of these problems.

The healthcare organization should be financially stable before undergoing an expansion. In the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2011 and ending on June 30, 2012, OhioHealth had total expenses of $1,695,909,153, and total revenue of $1,999,896,022 (Guidestar, 2014). As of now it seems OhioHealth is doing well financially, but should still be cautious and avoid expanding too fast or into areas where it is not as likely to be successful.

The population characteristics of the Columbus area can help OhioHealth determine where to target its programs. In 2010, more than 788,000 people lived within Columbus's city limits, which is an increase of about 10% over 2000. (United States Census Bureau, 2014).The growing population means there is a possible need for more providers.

The population over age 65 in Columbus at 8.6%, and the median age is 31.5 years. The largest population cohort is residents aged 25 to 34, which is 19.2% of its population, followed by residents aged 35 to 44, which is 13.5% of its population (United States Census Bureau, 2014).There are increased concerns about bone health, cancer, and other illnesses at older ages (American Cancer Society, 2014).

Columbus has an ethnic mixture that is 61.5% Caucasian, 28.0% African-American, 0.3% Native American, 4.1% Asian, and 5.6% Hispanic. The Hispanic growth in Columbus has increased from 5,968 to 42,993, which is a rate of about 720%, between 1990 and 2010 (United States Census Bureau, 2014). Those with poor English skills are more likely to have trouble accessing healthcare, whether it be through telephone or transportation, so there can be more of an effort to accommodate this population.

Methods

Thematic Analysis Search Strategy (Key words and data bases): access, acquisition, complimentary and alternative medicine, efficiency, environment, expansion of scope of practice, health, healthcare organizations, long-term care, social media.

Thematic Analysis: The proposed changes were made after consideration the research and the mission and values of the organization. This synthesis included questions that follow:
What populations are the most at risk for healthcare concerns?
What are these risks?
What healthcare markets in the Columbus area are expanding? What are the benefits and risks of entering these new markets?
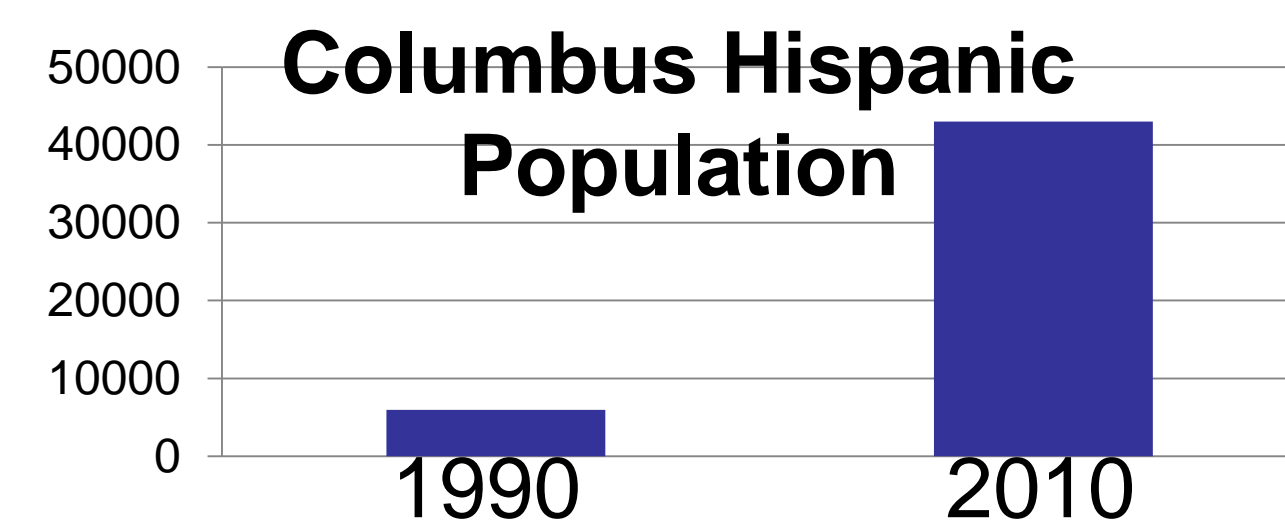What can be done to make current services more efficient?

