Exploring the Optimization Path of Incentive Policies for Family Doctors in Fuzhou City

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Abstract. To fully leverage the role of family doctors as health gatekeepers and effectively improve their work enthusiasm and satisfaction, China vigorously promotes incentive policies for family doctors. However, there are many problems in the institutional design and local implementation of incentive policies for family doctors in China, resulting in low job satisfaction among family doctors in many regions currently. Based on this, this article takes Fuzhou, China as an example to point out that the incentive system for family doctors still faces problems such as low sense of professional achievement, limited promotion space, and unreasonable salary distribution. Based on this, this paper puts forward the following suggestions. The relevant part should focus on optimizing the performance model and providing a basic guarantee for family doctors. At the same time, attention should be paid to strengthening training to enhance their competitiveness. Finally, improve the promotion system to provide a platform for the development of family doctors. Taking Fuzhou City as an example, this study provides local experience for the development of a family doctor incentive system in China.

Keywords: Family doctor, incentive policy, Fuzhou city.

1. Introduction

Family doctors mainly provide integrated services such as preventive healthcare, diagnosis and treatment of common and frequently occurring diseases, referral, patient rehabilitation and chronic disease management, and health management at the grassroots level. They are the "gatekeepers" of residents' health. The family doctor signing service provided by the family doctor team is an important way to ensure and maintain the health of the public and is an important measure to facilitate medical treatment for the public. However, the current incentive policies for family doctors in China still need to be improved, with prominent issues such as an incomplete performance evaluation system, insufficient opportunities for promotion and development, and imperfect guarantee mechanisms, resulting in low job satisfaction for family doctors and limited supply capacity for contracted services [1].

To improve the incentive mechanism for family doctors in China and enhance their job satisfaction, the academic community has conducted extensive research. Some scholars have summarized the main problems and contradictions in China's family doctor incentive system, while others have revealed the degree to which different factors affect the job satisfaction of family doctors. These scholars have comprehensively analyzed and summarized the obstacles to the development of the family doctor incentive system in China from different perspectives, but research on the specific implementation of the family doctor incentive system in local areas still needs to be supplemented. Therefore, this study takes Fuzhou City as an example to discuss and analyze the problems in the implementation process of the family doctor incentive system in the region, aiming to summarize local experience for the development of the family doctor incentive system in China.

2. Policy Analysis

In recent years, the incentive policies for family doctors in China have been continuously optimized in the implementation process. In 2018, the State Council issued relevant policies, which pointed out the need to improve the training system for general practitioners that adapts to industry

characteristics, innovate incentive mechanisms for the use of general practitioners, and provide reliable support for the development of health and wellness industry in general practitioners [2]. In this policy background, Fuzhou Municipal People's Government has issued a "Document", which points out the need to increase support in various aspects such as targeted training, open recruitment, and job subsidies for family doctors, to ensure that family doctors can be attracted, nurtured, retained, and cared for well, thereby improving the supply capacity of contracted services [3].

These policies provide guarantee and support for the work of family doctors from multiple aspects such as recruitment, salary, and professional titles, to a certain extent promoting the improvement of job satisfaction of family doctors. At the same time, they promote the development of incentive mechanisms for family doctors, which not only reflects the high importance that the country attaches to the work of family doctors, but also reflects the active thinking and initiative of local governments. However, due to the lack of local practical experience, the implementation of incentive policies for family doctors faces many problems. In Fuzhou, since the implementation of the "document", family doctors still face problems such as low professional achievement, limited promotion space, and unreasonable salary distribution, resulting in low overall job satisfaction of family doctors.

3. Analysis of Work Issues

3.1. Low Sense of Professional Achievement

Currently, the low sense of professional achievement among family doctors in Fuzhou leads to low job satisfaction. The sense of professional achievement of family doctors is related to their job responsibilities. A study found that career achievement is an important factor affecting the job satisfaction of family doctors. If employees can master more skills, knowledge, methods, etc. through work than in the past to meet their self-development needs, job satisfaction will increase. On the contrary, if the work is not challenging and cannot meet the self-development needs of employees, job satisfaction will decrease [4]. Family doctors, due to their long-term involvement in low-difficulty work, such as contract signing, physical examination, disease screening, on-site services, remote communication, etc., find it difficult to have the opportunity to master new knowledge and technology and are unable to effectively achieve self-development, resulting in a decrease in job satisfaction. A study has found that some family doctors in Fuzhou, due to long-term involvement in less challenging and being overwhelmed by heavy workloads, experience a decrease in professional achievement and lack of work enthusiasm, which affects job satisfaction [5].

