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Quality Management in Primary Health Facilities in North West Frontiers Pakistan

Role of combined evaluation methods

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ABSTRACT

Problem Statement:

Quality in health care is high up on the policy agendas worldwide. One example is Pakistan, which faces great challenges in assuring the quality and collecting information concerning the quality status. Consequently, health care plans and policies are not based on reliable data. However, efficient and effective evaluation requires valid and reliable methods, so that they can be of use of policy-makers, managers and researchers. Hence, the first quality improvement activities were launched by the government. One specific initiative was the development and implementation of standards in the North West Frontier Province. In 2007, one year after this implementation, the compliance to the standards was assessed and analysed through a quality survey. This study analyses the role of the combined evaluation methods of the quality survey.

Objectives:

One objective was to examine the methods and data collection regarding the combination and role of the patient interviews and peer reviews in primary health care services in NWFP. A related objective was to analyse the survey results to examine the potential to improve the evidence of future policies in the evaluation of quality in primary health care institutions in the province.

Methods:

Mixed methods have been used. The quantitative method involved a secondary data analysis. One part of the survey data, which was selected through purposive sampling, was analysed through descriptive examination and with the help of the Mann-Whitney-U-Test, to assess the differences and similarities of both evaluation methods. The qualitative part of the study was performed through a literature review and additional documents. To examine the information for policy and planning, an evaluation framework was used additionally.

Findings:

62.5% of the standards were significant different rated through the evaluation methods. 90% of the significant results were rated higher by the patients. The peer review included a method combination of observation, expert interview, patient interview and documentation review based on the primary assessment tool and the checklist. The patient interviews based on a

standardised questionnaire, with mainly closed-ended questions. All six steps of the framework were accomplished in the quality survey.

Discussion:

Some biases may have changed the results of the method comparison. Both evaluation methods had strength and weaknesses. The relevance of the weaknesses of one evaluation method could be minimized through the other one. The results of the framework, concerning missing elements, such as the development of indicators, which were not carried out, were discussed.

Conclusion:

The number of different results in both evaluation methods show, that both groups have a diverse opinion regarding quality of care. Consequently, it is important to use both methods in the evaluation. The qualitative analysis confirms that the combined use of the peer review and the patient interview is the most appropriate method for evaluation. Nevertheless, some improvements should be made to decrease the influence of biases and to increase the reliability and validity of the research methodology. For future quality surveys, it is essential to increase the cooperation between the stakeholders, in particular with the patient representatives.