



NAVIGATING COMPLEXITY: STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE HEALTH RISK MANAGEMENT IN HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT:

Background: Healthcare administrators face numerous challenges in ensuring the effective delivery of care while mitigating risks associated with patient safety, regulatory compliance, financial stability, and operational efficiency. Risk management plays a pivotal role in addressing these challenges and is increasingly recognized as essential in healthcare organizations.

Objective: This essay aims to emphasize the critical importance of risk management for healthcare administrators and to provide insights into its effective implementation. By conducting a comprehensive analysis of literature available in the SciELO and EBSCO databases under the "Health risk management" descriptor, the objective is to underscore the necessity for healthcare administrators to prioritize risk management strategies.

Methods: A systematic review of full-text articles published between 2017 and 2024, along with relevant books and reference materials on risk management and internal controls, was conducted. The analysis focused on identifying key themes, challenges, and best practices related to risk management in healthcare settings.

Results: The review revealed that effective management and leadership abilities are fundamental prerequisites for successful risk management implementation. Healthcare administrators must navigate the complexities of risk management, which involves identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks across various domains. Moreover, it was highlighted that consolidated internal management oversight rules are imperative, necessitating clear and transparent definitions and the adoption of good governance concepts. Such measures are essential for ensuring the successful integration of risk management practices into healthcare organizations, thereby enhancing patient safety, regulatory compliance, financial stability, and overall operational effectiveness.

KEYWORDS: Governance; Risk Management; and Healthcare Management.

INTRODUCTION:

In his book "The Post-capitalist Society," Drucker highlights information's critical role in providing businesses at the end of the 20th century with a competitive advantage over their rivals on the globalization front. Managers in the healthcare industry have looked for fresh perspectives and insights to meet consumer needs and add value. Risk management is one of the subjects extremely relevant to the management of the healthcare industry. De Cicco states that risk management must be applied at all levels, including the strategic and operational ones, to provide a methodical and organized way to rectify manufacturing decisions (Alshriefy, 2024; Rana, Vesty, Jansson, & Butler-Henderson).

Strategic planning, decision-making, a proactive mindset, and other risk-addressing strategies, processes, and practices are all necessary components of risk management, which is the collection of actions that convert unmanaged risk into managed risk through the methodical application of management policies, procedures, and practices (Senna, Guimarães Marujo, Santos, Freitag, & França, 2024).

According to Nohara, Acevedo, and Vila, risk management requires continuous evaluation of risk potential at all organizational levels to achieve company-wide objectives and set priorities for better-informed decision-making. The authors also stress the need for risk management to be integrated into the decision-making process at all organizational levels and given importance (Di Nota, Scott, Huhta, Gustafsberg, & Andersen, 2024).

According to Fassini, risk management is constructing a system to assess adverse events (AEs) and devise ways to lessen or eliminate the causes of these events, which can happen when healthcare personnel are practicing. Silva, Valente, and Camacho highlight occupational risks for professionals and risks associated with providing care in this theme (Hedayatipour, Etemadi, Hekmat, & Moosavi, 2024).

These risks can be reduced by having a risk management program in place. If this is done, underreporting occurs, and the processed data's objective must be understood correctly. These notes serve as the foundation for this study's discussion of the significance of risk management implementation by healthcare managers (Hofmann, Lämmermann, & Urbach, 2024).

Contents table with references:

Reference	Description
Alshriefy, M. M. (2024)	Alshriefy's work contributes to the understanding of risk management in the healthcare industry.
Rana, N., Vesty, G., Jansson, A., & Butler-Henderson	This study provides insights into the importance of risk management for healthcare managers, offering valuable perspectives.
Senna, L. W., Guimarães Marujo, R., Santos, A. C.,	The research by Senna et al. highlights the essential components and practices of risk management within the healthcare sector.
Freitag, M., & França, A. S. (2024)	The study sheds light on strategic planning and decision-making as integral parts of effective risk management in healthcare.
Nohara, J. J., Acevedo, V. R., & Vila, F. A. (2024)	Nohara et al. emphasize the continuous evaluation of risk potential and the integration of risk management into decision-making processes across all levels of healthcare organizations.
Di Nota, V., Scott, S., Huhta, K., Gustafsberg, E., &	This study provides insights into integrating risk management into decision-making processes to achieve organizational objectives and priorities in healthcare settings.
Andersen, J. (2024)	
Fassini, P. G. (2024)	Fassini's work explores the construction of systems to assess adverse events and mitigate risks associated with healthcare practice.
Silva, R. B., Valente, A. M., & Camacho, R. (2024)	The study by Silva et al. discusses occupational risks for healthcare professionals and risks related to patient care, emphasizing the

Reference	Description
	importance of risk management programs.
Hedayatipour, M., Etemadi, M., Hekmat, S., & Moosavi, M. (2024)	This research focuses on the reduction of healthcare risks through effective risk management programs, addressing the issue of underreporting and data processing.
	Hofmann et al. provide foundational insights into the significance of risk management implementation by healthcare managers, stressing the importance of objective data processing.

