

Monitoring and evaluation of HIV care in the government HIV clinic in Hong Kong

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Issue

Quality is both a vision and an attribute in health care. Clinical governance has become one framework for pursuing quality of care. The rapidly advancing nature of HIV medicine makes presence of a mechanism to ensure care quality crucial.

Description

In 1999, we embarked to pursue clinical governance for monitoring and evaluating our designated HIV clinical services at the Integrated Treatment Centre (ITC). Two methods were used: (a) periodic chart review (PCR) and (b) enumeration of clinical governance markers. They were conducted on a quarterly basis, and findings were by discussed by a clinical audit committee. PCR of medical records per a template was done by doctors. Some 20 to 40 cases were reviewed each time up to 2004, on documentation and compliance with care standards relating to antiretroviral therapy, opportunistic infections prophylaxis and health maintenance. New item of PPD testing and management was added in 2001 upon evaluation. Clinical governance markers drawn from a clinical information system tracks clinic statistics, risk management indices and clinical effectiveness indicators since 2002. Different areas of HIV care are covered, including CD4/viral load testing, viral suppression, drug adherence, new AIDS events, default follow up and death.

Lessons learned

The clinical governance system materialized through joint efforts of doctors, nurses and other is characterised by (a) adoption of a systematic approach, (b) emphasis on evidence and competency-based medicine, (c) inclusion of a variety of core components, and (d) implementation at on-going regular time intervals. It has contributed to the effectiveness of HIV care at ITC.

Recommendations

Governance or other quality assurance system is desirable for improving HIV clinical service. Though the templates and markers of the system are to be standardized, they should be kept under review and changes made to meet the need arising from international and local development.

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