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National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH 5th Edition): A critical Review.

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Abstract: Patient safety is a fundamental principal of healthcare. There is a widespread awakening all over the globe, about the need to improve the quality of healthcare in terms of actual patient care and patient safety. The objective of this paper is to present the concept of NABH (National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and healthcare Providers) and its importance, process and benefitsto different stakeholders of healthcare organization. India is growing rapidly in the healthcare sector, and patients are coming to India for treatment from the different parts of the world, since few years the healthcare industry (hospitals)focused on quality healthcare and patient safety and satisfaction. This can be possible only when hospitals are maintaining standards of NABH.

Keywords: NABH, Patient safety, Quality of Healthcare.

Introduction:

Healthcare has become one of India's largest sector, both in terms of revenue and employment. Healthcare comprises hospitals, medical devices, clinical trials, outsourcing, telemedicine, medical tourism, health insurance and medical equipment. India is growing in the medical world and patients are coming to India from different parts of the world fortreatment as part of medical tourism, this ispossible only when the hospitals are maintaining the standards. In the past few

years, there has been great pressure to improve the quality of patient care in India, Patient safety is a fundamental principal of healthcare. There is a widespread awakening all over the globe, about the need to improve the quality of healthcare in terms of actual patient care and patient safety India has also taken up the cause in full earnest and today private and public hospitals are both showing commitment towards improvement inquality of health services provided.

NABH standards focus on patient safety and quality of the delivery of services in the changing healthcare environment.

ABOUT INDIAN HEALTHCARE AND HOSPITAL INDUSTRY:

Healthcare has become one of India's largest sectors, both in terms of revenue and employment. Healthcare comprises hospitals, medical devices, clinical trials, outsourcing, telemedicine, medical tourism, health insurance and medical equipment which constitute about 70 per cent of the overall market. The Indian healthcare sector is growing at a brisk pace due to its strengthening coverage, services, and increasing expenditure by public as well private players.

India's healthcare delivery system is categorized into two major components - public and private. The government, i.e. public healthcare system, comprises limited secondary and tertiary care institutions in key cities and focuses on providing basic healthcare facilities in the form of primary healthcare centres (PHCs) in rural areas. The private sector provides a majority of secondary, tertiary, and quaternary care institutions with a major concentration in metros, tier-I and tier-II cities.

India's competitive advantage lies in its large pool of well-trained medical professionals. India is also cost-competitive compared to its peers in Asia and western countries. The cost of surgery in India is about one-tenth of that in the US or Western Europe. The low cost of

medical services has resulted in a rise in the country's medical tourism, attracting patients from across the world. Moreover, India has emerged as a hub for R&D activities for international players due to its relatively low cost of clinical research.

Hospital infrastructure: The hospital industry accounts for 80 per cent of the Indian healthcare market. It will reach USD 132 bn by 2023 from USD 61.8 bn in 2017, growing at 16-17 per cent CAGR. Numerous hospital projects by renowned organisations like Apollo Hospitals, Columbia Asia, Manipal Hospitals, Max Healthcare, Medanta, Cloud Nine Hospitals, Park Group, and Narayana Health are coming up in tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

Hospital Accreditation: The hospital accreditation program was started in the year 2005. It is the flagship program for NABH. This program was started with an intent to improve healthcare quality and patient safety at public and private hospitals, has subsequently grown to greater heights, with the standards being recognized internationally at par with other global healthcare accreditation standards and accredited by ISQua (International Society for Quality Assurance in Healthcare). NABH standards are accredited by International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua). The accreditation standards for hospitals focus

on patient safety and quality of the delivery of services by the hospitals in a changing healthcare environment.

