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**EVALUATION OF INVENTORY MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC
REGIONAL REFERRAL HEALTH FACILITIES IN UGANDA: A CASE
STUDY OF ARUA REGIONAL REFERRAL HOSPITAL**

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Abstract

Managing stock effectively is important for any organization, running a hospital is no exception because without enough stock, services to patients will be difficult. Health facilities must provide reliable services and accordingly keep stocks of certain medicines and other medical supplies to be able to discharge their duties effectively. It is a generally held opinion that where stock management by health facilities is poor, delivery of healthcare is normally affected.

Effective and efficient inventory management practices are still a major challenge facing Public health facilities in Uganda especially those at the regional referral status. Hence, this study aimed at evaluating inventory management at Arua Regional Referral Hospital.

The Objectives of the study were to examine the inventory management techniques, to evaluate inventory management practices, to determine the challenges of inventory management and to determine ways of improving inventory management at Arua Regional Referral Hospital

A cross section of a sampled population of Arua Regional Referral Hospital was relied upon to get responses on the set objectives. The method of data collection was by use of a Questionnaire (Appendix I). 45 respondents participated in the study though the issued questionnaires were 47 giving a response rate of 95.7% which was vital for the results obtained.

The study found out that inventory management at Arua Regional Referral Hospital faced significant challenges. A number of inventory management technics were not fully in use at the hospital. The study also noted that some inventory management practices were being exercised at the hospital and ways on how to improve inventory management were also found to be positive in management's view.

Major conclusions and recommendations arrived at respectively from the study findings were that Arua Regional Referral Hospital is faced with challenges of inefficient storage facilities, leading to insufficient inventories, bureaucratic drug inventory requisitioning process, drug utilization not fully monitored in patient wards, loss of drugs through pilferages and a manual inventory management system making inventory monitoring hard.

It was therefore recommended that management emphasizes the need and importance of various inventory management techniques alongside the hospital improving its demand forecast of various medical supplies and adoption of advanced information systems such as EDI to better manage inventory.