

The organizational structure of nursing service department

Although planning is the key to effective management, the organizational structure furnishes the formal framework in which the management process takes place. The organizational structure should provide an effective work system, a network of communications, and identity to individuals and the organization and should consequently foster job satisfaction. The organization contains both formal and informal structures.

Types of organizational structures:

1. The formal organizational structure:

It describes positions, tasks, responsibilities and relationships among people in their positions in the different departments in the organization, and presented in diagrammatic form called **organizational chart**.

2. Informal organizational structure:

It describes the personal and social relationships that do not appear on the organizational chart.

- It helps members to meet their personal objectives and provides social satisfaction.
- It also has its own channels of communication, which may distribute information more broadly and rapidly than the formal communication system.
- The informal organizational structure is important to management, thus, the supervisor should be aware of its existence, study its operating techniques, and use it to meet the organizational objectives.

Organizational chart:

It is a diagram shows the different positions and departments, and the relationships among them.

It is used to show:

- The formal organizational relationships.
- Areas of responsibility.
- Persons to whom one is accountable.
- Channels of communication.

Types of organizational charts:

There are three types of organizational charts: the vertical, the horizontal, and circular charts.

1. Vertical charts:

It shows high-level management at the top with formal lines of authority down the hierarchy, are most common (fig. 8).

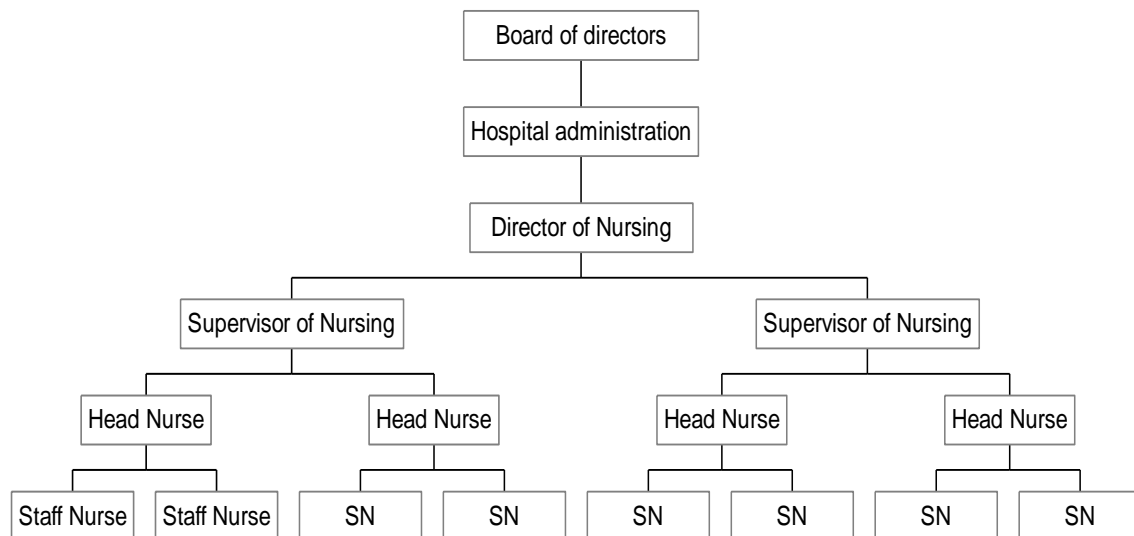


Fig. 8 Vertical organizational Chart

2. A left-to-right (horizontal) charts:

It shows the high-level management at the left with lower positions to the right. Shows relative length of formal lines of authority, helps simplify understanding the lines of authority and responsibility (fig. 9).

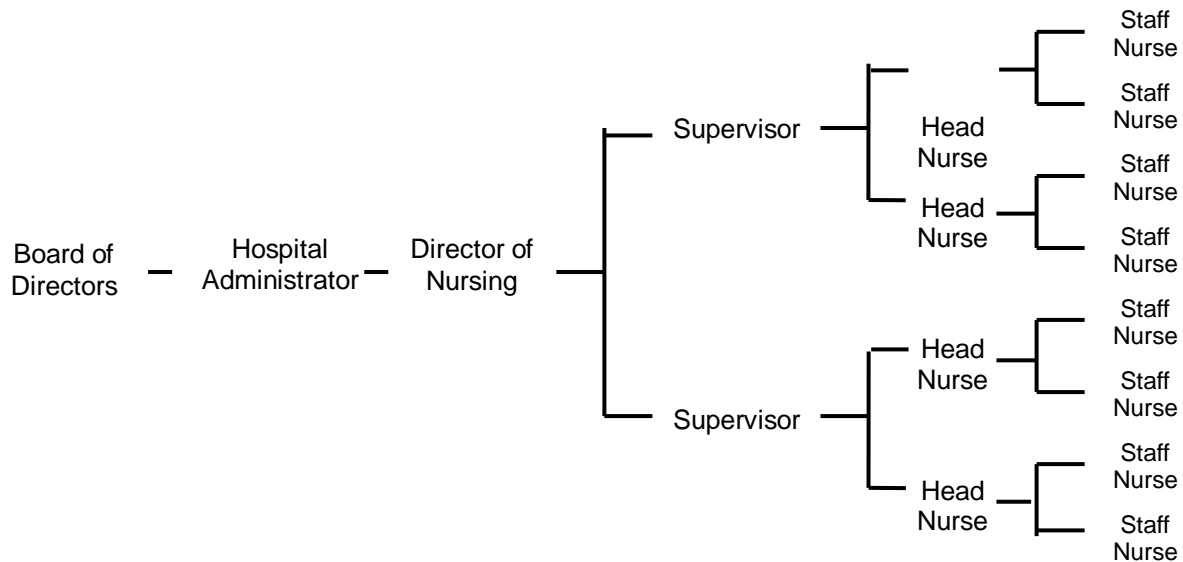


Fig. 9 Left-to-right (Horizontal) organizational Chart

3. Circular charts:

It shows the high-level management in the center with successive positions in circles. It shows the outward flow of formal authority from the high-level management. It reduces status implications (fig. 10).