METHODOLOGY:

This descriptive integrative review study involves finding, evaluating, and summarising a body of knowledge to respond to a specific query. This study used a narrative review methodology, which does not apply research methodologies or require the search for studies to be exhaustive of all possible information sources (Iirndu & Donaldson, 2024).

It also does not employ explicit and systematic criteria for the search and critical analysis of the literature, deep and thorough investigation. We used the SciELO and EBSCO databases' "Health risk management" descriptors to search for the reference, considering full-text papers published between 2017 and 2024. Another source of information was books and papers written by eminent experts on internal controls and risk management (Akindote, Adegbite, Omotosho, Anyanwu, & Maduka, 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

SAFETY OF PATIENT:

"Reducing the risk of unnecessary healthcare-related harm to an acceptable minimum" is one way to conceptualize patient safety. When the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) released Safety Culture: a Report by the International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group (INSAG-4), the phrase Patient Safety Culture (CSP) first appeared. Afterward, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) described CSP as an essential structural element in the healthcare industry, resulting from the values, attitudes, perceptions, abilities, and behavioral models of both individuals and groups (Ambrose-Oji et al., 2024; Niv & Tal, 2024b).

A fundamental tenet in the advancement of healthcare is safety. Appropriate procedures and proper acts by medical personnel lead to nonmaleficence. As a result, the various initiatives to improve safety must be assessed in light of the patient's rights and the participating professionals' ethical obligations. In April 2013, the National Patient Safety Program (PNSP) was founded in Brazil to promote adopting patient safety initiatives (Olatoye, Elufioye, Okoye, Nwankwo, & Oladapo, 2024).

Health services have begun to establish their own Patient Safety Centers (NSP) by the Resolution of the Collegiate Council of the National Health Surveillance Agency (Anvisa), nº 36 of 2013, which governs patient safety actions, the obligation to carry out their Patient Safety Plans (PSP) and to support the development of a safety culture within services (Fabiano, Guastafarro, Pettinato, & Pasman, 2024).

Since then, the significance of risk management in the healthcare industry has been hotly debated. Its goal is to implement preventive, corrective, and emergency measures to guarantee operational effectiveness and efficiency and provide patients with high-quality, safe healthcare. To stop a problem from reoccurring, preventative measures should be taken to lower the risk, and corrective measures should be taken to address the underlying reasons (Khoramabadi, Javadi, & Javadi).

But even now, several health services have not implemented their NSPs and PSPs because of management's lack of interest, ignorance, or mistaken belief that doing so will only lead to increased services and bureaucracy. Therefore, more than creating a Resolution of the Collegiate Council (RDC) is required for immediate implementation. In actuality, the RDC is a well-thought-out

document that, when appropriately implemented, will undoubtedly aid in the sufficient management of risks associated with healthcare (Niv & Tal, 2024a).

RISK MANAGEMENT:

Risk management, according to Arcanjo, is the systematic application of policies, practices, behaviours, and resources aimed at the identification, control, and evaluation of risks and adverse events (AEs), which have an impact on patient safety, patient health, healthcare workers' integrity, the institution's reputation for health, and the environment. However, creating NSPs and PSPs has proven difficult for managers since it involves several steps and goes beyond simply fulfilling legal criteria. Instead, it encourages a safety and risk management culture throughout the health services industry (Gilbert et al., 2024; Teoh et al.).

Designing unified internal management control guidelines and defining and adopting transparent governance principles are essential for the implementation to be effective. "governance" describes the collection of procedures and frameworks employed to guide, oversee, and keep tabs on the organisation's operations. It seeks to accomplish the goals it has set forth, and for it to be effective, all members of the institution must absorb its guiding principles and apply them in a coordinated and systematised manner. The phrase "internal control" describes the rules and practices used to guarantee adherence to directives issued by upper management. Figure 1 depicts the connection between internal control, risk management, and governance (Ho & Gan, 2024).