Results

Key Demographics in Service Area

Columbus Average Age
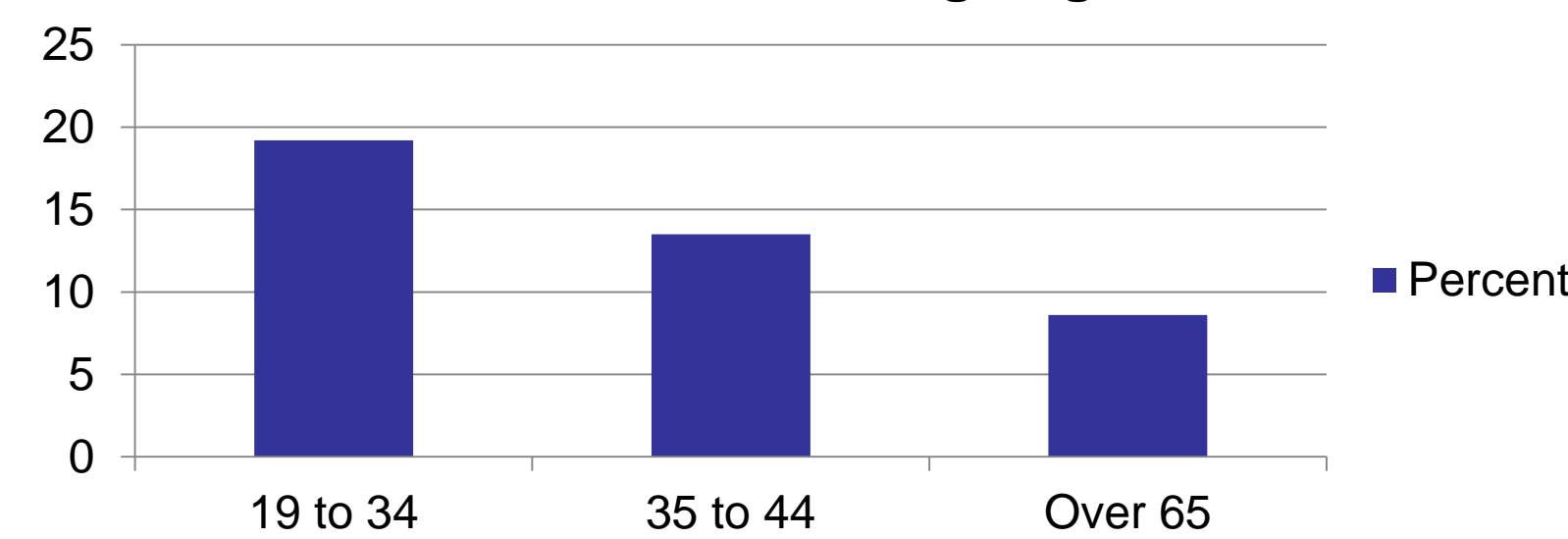
Columbus Hispanic Population

The changes that can enlarge customer base

The aging population creates an opportunity for expansion into long-term care, through acquisition of an existing long-term care provider.

A niche population can be targeted. Complimentary and alternative medicine (CAM) has increased in popularity in central Ohio, with new clinics opening. CAM services are relatively inexpensive and therefore would not be a tremendous risk (Acufinder.com, 2014).

Bone health does not need to only involve women. Comfortable and friendly services can be offered to men who otherwise would feel awkward about being treated for what is commonly seen as ailments that primarily affect women.

Patients may be inconvenienced from visiting a clinic or hospital because of language barriers, physical conditions, and so on. Patients could have more access if they could be evaluated without leaving their residence.

Conclusions

OhioHealth can benefit by a presence in long-term care because it would complement its current services. The patients in acute care hospitals can have the option to recover in the long-term care facilities, which would keep them in the OhioHealth system, providing a more cohesive experience for the patient.

OhioHealth can best accomplish the integration of CAM services by acquiring or having these become affiliated with OhioHealth. This would allow OhioHealth to use the expertise of these CAM professionals.

OhioHealth can expand its bone health care services by offering more services friendly to men. There are simple solutions, including having clinics that are aesthetically pleasing by using blue colors, and the hiring of more male bone health specialists.