History of Hospital Accreditation: The origin of the accreditation process was in the United States of America. In 1917, the American College of Surgeons developed a programme of “minimum standards for hospitals” to assess and identify suitable hospitals for surgical training. This developed into a multidisciplinary program of standardization, and in 1951, led to the formation of the independent Joint Commission on Hospital accreditation, now known as the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. All subsequent national programs have been derived from this either directly or indirectly. As the demand for accreditation grew, the Joint Commission International Accreditation (JCI) was established for this purpose in the USA in the year 1998. The JCI accreditations standards are based on consensus standards developed by healthcare professionals from many countries. An international body known as the International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua), was then established as an umbrella organization to provide approval for other accreditation bodies. In 1999, they launched a program called Agenda for Leadership in Programs in Healthcare Accreditation which provides

services to various national accreditation bodies to provide and administer standards of healthcare according to international standards. Currently, the 5th edition of NABH standards released in April, 2020. [2]

What is NABH : National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH) is a constituent board of Quality Council of India, set up to establish and operate accreditation programme for healthcare organisations. This program was started with intent to improve healthcare quality and patient safety at public and private hospitals, the accreditation standards for hospitals focuses on patient safety and quality of the delivery of services by the hospitals in a changing healthcare environment.

NABH standards consist of ten chapters which are being divided between patient-centered standards and organization-centered standards. All ten chapters consist of 683 stringent objective elements for the hospital to attain in order to get the NABH accreditation (5th Edition since April, 2020).

NABH 5th Edition of Hospital Accreditation Standard of National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers. Over the years,

successive NABH standards have brought about a significant change in the approach taken by the healthcare units in managing and delivering the healthcare services to the patients. NABH standards are accredited by International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQUa). NABH

standards focus on patient safety and quality of the delivery of services by the hospitals in the changing healthcare environment. Without being prescriptive, the objective elements remain formative and guide the organisation in conducting its operations with focus on patient safety.

Table 1 NABH the Journey

S.No	NABH Edition	Chapters	Standards	Objective elements
1	1 st edition	10	100	505
2	2 nd edition	10	100	514
3	3 rd edition	10	102	636
4	4 th edition	10	105	683
5	5 th edition	10	100	651

Source: www.nabh.co.in

Benefits of NABH Accreditation:

1. Patients: - Patients are the biggest beneficiary among all the stakeholders. Accreditation results in high quality of care and patient safety.

- Patient is the biggest beneficiary
- The patients get services by credential medical staff.
- results in higher quality of care

and patient safety

- rights of the patients are respected and protected
- Patient satisfaction is regularly evaluated

2. Health care organization

(Hospital):- Accreditation to a hospital stimulates continuous improvement. It enables hospital in

demonstrating commitment to quality care. It raises community confidence in the services provided by the hospital

- Stimulates continuous improvement
- It raises community confidence
- It also provides opportunity to benchmark with the best

3. Hospital Staff :- The staff in an accredited hospital is satisfied lot as it provides for continuous learning, good working environment, leadership and above all ownership of clinical processes

- Good work environment and continuous learning
- leadership
- It improves overall professional development

of clinicians and paramedical staff.

4. Benefits to paying and regulatory bodies: Finally, accreditation provides an objective system of empanelment by insurance and other third parties. Accreditation provides access to reliable and certified information on facilities, infrastructure and level of care.

5. Other Benefits: Accreditation also has many other benefits such as establishment of uniform policies, procedures and records, measurement of indicators of performances, management system, and clinical system. Systems are also more transparent and open to change



NABH STRUCTURE

Accreditation Committee: The main functions of Accreditation Committee are as follows:

- Recommending to board about grant of accreditation or otherwise based on evaluation of assessment reports & other relevant information.
- Approval of the major changes in the Scope of Accreditation including enhancement and reduction, in respect of accredited hospitals.
- Recommending to the board on launching of new initiatives

Technical Committee: The main functions of Technical Committee are as follows:

