

ABSTRACT

DECISION-MAKING IN A HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

THE CASE OF THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
(1952 - 1982)

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This study analyses some aspects of decision-making in health care delivery focusing on a case study of the University Hospital in Jamaica.

It identifies different loci of decision-making and the decisions made within three decades - 1952 to 1982. This period represents thirty years of rapid changes in the Caribbean. These include the gaining of political independence by Caribbean states, the dissolution of the West Indies Federation, the growth of political parties and labour movements, and economic integration in the region with the formation of CARIFTA followed by CARICOM.

The integral relationship between the University Hospital as a teaching hospital (Statutory Body) and the University of the West Indies, the political directorate and bureaucracy of the English-speaking Caribbean states and other agencies is also analysed.

The theoretical framework of this study was developed from works of both Western and Caribbean scholars. Data was obtained from University Hospital records, legal instruments especially those governing the delivery of health care (Public Health Laws, Labour Laws, University Hospital Law, Industrial Disputes Tribunal Awards), National Plans, National Health Plans, Government Reports

in the performance of the overall economy as outlined in the Economic and Social Surveys, Jamaica, policy documents and reports of conferences from regional and international agencies such as PAHO/WHO and CARICOM Secretariat.

One of the major concerns of this study was the application of a body of theory toward a better understanding of decision-making and its constraints. Within this context, prospects for enhancing the performance of Health Care Systems in a Third World environment are identified.