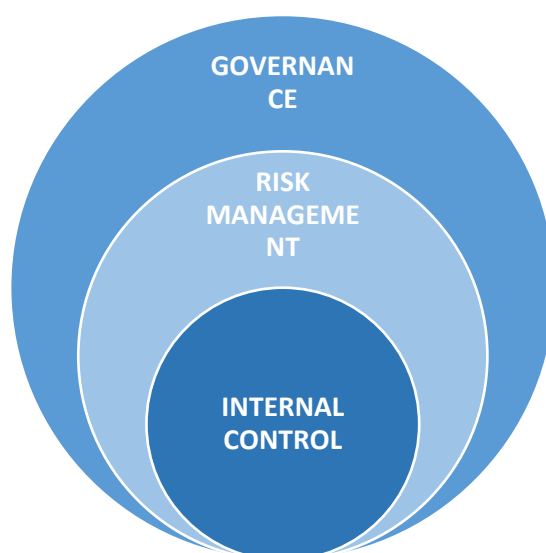


Figure 1: Internal control, risk management, and governance about each other.

Organizations are finding that risk management has taken on a greater significance, and the most significant obstacle facing them is effectively incorporating the process into internal control and governance frameworks. The absence of a risk management program promotes ignorance, underreporting, and erroneous beliefs about the reason behind data processing. In research including nurses, 81.8% of professionals stated that they did not report adverse events due to a lack of knowledge (Saha & Rathore, 2024).

As per Vieira and Barreto, risk management is an essential and inseparable component of managerial duties, encompassing:

- (A) Create the proper setting, which includes the framework for risk management;
- (B) Specify, explain, and convey goals and willingness to take risks;
- (C) Recognize possible dangers or chances to accomplish goals;
- (D) Assess the hazards;
- (F) Choose and put into practice countermeasures to risks, such as controls and other measures;
- (F) At all levels, convey risk information consistently;

- (G) Keep an eye on and coordinate the outcomes of risk management procedures and
- (H) Offer evaluations (assurance) on the efficiency of risk management.

The Federal Court of Auditors has created a methodology for evaluating organisational maturity to manage risk. The model is measured using established risk management maturity indicators and has four dimensions: relationships, procedures, outcomes, and environment (Lyzwinski, 2024).

By summing the points from the collection of indicators, the maturity index for each dimension environment, processes, results, and partnership is calculated. The weighted average of the maturity indices for the dimensions environment (40%), procedures (30%), results (20%), and partnerships (10%) is used to calculate the global risk management maturity index. Table 1 explains this process (Lee, 2024).

Table 1: – Levels of risk management maturity.

Maturity Index	Maturity Level	Description
0% - 20%	Initial	Low formalisation level; risk management documentation not available; lack of risk communication.
20.1% - 40%	Basic	Risk management is dealt with informally; training and communication on risks still need to be provided.
40.1% - 60%	Intermediate	There are documented principles and standards and basic risk management training.
60.1% - 80%	Improved	Risk management complies with established principles and is monitored and regularly improved.
80.1% - 100%	Advanced	Improved risk management: Risk principles and processes are integrated into the organisation's management processes.

Reports of concern for risk management and prevention on a national and international level have highlighted the need for managers who are proactive and aware of current needs. These include the growing use of new technologies in the healthcare sector, the increasing complexity of production and technological processes, competitiveness, and ongoing requests to improve service quality (Jabin, Pan, & Nilsson, 2024).

To reduce failures and disputes, abandoning outmoded management approaches and qualifying the management process to detect management bottlenecks, failures, and hazards is crucial. We refer to this as corporate governance (Sallam, Snygg, & Sallam).

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE:

Corporate governance is a concept that primarily encompasses efforts to improve institutions and individuals, as well as controls over how corporate resources are managed, increasing accountability and transparency. The Brazilian Institution of Corporate Governance (IBGC, 2015, p. 20) offers the following ideas (Dhingra, Raut, Gunasekaran, Rao Naik, & Masuna, 2024).

“Corporate governance refers to the framework that oversees, guides, and promotes businesses and other entities. It encompasses the interactions between the stockholders, boards of directors, upper management, supervisory and control bodies, and other stakeholders.”

The Federal Court of Auditors identified ten stages that might be stated for excellent governance, and they are as follows:

ESTABLISHING THE GOVERNANCE MODEL SUITABLE FOR THE REALITY OF THE ORGANISATION:

- Identify internal governance entities and those that provide support for governance; assess if they are required, sufficient, and adequate for the efficient execution of government responsibilities; ensure that they have timely access to information and the resources they need;
- Define who is in charge of supervising management, authorising and assessing internal policies and organisational strategies, and determining the organisation's duty;

- Ascertain the organisation's primary stakeholders and establish norms for responsibility, communication, and transparency;
- Maintain a balance of power and delineate roles when making important choices.

