

Factors Involved in Selecting Health Services and Products

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Abstract

Health services and products are of paramount importance at reforming and improving the performance of health system. The selection of health services and products should be based on the therapeutic needs of the health care system. This paper focuses on the factors involved in selecting health services and products. Various ailments /indications, definitions and products recommendations were identified and some factors for selecting various health products and health services were also reviewed. Claims about health products can be persuasive and misleading. This paper has been designed so that individual, community, health care givers or professionals, government and the general public can learn to evaluate information about health products, especially those that target the youth market. Thus health services and products are those self growth tools for those seeking to improve their health and wellness through herbal supplement, over -the-encounter drugs, mental enrichment, and physical fitness product (such as exercycle exercise), arthro-aquatic fitness system, treadmills, total-body elliptical cross-trainers, wheel chair bike. The individual, community, government, health care givers or professionals and the general public were advised to be equipped and guided by these factors in selecting their physical health services and products in order to achieve sound physical, mental emotional and social well being. Hence, this group of people is consumers of a range of health products and services throughout their lives, it is important that as they gain the knowledge and skills to choose those that will best meet their health needs.

Key words: Factors, Selecting, Health, Services, Products.

Introduction

In light of scientific and technology advancement, it is not surprising that many people believe that health is purchasable. The health market place abounds with products of every description to accommodate people's desire (Larkin, 2000). Factors involved in selecting health services and products are vital to the efforts directed at reforming and improving the performance of health system (Denis, 2007). Vijaya (2009) asserted that health services and products are essential self growth tools for those looking to improve their health and wellness through physical fitness, herbal supplements and mental enrichment. Oleske (2009) opined that selection plays major roles in health services and product such as: Assuring the delivering of high quality services and products; serving as a tool for monitoring care and controlling costs; promoting accountability for public and private programmed expenditures.

Kasl and Cobb (1999) disclosed that, factors for selecting health services and products helps to increase professional health worker's knowledge of selected research findings and theories so that they may better understand why and under what conditions people take action to prevent, detect and diagnose disease. Redmond (2007) conceptualized factors as part or component that has to be considered in selecting health services and products. Selecting, in other words, is the ability to choose from among the number of alternatives (Redmond 2007). Within the context of the present study, factors are those components that contribute or have an influence over health products and services which need to be considered during selection while selection is an act of choosing health product and services from a wide variety of others. Product is a thing produced during a natural, chemical or industrial process (Stacey 2007). Health product is a product or substance of nature that provide the nutrient such as carbohydrate, protein, dietary fiber, vitamins and minerals which contribute to normal health diet (Stacey 2007). Natural Health Products (2004) posited that product may be used as part of a meal or taken to replace a meal.

Service on the other hand refers to an individual, government or private organization that is responsible for a particular type of activity, or for providing a particular health product or health services that people need (Pearson, 2005). Health is a qualifying factor for living (Onuzulike, 2005). Olise (2007) asserted that, the health

of an individual is the sum total of a number of factors ranging from environmental, socio-cultural, political, genetic and behavioural, to health care delivery. WHO (1971) defined health as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being of an individual, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Health services are those services that are and can be rendered within the communities by community care givers or health professionals (Community Based Health Services, 2009). They further stated that these services are part of the primary Health care programmes that are preventive, promotive, little bit of curative, rehabilitative and environmental health Services. They maintained that these services are rendered by community organizations working in the health sectors under the supervision of the health officials. In other words health services refer to the sum of all the units that deals with the health and disease of members of a community. The units included medical care services, public care services, health education, research, preventive and curative health services as well as traditional health services

Factors involved in Selecting Health Services

WHO (1978) identifies the following factors to be considered in selecting health services to include:

Proximity: The services provided must be near enough and central in location to the members of the community. Appropriate sitting of the service centre will remove some disadvantages factors like transportation inconveniencies which may prevent the people from using the services provided.

Timing: The time when services are provided must be the time when the people are free from their occupational commitments. The use of health services are neglected when it is scheduled at time that the people perform a task which is necessary to their survival in the community, like during farming seasons or festivities.

Cost: The health services provided must be at a cost that is affordable by the people. Services may be provided to be acquainted with the facilities and gain confidence in the work staff. Individuals may refuse to use a needed service because of its excessive cost or due to complete lack of funds.