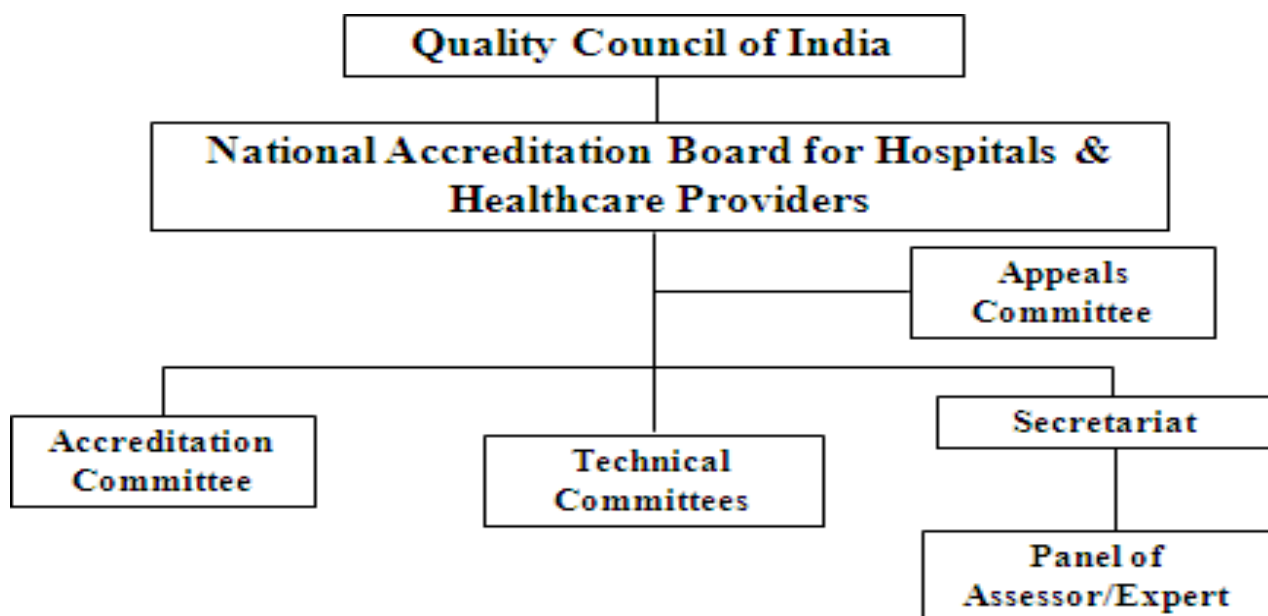
- Drafting of accreditation standards and guidance documents

- Periodic review of standards

Appeals Committee: The Appeal Committee addresses appeals made by the hospitals against any adverse decision regarding accreditation taken by the NABH. The adverse decisions may relate to the following:

- Refusal to accept an application,
- Refusal to proceed with an assessment,
- Corrective action requests,
- Changes in accreditation scope,
- Decisions to deny, suspend or withdraw accreditation, and
- Any other action that impedes the attainment of accreditation

Organizational structure:



NABH STANDARDS (5th Edition):

NABH Standards for hospitals prepared by technical committee contains complete set of standards for evaluation of hospitals for grant of accreditation. The standards provide framework for quality of care for

patients and quality improvement for hospitals. The standards help to build a quality culture at all level and across all the function of hospital. NABH Standards 5th edition has ten chapters incorporating 100 standards and 651 objective elements.