Characteristics of an effective organizational chart:

1. Be accurate, clear, simple and updated.
2. Shows the chain of command, lines of authority, responsibility and relationships.
3. All members of the department should be notified when any change occurs.

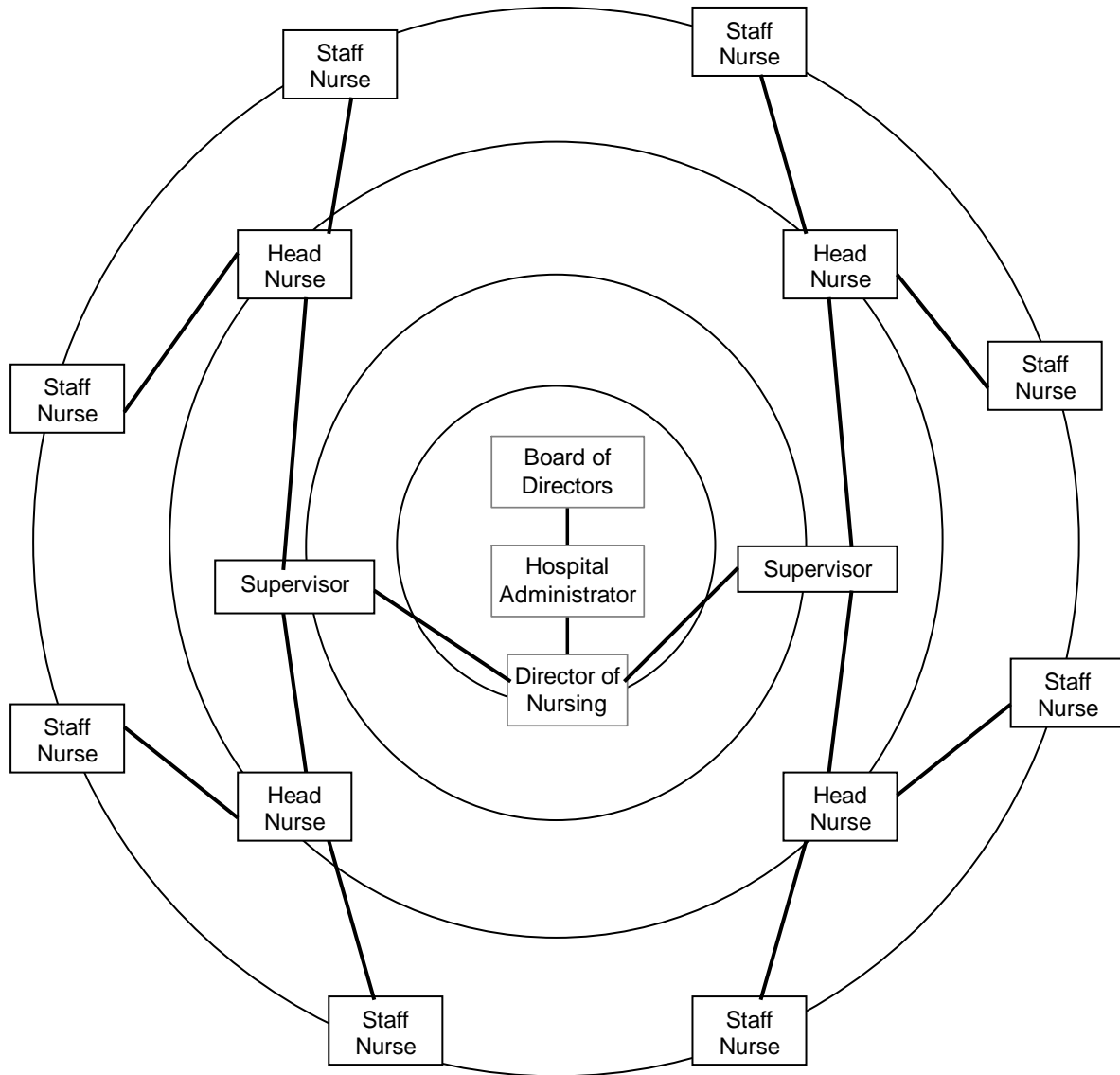


Fig. 10 Circular Organizational Chart

Principles for drawing an accurate organizational chart:

- The chart should have a clear title.
- It should be dated.
- The higher management should be shown at the top, while most junior positions at the end of the chart.
- Positions of equal seniority should be shown at the same level.
- For clarity, details should be well spaced.

- Solid lines must be used to indicate flow of authority; staff relationships can be shown by a dotted line.
- Colors may be used to distinguish between departments.

Advantages of an organizational chart:

1. It provides a quick visual illustration of the organizational structure.
2. It provides help in organizational planning.
3. It shows lines of formal authority, responsibility and accountability.
4. It clarifies who supervises whom and to whom one is responsible.
5. It emphasizes the important aspect of each position.
6. It facilitates management development and training.
7. It is used to evaluate strengths and weakness of current structure.
8. It provides starting points for planning organizational changes.
9. It describes channels of communication.

Disadvantages:

1. Charts become outdated quickly.
2. Does not show informal relationship.
3. Does not show duties and responsibilities.
4. Poorly prepared charts might create misleading effects.