



# Knowledge Management: Generating Value in Healthcare

Alejandro De La Torre Sanclemente<sup>1</sup> · Rafael González Molina<sup>1</sup> · Yuri Vanessa Valencia<sup>1</sup> 

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Despite the advances in the Colombian healthcare system in terms of coverage and quality, the system is perceived as stagnant. Users frequently complain of the quality and opportunity of services. This compels healthcare companies to explore innovative strategies that augment the dynamics of the system and its responsiveness to the needs of users. Thereupon, the development of Knowledge Management (KM) models appears as an important strategy to face new challenges, improve health care and create added value to the community.

The implementation of KM in healthcare organizations emerges as an alternative for the enrichment of their institutional culture and strategies. This facilitates the diffusion of innovations and promotes learning at the individual and group levels, by providing access to the newest scientific and clinical developments [1]. Healthcare companies should encourage learning among their collaborators and promote the development and implementation of new ideas to address patient care.

KM and organizational learning deploy highly effective work lines for the management of healthcare companies in a globalized, competitive and changing market, focusing their attention on the intangible capital of their human talent: the ideas and knowledge of their members. The KM strategy emphasizes in the systematic process of creation, codification and transfer of knowledge. This process is aimed to achieve a more intelligent organization by generating and maximizing its intellectual capital. Added value is created by helping health professionals to translate tacit knowledge into explicit and by making it available to the community [3].

In a society in which there is easy access to capital, labor, product and service markets, effective KM improves the competitiveness of healthcare institutions. The great amount of

resources available in the market, makes companies less dependent on traditional, human, material and financial resources. Their competitive advantage comes mainly from the understanding and acknowledgement of the current market supplies and demands, and utilizing the information in an efficient and innovative way. Ultimately, assimilated information becomes the key competitive advantage of any healthcare institution [1, 2].

The KM model being implemented at Centro Medico Imbanaco is based on the aforementioned paragraphs and it is expressed through continuing medical education. This approach was built around the intellectual capital of its collaborators and incorporates two key factors: human talent and the experience of an institution that has provided healthcare services with the highest standards of quality and excellence for more than 40 years. This model seeks to generate value and positively influence the well-being of individuals and the community (Fig. 1).

The model states that offering a great number of educational programs improves the skills and competencies of people at the community. This should be reflected in an increase in competitiveness and, subsequently, in the demand for services at the institution. Also, the model raises the possibility of establishing strategic alliances with the academia, scientific medical associations and the pharmaceutical sector, facilitating access to the most recent evidence and the latest scientific advances. At internal level, the implementation of the KM model encourages learning among healthcare staff. Externally, the process is reflected in positioning organizations as a referent for knowledge and quality of care, community recognition and increased demand for services.

The implementation of the model also generates incentives for health professionals. Their experiences and knowledge are recognized, valued and they become a potential source of additional income, by creating alternatives such as teaching, external consulting and support related to continuing education.

Implementing a successful model of KM requires empowering health professionals, encouraging creativity,

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✉ Yuri Vanessa Valencia  
vanevalencia0525@gmail.com

<sup>1</sup> Centro Médico Imbanaco, Cra. 38 BIS No. 5B2 – 04, Cali, Colombia

**Fig. 1** Shows a schematic representation of the Knowledge Management Model and Continuing Education being implemented at Centro Médico Imbanaco



\*CMI: Centro Médico Imbanaco

facilitating the adoption of new and diverse strategies to document their ideas with the use of modern technologies [2]. This can improve the outcomes of transfer activities and will allow greater effectiveness and quality of care, with equitable outcomes in service providing and financial sustainability for organizations.

In conclusion, KM in healthcare organizations is built from experiences and ideas of their staff and constitutes the basis for the development of institutional learning. The model presented here allows healthcare companies having a novel and attractive business alternative that promotes quality and innovation in a continuous improvement cycle [1–3].

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### Compliance with Ethical Standards

**Conflict of Interest** The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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