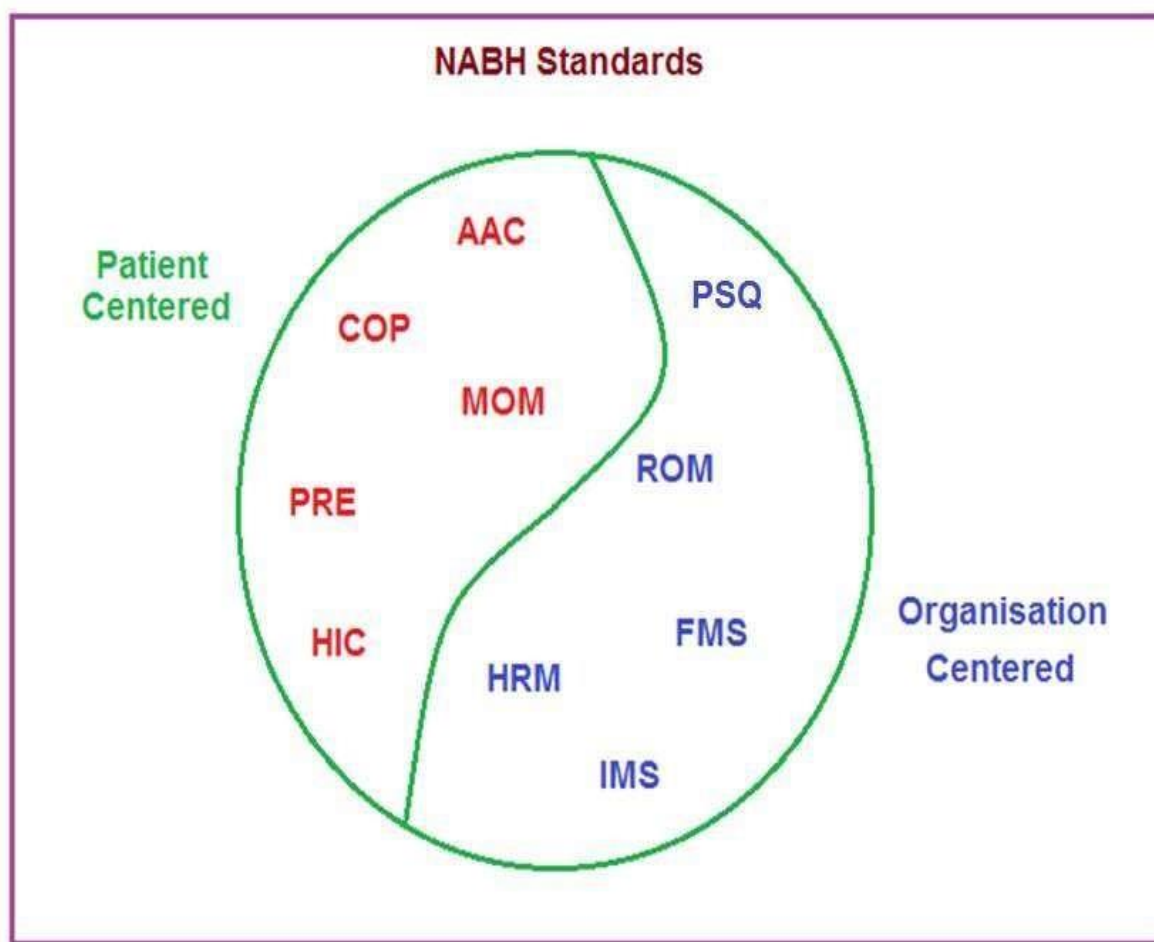
Table 2. National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers standards

Chapters	Title of the chapter	Standards	Objective elements
Patient – centered Chapters			
Chapter 1	Access Assessment and continuity of care (AAC)	14	91
Chapter 2	Care of Patients (COP)	20	142

Chapter 3	Management of Medication (MOM)	11	68
Chapter 4	Patient Rights and Education (PRE)	08	53
Chapter 5	Hospital Infection Control (HIC)	08	51
Management – centered Chapters			
Chapter 6	Patient Safety and Quality Improvement (PSQ)	07	49
Chapter 7	Responsibilities of Management (ROM)	05	32
Chapter 8	Facility Management and Safety (FMS)	07	45
Chapter 9	Human Resource Management (HRM)	13	76
Chapter 10	Information Management System (IMS)	07	44
	Total	100	651

***Standard Means** “A statement of expectation that defines the structures and process that must be substantially in place in an organisation to enhance the quality of care”.

**** Objective element means** “It is that component of standard which can be measured objectively on a rating scale. Acceptable compliance with the measurable elements will determine the overall compliance with the standard”.



Procedure for NABH: The HCO shall apply to NABH online in the prescribed application form, along with self-assessment tool kit and supporting documents of the HCO which should describe the requirements in accordance with relevant accreditation/ certification standard. The application shall be accompanied with the prescribed application fee along with applicable taxes. The application fee shall be calculated on the

sanctioned beds in the hospitals. The self-assessment shall be done by the hospital in a stringent manner and if at the time of preassessment it is found that there is a significant difference between the self-assessment and the pre- assessment report then the organization shall apply for final assessment not earlier than six months from the date of completion of pre-assessment. The applicant hospital must apply for

all its facilities and services being rendered from the specific location. NABH accreditation is only considered for hospital's entire activities and not for a part of it. [3]

Conclusion: The accreditation standards for hospitals focus on

patient safety and quality of the delivery of services by the hospitals in a changing healthcare environment. NABH standards are the highest bench mark in Indian healthcare system.

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