3.2. Limited Promotion Space

At present, the promotion space for family doctors in Fuzhou is limited, which is caused by the imbalance of professional title structure. There is a positive correlation between career development opportunities and job satisfaction of healthcare workers. Lack of career development opportunities will lead to a decrease in job satisfaction and burnout [6, 7]. To provide more career development opportunities for family doctors, the document points out the need to increase the proportion of senior positions in primary-level hospitals used to hire registered general practitioners on duty, to stimulate the enthusiasm of family doctors in their work. However, although relevant policies have increased the emphasis on the evaluation of family doctor titles, and the number of middle and senior professional titles used for hiring family doctors has increased, the overall structure of professional title allocation is imbalanced. A study has pointed out that although family doctors in Fuzhou are more likely to be awarded intermediate professional titles at present, it is difficult for family doctors who have already been awarded intermediate professional titles to further obtain senior professional titles [5]. Therefore, for these family doctors, the promotion space is very limited and there is a risk of delayed promotion, leading to a decrease in job satisfaction [8].

3.3. Low Salary and Benefits

At present, the low salary and benefits of family doctors in Fuzhou are an important reason for low job satisfaction. Some studies have pointed out that lower wages are an important reason for the loss of medical human resources in grassroots medical institutions. Lower salaries and benefits will lead to a decrease in job satisfaction for family doctors, who are unwilling to stay at the grassroots level to work [9, 10]. Although the document mentions the need to increase the salary and benefits of grassroots family doctors, their income has not been effectively increased. A study suggests that there is a significant gap in the salary and benefits of family doctors in Fuzhou compared to doctors in other comprehensive hospitals [5]. The difference in salary and benefits will result in capable and experienced grassroots family doctors not choosing to engage in this job or flowing to tertiary hospitals or private hospitals that are willing to provide higher salaries.

3.4. Unreasonable Performance Model

At present, the performance evaluation model for family doctors in Fuzhou is not reasonable enough, resulting in unequal income and effort for family doctors, leading to a decrease in job satisfaction. A study found that if the efforts and income of family doctors are not equal, their job satisfaction will decrease [8]. Although the document mentions several measures to increase family doctor bonuses and subsidies, there is no discussion on improving the existing, quantity-oriented performance model. The quantity-oriented performance model has led to some family doctors not being able to receive corresponding compensation even if they provide high-quality services, resulting in an imbalance between income and effort, leading to low job satisfaction. A study found that even though family doctors in Fuzhou have put in a lot of effort, provided high-quality services, and received high praise and recognition from residents for their work, their salaries are not high [5]. It can be seen that the quantity-oriented performance evaluation model is relatively one-sided and fails to fully mobilize the enthusiasm of family doctors, greatly affecting their job satisfaction.

4. Solutions

4.1. Improve Salary Levels and Optimize Performance Models

At present, the problem of income inequality among family doctors in Fuzhou is more prominent, mainly reflected in the large income gap between grassroots family doctors and doctors in comprehensive hospitals, as well as the imbalance between personal efforts and income, leading to a decrease in job satisfaction. Therefore, it is crucial to narrow the wage gap between family doctors in primary-level hospitals and comprehensive hospitals, to achieve a balance between income and effort, and promote fair and reasonable salary distribution, to improve the job satisfaction of family doctors in Fuzhou. Based on this, this article points out that the optimization of the incentive system for family doctors in Fuzhou can be approached from the following two aspects. For one thing, salary levels can be raised, and for another, performance evaluation methods can be improved.