WHO (2000) further disclosed other factors as follows:

- The health services selected could address single issues of national public health importance such as HIV/AIDS or malaria. Several other issues might also be addressed to achieve a more broadly defined health target such as reduce level of anemia or improve reproductive health.
- The provision of health services as part of other initiatives to address the problems and need identified e.g. national's programmes that address HIV/ AIDS (WHO, 1999).
- Promotive and preventive health information and services that do not relate to one specific health problem may also constitute a health services thus need to be considered in the selection (WHO, 2001).
- Estimates of the burden of morbidity and mortality among the population as a whole, and the share of this burden that falls on them, also unhealthy practices adopted during childhood which could result in morbidity and mortality later in life (Brabin, 2002).
- The feasibility and cost of the recommendation interventions, especially in the context of going to scale (Aral and Peterman 1996).
- We need to know how to select, recruit and sustain organizations within a network (Harrison, et al 2001).
- Establish the network of service providers for instance implementation will be affected at lower levels of the health system, at which level, assessment of existing providers would follow with a view to strengthening local networks, encourage collaboration between existing programmes (e.g. Social Welfare) (Huba and Melchior 1998).
- Sensitization of local communities and involvement of individual will also be essential (Meya-Weitz et al., 2000).

Health product is those product or substance of food nature that provide the nutrients such as carbohydrate, protein, dietary, fiber, vitamins and minerals which contribute to normal health diet (Vijaya, 2009). Exercise product provides people with a practical learning experience in product benefit segmentation (George et al, 1978). According to NHPS (2004) the following natural health product were highlighted as: Vitamins and minerals; Herbal remedies; Traditional medicines; Probiotics that is substances containing beneficial microorganism. Other products like amino acids and essential fatty acids. Natural Health product must be safe for consideration, as over-the-counter drugs are not requiring a prescription to be sold. Product requiring a prescription will continue to be regulated under the food and drug regulations (Health Canada, 2004).

The health product may be used as part of a meal or taken to replace a meal (Stacey, 2007). Example of products that can be taken as part of a diet includes: Energy food; essence of chicken/dunk/fish; herbal teas and drinks for general regular consumption; wine or vinegar drinks containing herbal ingredient commonly used in food.

Merk (2010) spelled out the following product that can be taken for a medical purpose to include:

Singular, this is a prescription medicine that blocks substance in the body called leukotrienes. It does not contain a steroid. It prevents exercise induced asthma in adult and children; Tradition Indian medicines; Chinese proprietary medicines; Western pharmaceutical drugs (e.g. Synthetic Caffeine, Aspirin).

Product that can be taken for nutritional or functional benefits, particularly for specific nutrient deficiencies or in terms of stress when normal includes: Garlic (*allium sativum*) extracts e.g. oil and allicin; Ginger (*zingiber officinalis*) extracts e.g. oils; Omega-3 or omega-6 oils e.g. Eicopentaenoic acid (Epa); Soya bean isolates; Amino acid e.g. Lcycine, methionine; Tea tree extract and wild yam extracts.

Durable Medical Equipment (2007) describes product for exercise as shown in table 1 below:

Table 1.

PRODUCTS	DEFINITIONS	MANUFACTURER
Facial-flex	Product for flexibility, to move or tense a muscle, or become tense or contracted.	Facial-flex corporation
Tread mills	Exercise machine with an endless belt on which somebody can walk, jog or run, use for Exercise and stress testing.	Lifefitness.com.
Exercycle Exerciser	An apparatus for physical fitness	Exercycle corporation
Kneel/ankle mobilier	Machine used for movement of ankle/knees.	Hayes kam systems
Exercise bike	Exercise machine in the form of a stationary bicycle that is pedaled vigorously for exercise.	
Total body Elliptical Cross-Trainers	An exercise machine Intended to develop many group of muscles.	Lifefitness.com
Wheel chair Bike	Life cycle exercise bike.	Chiefs manufacturing company
Motorized bicycle exercise Trainer	An exercise machine in the form of stationary bicycle that is pedaled for exercise	Lifefitness.com

Table 2: This Table below According to Vital Health food show a guide for selecting health services and products, Recommendation of various Ailments/indication "Vital Health food" (www.Vital.com).

