



A Study on Right to Information applications in hospital for a period of nine months and to assess exemptions to disclosure of information as specified in the Act.

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ABSTRACT: Introduction: The notion of right to information gained momentum when Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948 ensuring “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression, this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”. Also the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights 1966 says that “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression, the freedom to seek and impart information and ideas of all kind, regardless of frontiers”.

In India, after several sustainable grassroots campaigns and political will on the part of the Government, the Right to Information Act, 2005 gets the ratification of both the Houses of Parliaments on 12th May, and came into force from 12th October, 2005. India can now proudly boots of being one of the 55 countries that have comprehensive laws to protect the citizens right to information.

Aim & Objectives: Study of RTI applications in main hospital for a period of nine months and to assess exemptions to disclosure of information as specified in the Act and To analyse the RTI application received over a period of nine months from April to December 2013.

MATERIALS AND METHODS: Study settings : AIIMS Main hospital, Study design: Retrospective, record based study and descriptive in nature.

RESULT : The applications were analyzed for a period was for nine months. There were 285 applications out of which 62 applications were exempted for disclosure of information ith the clause 8(1)(e)&8(1)(j) being the highest proportion (66.1%). Among the profile of queries the hospital related queries were at the highest proportion (35%) followed by personal and service related matter (32.9%).

CONCLUSION: The replies to the applications were well within the time and the appeals were represented promptly. The study concluded that the hospital has effectively implemented the Right to Information Act.

I. INTRODUCTION:

In the last few decades freedom of information has been recognized as an international protected human right and societies across the world have been moving away from opaque and secretive administrative system to open and transparent systems. The notion of right to information gained momentum when Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948 ensuring “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression, this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”. Also the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights 1966 says that “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression, the freedom to seek and impart information and ideas of all kind, regardless of frontiers”. In India, after several sustainable grassroots campaigns and political will on the part of the Government, the Right to Information Act, 2005 gets the ratification of both the Houses of Parliaments on 12th May, and came into force from 12th October, 2005. India can now proudly boots of being one of the 55 countries that have comprehensive laws to protect the citizens right to information. Hospitals are no exceptions from proving information under RTI Act to the citizens. This study has been undertaken at AIIMS main hospital to study the RTI application and to capture details of the applicant and the nature of queries. More specially the study aims at assessing the application / queries rejected on the basis of exemptions to disclosure to information as specified in the Act. Education and health care are



critical services for empowerment of people, in general, and the poor, in particular. The implementation of relevant policies and programmes in the past has yielded less than desired results due mainly to lack of people's participation in delivery of services that empower the poor. The use of RTI has contributed to improvements in quality and quantity of services under the flagship programmes, national Rural Health Mission. Healthcare services have largely remained on paper due to lack of accountability of staff. Using the tool of RTI, the citizens have sought for detail of primary health services. The disclosure of such details as stock of medicines and its distribution procedure for procurement of medicines, attendance of medical staff and number of patients treated etc., have resulted in better management of primary health centres. Thus, in pursuance of the goal of the mission, access to primary health care has significantly improved, which is due to the sue of RTI by the poor, who are ultimate beneficiaries of the rural health policy.

The people's pressure on improvement in health services in urban areas is even more pronounced at the Government hospitals as well as private hospitals have, of late, become somewhat more responsive to the needs of common man, who are duly aware of their human rights than those in rural areas. The RTI thus created effective demand

for improvement in quality of services provided by the hospitals

II. OBJECTIVES:

1. To analyse the RTI application received over a period of nine months from April to December 2013.
2. To assess the applications which have been exempted on the clause of disclosure of information as specified in the Act during the study period.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

METHODOLOGY

Study settings : AIIMS Main hospital

Study design: Retrospective, record based study and descriptive in nature

Study Period: Apr-Dec 2013 (Nine months)

Study population : RTI files of Main Hospital from April 2013 – December 2013.