USE INTEGRITY WHEN DRIVING AND PUSH DEVIATIONS: Establish control mechanisms to stop biases, prejudices, or conflicts of interest from influencing leadership decisions and actions. Formally support public integrity programs and policies, including support for detecting, investigating, and sanctioning violations of integrity standards. Direct and monitor integrity management based on identified risks (Pool, Akhlaghpour, Fatehi, & Burton-Jones, 2024).

PROMOTE LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY:

- Ensure that the selecting or choice process occurs clearly, based on previously established criteria and skills;
- Define and promote the desired leadership abilities, as well as the choosing or choice criteria to be observed;
- Establish protocols for exchanging information and knowledge during the leadership succession process. Establish guidelines for assessing the performance of these members, along with performance indicators and objectives. Establish guidelines to fill in leadership development gaps, taking into account, where appropriate, the enhancement of current members' skills and substitute them with new members (Dissanayake, Dharmasena, & Warnakulasuriya, 2024).

MANAGE RISKS:

- Specify and put into action the framework for risk management. The framework mandates that the leadership adopt a policy committing to risk management;
- Make sure the risk management procedure is integrated into other organisational processes, starting with strategic planning, to support decision-making and ensure the achievement of objectives.
- Establish second-line functions, such as facilitation, support, and monitoring of risk management activities.
- Put in place a business continuity management process to prepare for and lessen the effects of potential events that could disrupt the organisation's operations (Yates & Dickinson, 2024).

ESTABLISHING A STRATEGY AND PROMOTING STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT:

- Specify the strategic management model, taking into account risks, openness and participation of interested parties, conformity to the State and Federal government's priorities and directives, and evaluation of government initiatives that the organisation is integrally involved in carrying out;
- Specify the goals, metrics, and performance targets of the organisation's strategy;

Establish the final and support units' management models to prevent inconsistent processes and activities; Define each unit's objectives, goals, and indicators by the organisational strategy; and Define the strategy observing model to enable ongoing observation of the development of indicators and action plans (Hill et al., 2024).

MONITORING FINDINGS:

- Define the format and frequency of management reports generated for leadership;
- Define the format and frequency of reports generated for stakeholders and publish these reports on the Internet;
- Implement performance indicators;
- Set up procedures to gather the data required to monitor the execution of current plans to achieve established objectives (Balogun et al., 2024).

PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY:

- Ensure active and passive openness to interested parties, allowing for the rare exception of legal-mandated concealment. It entails determining the legal and regulatory requirements for advertising and information requests from interested parties to ease information management and analysis. It also entails making data available consistent with open data principles (Padamsee et al., 2024).

RESPONSIBILITY GUARANTEED:

- Consider how well the organisation performs to make publicly accessible information of broad interest available and to enable an evaluation of the value the organisation provides to the populace;

A channel for comments from interested parties should be established. The bodies managing and looking into disciplinary infractions and ethical deviations should be named. Standardised procedures should be standardised to investigate and handle administrative offences, ethical deviations, and damaging acts by legal entities against the organisation. Teams from the inquiry, investigation, and treatment commissions should be trained (Chiumento, Fovargue, Redhead, Draper, & Frith, 2024).

EVALUATING STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION:

- Draft, release, and maintain the User Services Letter, which includes accurate and lucid details about each service rendered;

Determine the conditions that must be met for services to be provided, considering both user requests and legal requirements and ensuring they are met. Surveys should be conducted to gauge user satisfaction, the results should be disseminated widely, and the data should be used to enhance how services are provided (Jha, Chaudhry, & Chaudhry, 2024).

ENSURE INTERNAL AUDIT EFFECTIVENESS:

- Provide internal audit with information about stakeholder expectations, organisational strategies, objectives, and priorities, as well as relevant processes and activities, so that internal audit plans can consider this information;
- Support the internal audit quality assessment and improvement programme by helping to define key performance indicators and assessing the value of the internal audit activity to the organisation.
- Ensure the internal audit activity recommendations are followed to adopt the necessary measures.
- Officially record any decisions not to implement specific internal audit recommendations.

The observation that three dimensions must be observed simultaneously to have effective corporate governance is noteworthy. These dimensions are institutional (structural), supervisory (technical methods and skills), and ethnic (principles and values). In other words, norms, culture, and management practices must be aligned through formal institutions (rules/processes) and informal institutions (practices/values). Table 1 summarises the sound governance principles (Thoebes, Porter, & Peck, 2024).

Table 1: Good Governance Principles.