Ailment	Definition	Product Recommendations
Acne	Acne is a common skin disease characterized by pimples on the face, chest, and back. It occurs when the pores of the skins become clogged with oil, dead skin cells and bacteria.	Multiline Hair, skin and nails, vitamin A&E, Vitamin E. Zinc, selenium complete, Garlic, Garlic & parsley, odourless Garlic Brewer's yeast.
Ageing	Ageing is associated with a slowdown in regeneration of body cells, Resulting in a gradual degeneration of body tissues. Poor blood circulation, .wrinkling of skin and graying of hair are typical physical characteristics.	Multiline over 60's, multiline Eyes, Vitamin E, calcium, complete, selenium complete Ginkgo Bibola, omega 3 concentrate
Bladder	Bladder problems include cystitis, which is caused by a bacterial infection of the bladder. Resulting in a burning sensation while urinating.	Multitime woman, Bunch, zinc, Garlic & parsley odorless Garlic, kelp, Antioxidant.
Blood circulation	The heart is responsible to pump blood throughout the body, so that it circulates through all tissues and organs. Poor circulation is often caused by smoking cigarette, but is also associated with ageing and heart disease.	multitime heart, vitamin c, vitamine, folic complete, garlic, garlic & parsley, odorless garlic, ginkgo biloba, omega 3 & 6 concentrate, lecithin, antioxidant, evening, primrose oil
Bone Health	Calcium is the main structural mineral in bones and teeth. Calcium balance is maintained by in taken of sufficient calcium and supporting nutrient such as magnesium and vitamin D	Calcium complete , dolomite, multitime menopausal women, magnesium

Candida	Candida albicans is a fungus naturally found in the body. Under certain circumstance, an overgrowth of Candida can result in vaginal thrush or Digestive complaints such as bloating	Brewer's yeast, vitamin B complex, maxi B, zinc, selenium complete, garlic, garlic & parsley odorless Garlic, Herb time immune system (Echinacea), Buchu.
Cholesterol	Cholesterol is a fatty substance present in the blood, which in high levels can increase the risk of heart disease by compromising blood circulation.	Multitime Heart, Garlic, Garlic & omega 3, salomn oil vitamin C, vitamin E maxi B , folic lecithin omega 3 concentrate.
Cold & Flu	Cold and flu are caused by viruses which infect the respiratory system, resulting in symptoms such as fever, blocked sinuses, catarrh, coughing sore throat and body aches.	Vitamin C, Vitamin A & D, Emulsion, zinc, selenium complete, viral Boost , Herbal time immune system (Echinacea), Garlic, Garlic & parsley, odorless Garlic, cod-liver oil, Garlic omega 3
Pre-menstrual Tension	Pre-menstrual tension is caused by the hormonal fluctuations in the week before the one set of the menstruation. symptoms include breast tenderness, mood swing, and irritability and skin breakouts	Multitime women , vitamin B& 6 magnesium, Ginseng, Evening primrose oil, omega 3&6 concentrate
Concentration & Memory	The brain, as part of the nervous system, is responsible for memory and concentration may be caused by stress, being overworked, insomnia; fatigue, ageing or certain medical conditions	Herbtime memory & contraction (Ginkgo biloba), Ginkgo Biloba, vitamin C large multiboost, kids time focus, vitamin E ,vitamin B complex, maxi B , lecithin, salmon oil, omega 3 concentrate.
Constipation	Constipation is characterized by a reduced frequency in bowel movements and difficulty in passing dry, hard stools.	Bio-fiber, colon complete, muesli, maxi B , magnesium, kelp , Brewer's yeast, Green tea, Rice, cakes
Cramps	Muscle cramps often occur during strenuous exercise, in which case they may be caused by the severity of the exercise, or by nutritional imbalances. Night time muscular cramps in the elders may be caused by deficiencies in calcium and magnesium.	Dolomite, calcium complete, molasses, vitamin B complex, Maxi B, vitamin C, vitamin E, salmon oil, Brewer's yeast, omega concentrate
Dry skin	Skin moisture is dependent on sufficient intake of skin nutrients such as vitamin E, omega 3 and omega 6 fatty - acid. dry skin can be aggravated by exposure to wind, sunlight and very cold or hot air	Vitamin E, multi-time Hair, skin & nails, omega 3 concentrate, wheat Germ oil, salmon oil , Evening primrose oil
Eyes	Optimal nutrient is essential for the maintenances of health eyesight, especially through the developmental childhood years and also with ageing	Multi-time Eyes, vitamin A&D, over 60', zinc, selenium complete Beta carotene, cold liver oil, omega 3 concentrate, Antioxidant
Fatigue	Fatigue is characterized by the feeling of low energy levels persistent tiredness, and inability to perform normal tasks. Fatigue is typically a symptom of being overworked, loss of sleep or medical disorder	Vitacharge, vitacharge multi boost, vita charge fizzy, vitamin B complex, magnesium, iron , ginsengs, Alfalfa, Antioxidant, green Tea, Day break Tea
Weight management	Slimming or weight loss is usually an attempt to loss excess body fat and is facilitated increasing energy output through exercise, as well as reducing in dietary intake.	Fat Burner, vital-slim capsules & vita-slim shakes, Apple cider Diet, Buchu, Kelp, vitamin B complex, maxi B, multitime women, multitime adults.

