

UNIVERSITY OF WALES – TRINITY OF SAINT DAVID

PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING /BMSW4004/

COMPLEX PROBLEM SOLVING- REPORT

STUDENT: ALEKSANDRA BATINKOVA 2026174

LECTURE: MENTESNOT MENGESHA

In this report, I will introduce you to the steps I will use to solve a complex problem. I will choose a problem from my personal experience, analysed it in detail and solve it by applying learned tools and techniques.

Problems of different nature in the workplace are something usual and they never seem to go away. They are time-consuming and present unsatisfaction state. Depends of the level of complexity, type and nature, we can use huge range of tools to solve them. They can be related to single individuals (ethical problems, attitude problems, interpersonal problems, harassment, discrimination, etc.) or institutional problems, related to the organization's policies, process, stakeholders, and resources (workplace policies, type of costumers, lack of equipment and resources, etc.)

To solve the problem you need to find the right solution as soon as possible, because the effects could be job dissatisfaction, stress, higher turnover rates, absenteeism, etc. Problem-solving is the process of understanding the problem, analyzing, and planning.

Useful steps to solve a problem:

1. To solve the problem first we need to define the problem. Analyse the situation, determine the cause, to analyse company policies, and discuss with team members. Depending upon the complexity of the problem, we may need to use tools, cause-and-effect diagrams, to define the problem and its root causes.
2. .The next step is to identify alternative solutions, using brainstorming ideas and suggestions from everyone affected by the problem.
3. Evaluate Solutions- analyse and compare all the alternatives in terms of resources required for their implementation.
4. We need to select a solution which is practical and easy to implement and it fits the company policies and procedures.
5. After the Implement the chosen solution, we have to create an action plan, define deadlines, ask for feedback and follow all the processes. If the process

fails, then the solution is not working properly. Eventually, In that case, we have to change something.

Using these steps I will define and analyse a complex problem from my personal experience.

We are surrounded by complex problems. At a global or national level, many of these are new and very threatening very difficult to solve or control. They are complex because there are many expert opinions expressed to solve the problem, which is radically different from each other, but still true to themselves. The result is countless options for partial resolution, but none that can fully resolve it. As the solution of complex problems does not depend directly on any organization or government, the adequate response of the individual structures is very important. The set of correctly made decisions in the separate structures and institutions will be the solution of the complex problem. In my case, I will try, as far as possible, to solve a problem of such a complex nature, which is directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is a global problem that affect many sectors and industries- from Economic to Healthcare. My personal investigation and experience shows that they are a lot of problems in healthcare, because of the Covid-19 pandemic. GP practice didn't offer a face-to-face appointment. The Emergency department is overcrowded because many people search for help from the Emergency department. Planned operations are canceled. There is a lack of trained staff, there is a lack of staff at all. Receptionists are taking a lot of abuse, because of the chaos in the system.

For such a complex problem, affecting the entire health system, need to analyze the problems, find the right solution and implement the solution, check if the solution works.

I am a mother of two children and I often have to visit a doctor because the children are often ill. From the moment the pandemic began, it was impossible to make an appointment with a doctor in the local GP practice. GP appointments moved online

in lockdown and although restrictions have eased. Over the phone, you will never get the full picture. Sometimes they ask you to send pictures in, people who don't have phones, or elderly people miss that opportunity. Also, the measurements of Covid-19 did not allow face-to-face examination without a negative PCR test. The results from the PCR test are ready after 24-48 hours from the testing- which is too much time. A not on-time examination can complicate the patient's health condition. Most of the time GP practice offers me an appointment after 3 weeks and most of the time I need to book a private one, which costs a lot of money. For me, this is not the right decision of the situation.

If I was a GP practice manager I will take this actions to solve the problem.

First I need to define the problem. The problem is no face-to-face appointments in the GP practice/practices.

To define the problem from its roots causes I will use Fishbone analysis. The Fishbone Diagrams will help me categorize the causes of a problem and it should be efficient as a test case technique to determine cause and effect. The fishbone diagrams shows that the problem causes are lack of staff, closed GP surgeries, online examination, change in the healthcare system, covid isolation, a risk to spread the virus.

Not available face-to-face appointment is problem affect all the stakeholders of the GP practice. Stakeholders are patients, doctors, nurses, administrators, managers, employees, employers, and government.

Stakeholders can take part in the decision-making.

After defining the problem in details (using the fishbone diagram, which define the problem from its roots) I will identify a possible solution.

Possible solutions of no face-to-face appointments during the Covid-19 could be :

Priority patients list in the GP surgery- which means that all the patients with chronic diseases and conditions, elderly patients, and patients under 5 must be with priority appointment.

Vaccinated staff -Only fully vaccinated staff will be allowed to work. If all the staff is fully vaccinated the risk from spreading the virus will be minimal.

Covid Pass – Certificate with unique QR code will allow patients which are fully vaccinated to face to face examination.

Informed patients – The Receptionist must provide the necessary information to their patients. The patients need to be informed about GP practice policies related to Covid-19, Covid-19 symptoms and any information about the virus, the Priority list for elderly patients and babies, emergency contacts, and opening hours of the GP practice. When patients are well informed they will be more tolerant.

