



**Quality Management in a Health Care Setting: A Study of Substance Abuse Treatment Centers**

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While quality in all aspects of organizational operations has long been considered vital to the success of firms in general, health care has focused largely on the quality of the treatments provided. What has often been overlooked is the importance of a quality management program that covers both managerial and treatment factors and emphasizes the importance of the inter-relationships between them in the provision of quality health care services. Private (for-profit and non-profit) treatment centers are a major provider of substance abuse care in the United States. The importance of these centers, a dearth of research on the organizational aspects of substance abuse treatment, and the turbulent politico-economic environment surrounding all aspects of health care in the 1990s combine to make these centers crucial sites for empirical research. The 1990s have also witnessed a sharp increase in the promotion of quality management as an essential contributor to the production of a quality product as well as to the financial performance of an organization. This study identifies aspects of quality management at a sample of substance abuse treatment centers and relates their presence or absence to organizational antecedents and performance and treatment outcomes.