Transparency (Openness)	There needs to be transparency so interested people can trust how decisions are made, the actions of state agencies that run their activities, and the people who work for them. Being open by talking to peers and giving complete and correct information lets people take action quickly and correctly, encouraging the public to look closely at what's happening.
Integrity	Honesty and objectivity are essential in direct and trustworthy negotiations. High standards of integrity protect people who use public resources and handle issues of public interest. It depends on how well the control system works and how professional the people who bring these parts together are. It shows how decisions are made and the level of the reports on finances and performance.

Accountability	When public agencies and the people who work for them are responsive, they are held responsible for their actions and choices, including how they use public funds and all other parts of their performance, and they have to answer to the public. These things are possible when everyone in an organisation knows exactly what their job is and how to do it.
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To enable effective risk management implementation, enhance governance dynamics, and increase decision-making capacity in increasingly complex contexts with a multitude of uncertainties and variety, managers must seek appropriate training and consistent information. Based on the information presented in this study, it is clear that professionalising management and ensuring risk management is implemented will lower the likelihood of failures to a manageable level. This will also reduce the risks and damages arising from assistance and improve patient safety (Lelaka & Ojoniyi, 2024).

In this case, the work group's outstanding performance is motivated by their concern for the safe and effective administration of health services. Consistent and similar results require senior management's dedication, sponsorship, and leadership. The organisation's operations, including the risk management process's function as a competitive and strategic differentiation in decision-making processes, must be integrated with governance (Ateeq et al., 2024).

Although risks can be recognised, examined, evaluated, managed, and tracked, they should only be considered partially removed. As a result, this process is dynamic, keeping in mind the unique characteristics of each institution and internal and external contexts, and it is constantly improving due to experiences and learning. Additionally, people concerned must communicate assertively with one another (Alfozan, 2024).

In healthcare services, sacrificing quality often entails raising risk tolerance. Corrective activities must address the identified reasons to prevent their recurrence, and preventive steps must be implemented to decrease the risks of non-compliance or other potential unpleasant events to prevent their occurrence (Dion & Evans, 2024).

Health services must have a transparent risk management approach founded on timely, accurate information and examined using a methodology that makes it repeatable, scalable, and comparable. Ultimately, the significance of the manager's job is validated because an organisation's culture is closely associated with the leadership style of that organisation. To be a high-performance leader, some activities need to be incorporated into management: creating a transparent culture, inspiring staff, enhancing maturity, and practising providing feedback (Cavanagh, Bartram, Walker, Pariona-Cabrera, & Halvorsen, 2024).

It's critical to remember that the activities of all employees shape an organisation's culture, but most importantly, the manager, when establishing a transparent culture. The better the information, the more transparent it is. Numerous research studies have shown that one of the critical elements in retaining motivated and productive staff members is their degree of motivation (Jerry-Egomba, 2024; Subba).

According to Ferraz, there are five primary motivators: money, security/comfort, learning, recognition, and self-realisation. Commitment to the goal, ownership of the mission, the drive to act based on empathy for the issue, and the powerful example of leadership are all additional crucial components. In evaluating the team's maturity, the manager must review each subordinate team member separately because individuals differ, and different approaches can be taken to ensure that each member develops according to their ability (Gani & Harun, 2024).

To ensure that feedback is thoroughly absorbed, it must be applied firmly, striking a balance between praise and criticism. Giving feedback can be done in several ways, such as being sincere but also sympathetic; being specific when praising or criticising; criticising the behaviour rather than the person; maintaining a balanced posture; speaking at the appropriate time; acknowledging effort and celebrating accomplishments; accepting criticism or suggestions; and always giving accurate and frequent feedback (Davis, 2024).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS:

This research adds to our understanding of the significance of risk management in healthcare organisations, which are fundamentally focused on providing safe, efficient, timely, patient- and customer-centred care.

It is acknowledged that the primary difficulties faced by managers are appreciating the significance of risk management and being aware of the procedures needed to accomplish it, which are founded on reasonable governance procedures and principles. This study is anticipated to help managers implement the individual safety plan and enhance comprehension of the core plan.

Public and private healthcare organisations must implement effective strategies to direct their operations to attain varying degrees of patient and professional safety and quality of care differentiation. Policymakers, healthcare practitioners, and researchers have been paying more and more attention to patient safety since service users expect safety to be a top priority within healthcare services.

It is imperative that managers in the healthcare industry foster analytical thinking and an integrated vision among their staff members to create a new organisational culture based on adding benefits to the patient or customer, centred on their journey, and concentrated on improving outcomes financial, process, or economic.

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