Building a New GP practices in every Borough in the biggest cities in the United Kingdom. This solution might be very expensive for the government.

Recruiting more staff. The GP practices need to recruit more doctors to cover all the patient's needs.

Using lateral flow test before appointment. The lateral flow test-antigen test result is ready in 30 minutes. This test can give some protection to the doctor.

Completely change Covid-19 measurements and even fully dropped out the restrictions. If there isn't any restriction, everything will be like before.

This is the main solutions that I suggest to solve this problem. To evaluate the solutions I need to use a budget, government policies, current information about Covid-19 situation, risk to staff and patients, economic factors, etc.

The best tool to evaluate the solutions, in this case, is PESTLE analysis.

A PESTLE analysis is a very useful tool,a starting point for the analysis of external environments, to be used to look outside the company to evaluate what may or may not happen. PESTLE stands for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental factors.

Political factors -Brexit uncertainties- The United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union is set to have widespread consequences on society, and that includes public institutions such as the NHS. A number of articles have been published speculating how Brexit might impact the NHS, but nothing is sure just yet. For example, there are uncertainties surrounding how medication and equipment originating from the EU will be brought into the UK. Perhaps a more serious issue is that of staffing: with a great number of medical professionals originally from other European countries, there are concerns that the NHS' workforce might take a hit if Brexit results in stricter or less favorable living conditions for foreigners.

Economic factors- Economic downturn - Following the 2008 financial crisis, the entire world has experienced an economic downturn. Of course, the United Kingdom was in no way immune to this economic setback, and this is something that has impacted the NHS. For more than a decade, the NHS is said to have been facing financial troubles (due to economic reasons as much as regulatory ones). This makes it difficult for the NHS to provide a sufficient quality of care to its patients. The biggest manner in which this has manifested is in a serious lack of qualified staff. With mediocre salaries, the NHS has never been a particularly attractive workplace for clinical professionals.

Technological factors- Improved Healthcare - [Healthcare is slowly being improved](#). Scanning tools are more affordable than ever, making them a staple of hospitals and clinics. Various pumps and tools for treating or managing conditions are being developed, decreasing morbidity. Government organizations like the NHS are able to speed up and automate more clinical tasks.

Social Factors – Aging population - Across the world, a common phenomenon is that of an aging population. As healthcare improves, the average age of populations is increasing. Although this is very much a good thing, an older population tends to have more health problems. Conditions like diabetes and various cancers tend to develop in later stages of life, and can be extremely costly to treat or manage. As a result, [the UK's aging population](#) is placing an additional strain on the NHS.

High patients expectation - With the advent of social media (allowing information to spread faster than ever) and improved educational systems, patient's expectations are higher than ever. Patients tend to have a much better knowledge of the treatment options available to them, and in developed countries (like the UK), expect government organizations to spare no expense on treatment. While this reduces mortality and is, once again, a mostly positive change, it does create new challenges for the NHS as they are expected to provide better care than ever before.

United Kingdom's National Health Service is in a tough spot: with Brexit uncertainties, financial struggles, an aging population, and growing numbers of legal claims, it may seem like nothing is going the right way. Thankfully, changes in technology may make it easier for the body to provide [quality healthcare](#). It does, however, seem that the NHS will need a good deal more financing if it's set to meet growing expectations.

This particular case is much more complex and difficult to be solved. This is a global problem and any actions related to this problem should be taken by the government. The manager didn't have the rights to take such a radical change related to pandemic rules- like Completely change Covid-19 measurements and even fully dropping out the restrictions.

This solution is not just easy to fit, it is invincible at this stage. Due to Financial Crisis, it is not possible to undertake the adjustment of new medical facilities and centers. Hiring new staff is also difficult because of Brexit.

Vaccination at this stage is not mandatory. People with certain diseases and allergies cannot get vaccinated. Vaccination is partially the solution. The solution to this problem is Priority and face-to-face Appointments for adults, people with chronic illnesses and young children. A lateral flow test before the appointment is mandatory for everyone else who wants to examine in person. This will avoid the risk of infection. An action plan should be created without wasting time. First will be preparing priority list of elderly patients, chronic diseases patients and children

under five. The next step is to spread the information via email, text message or post letters . The information will address the new ways and rules for face-to-face appointments. Deadlines is 1 month ,this is enough , because the digital system and technology are doing well. The budget will not affect GP practice finances.

Following the process, check if the solution is working without fail. Evidence of successful solving problem will decrease cases

Covid-19 statistics and patients positive review.

As a result of the pandemic, the way that healthcare is provided has changed to protect staff and patients. I hope that the solution to this complex problem will not put at risk the health of patients and doctors.GP practice must work in a way, similar to other sectors of the British economy. Access to hospitals should be as easy as possible. There should be no double standard. Priority should be given to hospitals, patients should be not examined by telephone as priorities. Human health comes first in such difficult times. Good problem-solving skills are essential if you want to succeed in your career and your life In general.

Reference

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