Sampling and sample size: All RTI files from April 2013 – December 2013.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: The data collection was tabulated, coded, and analyzed using Microsoft word SPSS for windows version 8.1

Observation and results

The summary of total quantum of queries received at main Hospital, AIIMS, New Delhi, during the study period (April-December 2013) is as under.

Total number of RTI applications received during the study period

Quarter / year	Applications
April – June 2013	92
July – September 213	101
October – December 2013	92
Total applications	285

Demo graphs profile of RTI applicant

S. No.	State	April-June 2013	July – September 213	October – December 2013	Total	Percentage of distribution
1	New Delhi	45	49	52	146	51.1 %
2	Uttar Pradesh	19	18	11	48	16.7 %
3	Haryana	3	8	7	18	6.2 %
4	Bihar	8	3	1	12	4.1 %
5	Punjab	4	5	1	10	3.4 %



6	Rajasthan	3	4	2	9	3.2 %
7	Andhra Pradesh	1	5	3	9	3.2 %
8	Uttarkhand	3	3	2	8	3.1 %
9	Maharashtra	3	1	3	7	2.4 %
10	Madyapradesh	0	1	4	5	1.7 %
11	Himachal Pradesh	1	1	1	3	1.1 %
12	Kerala	0	1	2	3	1.1 %
13	Karnataka	0	1	1	2	0.7 %
14	Jharkhand	1	0	0	1	0.4 %
15	Tamilnadu	1	0	0	1	0.4 %
16	Chhattisgarh	0	1	0	1	0.4 %
17	Gujarat	0	0	1	1	0.4 %
18	Meghalaya	0	0	1	1	0.4 %
	TOTAL	92	101	92	285	

Information seeking person

S. No.	Information seeking person	April-June 2013	July – September 213	October – December 2013	Total	Percentage of distribution
1	Self / organization	42	64	68	174	61.1 %
2	Relative	8	8	3	19	6.6 %
3	Third Party	41	28	17	86	30.2 %
4	Insurance company	1	2	3	6	2.1 %
	TOTAL	92	102	91	285	
S. No.	Information seeking person	April-June 2013	July – September 213	October – December 2013	Total	Percentage of distribution
1	AIIMS Staff	10	11	3	24	8.4 %

Time period taken for reply / transfer queries

S. No.	Time period taken	April-June 2013	July – September 213	October – December 2013	Total
1	Within 30 days	80	101	90	280



2	More than 30 days	1	Nil	4	5
3	Range (Min-Max period) and Mean	1-53 (Mean-17.1)	1-30 (Mean 15.8)	1-42 (Mean-14.5)	Mean -15.8 days

Number of queries

S. No.	Total number of queries	April-June 2013	July – September 2013	October – December 2013	Total
1	Applications with queries 1-5	67	86	72	225 (78.9%)
2	Applications with queries 6-10	11	13	11	35 (12.5%)
3	Applications with queries >10	7	2	9	18 (6.67%)
	Total applications	92	101	92	285

Details of applications exempted for disclosure of information

S. No.		April-June 2013	July – September 2013	October – December 2013	Total
1	Total no. of applications contained queries which were exempted for disclosure of information	22	25	15	62 out of 285 (21%)
2	Total number of queries exempted for disclosure of information	42	43	70	155
3	Applications for which appeal has been received	1	2	4	7
4	Disposal of appeal days	Disposed off	Disposed off	Disposed off	
5	Average time period taken for appeal (in days)	2	2	11	6.9



IV. CONCLUSION:

This study was conducted at tertiary care hospital to analyse the RTI applications received and to find the reason of exemptions for disclosure of information. The applications were analyzed for a period was for nine months. There were 285 applications out of which 62 applications were exempted for disclosure of information with the clause 8(1)(e)&8(1)(j) being the highest proportion (66.1%). Among the profile of queries the hospital related queries were at the highest proportion (35%) followed by personal and service related matter (32.9%). The replies to the applications were well within the time and the appeals were represented promptly. The study concluded that the hospital has effectively implemented the Right to Information Act.

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