Firstly, relevant departments should appropriately increase salary levels and strengthen financial subsidies to enhance economic insurance for primary-level medical institutions and medical personnel [1]. Secondly, the performance evaluation model should be optimized. The relevant policy documents clearly state that the importance of service quality in performance evaluation should be emphasized [2]. This approach helps to promote the provision of quality-oriented contract services by family doctors, which is not only conducive to improving resident satisfaction but also reflects the technical and labor value of medical personnel. Therefore, the government and relevant departments should increase their emphasis on service quality and include indicators such as nursing quality and health outcomes in their charging standards [9]. Furthermore, relevant departments should fully leverage the initiative and creativity of family doctors, encourage their teams to actively explore personalized signing services, and incorporate them into performance evaluations. This measure can

not only meet the diverse needs of residents for health services to a greater extent but also help family doctors achieve higher income generation and improve their income levels.

4.2. Strengthen Education and Training, Develop Comprehensive Mentors

The job responsibilities of family doctors are relatively difficult, making it difficult for them to master new knowledge and technology, resulting in a low sense of achievement in their work, which in turn affects job satisfaction. Education and training are important ways for family doctors to improve their work level and ability. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the cultivation and training of family doctors, help them achieve self-improvement, and improve their sense of work achievement and job satisfaction. Based on this, this article believes that the optimization of the family doctor training system can be approached from the following two aspects.

Firstly, it is necessary to promote regular training and further education for family doctors. Scholars have pointed out that training can improve the professional abilities of grassroots medical personnel, thereby increasing their job satisfaction [10]. Therefore, higher-level hospitals should actively organize family doctors from corresponding grassroots hospitals to attend regular training sessions by relevant rules and regulations. Secondly, relevant departments should not only encourage family doctors to regularly visit targeted hospitals for further education but also ensure that their salary and benefits are reasonable and stable during the training and training period, eliminating the worries of family doctors. Furthermore, it is necessary to regularly organize experts from higher-level hospitals to provide business guidance at community hospitals. Peer-to-peer assistance from doctors in higher-level hospitals can help improve the service capabilities and quality of grassroots general practitioners [10]. In addition, individual members of the family doctor team can be encouraged to develop into "general practitioners". A general practitioner mentor is described as a general practitioner teacher who maintains and improves the clinical abilities of general practitioners through medical teaching and supervision [11]. A foreign study suggests that most general practitioners are willing to serve as general practitioners, and serving as mentors helps them improve their organizational, teaching, and comprehensive development abilities [11]. Based on this, Fuzhou can explore the development of a "general practitioner mentor" system, allowing willing family doctors to serve as mentors in the team and continuously grow in the process of teaching and learning.

4.3. Strengthen Career Planning and Optimize Promotion System

At present, the promotion space for family doctors in Fuzhou is limited, especially the proportion of senior professional titles used to hire family doctors needs to be increased, which leads to difficulties in promoting family doctors and affects job satisfaction. Therefore, the importance of career planning for family doctors should be increased, and a fair and reasonable promotion system should be established to meet the career development expectations of family doctors. This article believes that the promotion system for family doctors in Fuzhou can be approached from several aspects: strengthening career planning, optimizing evaluation mechanisms, and strengthening departmental coordination.

Firstly, relevant institutions should attach importance to the career development needs of family doctors. Managers should assist family doctors in making personalized career development plans and provide relevant training and support [12]. Secondly, relevant health departments should implement policies related to the evaluation of family doctor titles, fully play a coordinating role, coordinate the ratio of professional titles among various units and departments, and ensure that senior professional titles can be more inclined towards family doctors within a reasonable range. Furthermore, relevant departments such as human resources should give priority to family doctors who meet the conditions and are delayed in promotion, ensuring that these family doctors do not experience a decrease in job satisfaction due to prolonged waiting times for promotion [12].

5. Conclusion

With years of exploration and practice, the incentive policies for family doctors in Fuzhou are constantly being improved. At present, the job satisfaction of family doctors in Fuzhou is not high, and problems such as low job achievement, limited promotion space, and unreasonable salary distribution are still prominent. This article believes that the optimization of the incentive system for family doctors in Fuzhou can be achieved by optimizing performance evaluation methods, appropriately increasing salary levels, strengthening training and training, strengthening career planning, and optimizing promotion systems. Taking multiple measures and coordinating multiple parties is the fundamental way to optimize and develop the incentive system for family doctors in Fuzhou, and it is also the basic path to improve the job satisfaction of family doctors.

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