

Introduction to Healthcare Support Services

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Key concepts, roles, and how they fit into the broader health?care system

1. What Are Healthcare Support Services?

Definition	Scope
Non?clinical services that enable safe, efficient, and patient?centered care	Includes administrative, technical, logistical, and ancillary functions that support clinicians and patients but do not involve direct medical treatment.
Goal	Improve quality of care, enhance patient experience, reduce costs, and ensure regulatory compliance.

2. Core Categories of Support Services

Category	Typical Functions	Example Roles
Administrative & Management	Scheduling, billing, medical records, compliance, HR, finance	Medical Office Manager, Health Information Technician
Facility Operations	Housekeeping, maintenance, security, waste management, environmental services	Environmental Services Technician, Facilities Engineer
Clinical Support (Non ?Direct Care)	Laboratory processing, radiology imaging, pharmacy dispensing, nutrition services	Lab Technologist, Radiology Technician, Pharmacy Technician
Information Technology (IT)	EHR/Epic support, network security, telehealth platforms, data analytics	Health IT Specialist, Clinical Informatics Analyst
Patient Support & Navigation	Admission/discharge coordination, patient education, language interpretation, transport	Patient Navigator, Medical Interpreter, Transport Aide
Supply Chain & Materials Management	Procurement, inventory control, sterile processing, equipment maintenance	Materials Management Coordinator, Central Sterile Processing Technician

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3. How Support Services Interact with Clinical Care

1. Workflow Integration

- Admission ? Scheduling ? Clinical assessment ? Lab/Radiology ? Treatment ? Discharge
- Each step relies on a support function (e.g., registration, specimen transport, billing).

2. Quality & Safety

- Sterile processing prevents infections.
- Accurate coding/billing ensures proper reimbursement and reduces audit risk.
- IT systems provide decision?support alerts (e.g., drug interactions).

3. Patient Experience

- Clean environments, clear signage, and timely transport reduce anxiety and improve satisfaction scores (HCAHPS, NPS).

4. Key Principles Guiding Support Services

Principle	Practical Implication
Patient?Centricity	Design processes around the patient journey; minimize wait times and barriers.
Efficiency	Lean/ Six?Sigma methods to eliminate waste (e.g., unnecessary paperwork, duplicate tests).
Compliance & Safety	Follow Joint Commission, OSHA, HIPAA, and local regulations.
Collaboration	Regular interdisciplinary huddles; shared performance dashboards.
Continuous Improvement	Use data analytics to monitor KPIs and drive corrective actions.

5. Common Performance Metrics (KPIs)

Area	KPI	Target Example
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Admission & Registration	Average registration time	??5?min
Medical Records	Record retrieval time	??2?min for electronic, ??15?min for paper
Housekeeping	Room turnover time	??30?min after discharge
Laboratory	Specimen turnaround time (TAT)	??60?min for stat tests
Pharmacy	Prescription fill accuracy	99.9?%
IT	System uptime	??99.5?%
Patient Navigation	Discharge planning completion	100?% for high?risk patients
Supply Chain	Stock?out rate	<?1?%