OhioHealth can create easier communication for the increasing Hispanic population, and patients who are limited by cultural or physical problems. There can be an application that patients can access that will make it easier to translate. There are also opportunities to reduce unnecessary patient visits. When a patient has a visible condition, the patient can show this to a professional with the use of social media like Skype. This will reduce costs and save time.
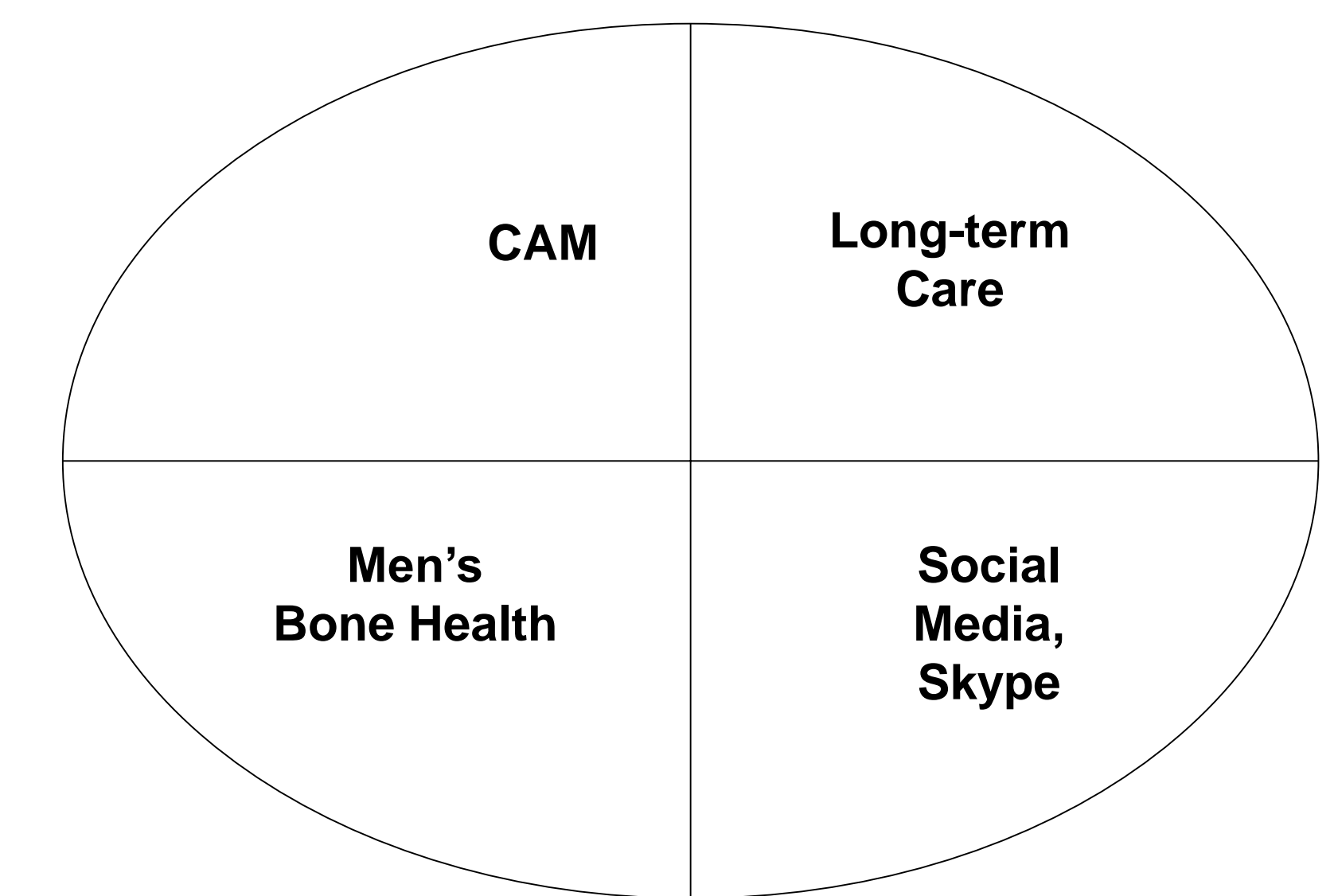
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