Table 3: This table indicates other Ailment/Indication and Product Recommendations

Ailment/ indication	Definition	Product Recommendations
Hair	Health hair requires sufficient intake of variety of essential vitamins, mineral and essential fatty acid. The condition of Hair is effected by nutrition, hair products, environment etc.	Multitime Hair, & vitamin A & D, vitamin B complex , maxi B, folic complete, Dolomite magnesium, zinc, Brewers, yeast, cod hair oil, salmon oil omega 3 concentrate.
Menopause	Menopause represents the end of reproductive cycle of a woman, which is characterized by cessation of menstrual cycle with accompanying symptoms such as mood swings, irritability, mild depression, insomnia and hot flushes.	Multi-time menopausal women, maxi B, vitamin B 6 & magnesium, calcium complete, Herb time mild Depression (st john worth) Evening primrose oil, omega 3 & 6 concentrate.
Pregnancy	Optimal nutrition during pregnancy will optimize the healthy development of the baby, while preserving nutrient stores of the mother	Multitime pregnant women, calcium complete, omega 3 concentrate, vitamin B complex, maxi B, vitamin C, folic complete , magnesium , iron, zinc, salmon oil , Brewer's yeast.

Retrieved from <http://www.vital.co.za/index.php>

Factors Involved in Selecting Health Product

Obionu (2001) identifies the following factors as follows:

- The product should be based on the therapeutic needs of the health care system of the individual's communities.
- The drug must be proven efficacy and safety.
- Side effect must be minimal,
- The quality and availability of dosage form should be assured,
- The dosage form should have reasonably long stability under the expected conditions of storage
- Tablets should be preferred to syrups and solutions because they can keep better.
- The drugs should be in generic names as much as possible
- They must be financially affordable.

According to Babalola (1987) exercise product selected should help to enhance the following:

- Aiding circulation
- Increasing red corpuscles and hemoglobin
- Aiding the removal of waste from tissue
- Strengthening the muscular system
- Aiding digestions
- Improving mental health
- Improving the heart -regulating mechanism
- Facilitating relaxation and sleep.

Summary

A major point of emphasis is factors involved in selecting health services and products. These factors are essential to the effort directed at reforming and improving the performance of health system. This has been reviewed in this paper together with various health product and services to equip and increase awareness among government and professional health workers for selecting health services and product that are preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative. Individuals, communities and the general public were also urged to be guided by these factors involved in selecting health services and product.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Health services and product are necessary for those seeking to improve their health and achieve wellness through physical fitness, herbal supplements and mental enrichment. Taking cognizance of those factors involved in selecting health services and products as stated in this paper will serve as a remedy to the menace involved during selection of various products. Based on this, the following recommendations were made:

- The health care professionals should scrutinize all the products to ensure the efficacy and safety before selection.
- The government, health care givers or professionals, individuals, communities and society were urged to take cognizance of the NAFDAC numbers, and the expiration date of each product.
- Policy makers should enact laws regulating standard of the environment in which product is manufactured, processed, packaged, stored, produced and sale, to avoid food or products contamination.

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