



HONG KONG PHYSIOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION LIMITED 香港物理治療學會有限公司

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Views on Hospital Accreditation for the Special Meeting on 4 Jul 2011

Hospital accreditation, by definition, is “A self-assessment and external peer assessment process used by health care organizations to accurately assess their level of performance in relation to the established standards and to implement ways for continuous improvement”.

(Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hospital_accreditation).

From the perspective of the public, hospitals should be places of safety, not only for patients but also for the staff and for the general public. Being as a liable organization, quality of hospitals and healthcare services are also of great interest to ensure public health. It is well known that hospital accreditation can be used for maintenance of patient safety and quality. We fully agreed that patient safety should be the number one priority for hospital service and thus hospital accreditation has to be well supported.

After engaged in the hospital accreditation exercise in local hospital, we have to agree that this exercise facilitates team work, team building, standardization and cultural change for continuous improvement. It is definitely a good chance to organize our working places or systems in a tidy way, just like tidying up your house which has not been renovated for 20 years or so.

Just because we have not cared our “house” for 20 years, we had to pay tremendous effort in raising the standard with a sharp-turn. We also have to work within a short time frame, 1/2 year to 1 year of preparation. Moreover, our colleagues are already jammed with very heavy clinical workload - one physiotherapist had to care up to 30-40 patients and usually have to complete the clinical work at round 6 pm. All the housekeeping and documentation for accreditation had to be prepared after the long day of work, up to midnight and even to the whole weekend. No precedent local case could be followed. Inadequate coaching, guidance at departmental level; lack of technical and clerical support were reasons to create physical and psychological stress to clinical, clerical and supporting staff. The accreditation team might not be very familiar with the level of standard required, and thus the actions or all the preparatory work was shifted like a pendulum, making colleagues difficult to cope with.



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Having discussed with some Australian physiotherapists on the accreditation process that they have gone through for years, they shared the same stressful feeling with us. However, they assure us that we will get better as we will sooner or later catch up with the required standard and good practice.

Although we are not able to note for immediate or significant improvement in quality at this present moment, at least, hospital accreditation increases the awareness of the organizations and colleagues on its significance and the directions of quality improvement. Seeds have already been put in and just take time to develop the culture for patient safety, standardization and quality improvement.

Our quality journey will definitely be happier, less stressful and more effective if the following measures will be implemented in the coming accreditation exercises:

- ✧ Well explain the rationale of hospital accreditation to align the public and staff expectations to reduce the stress of working colleagues.
- ✧ Implement the accreditation in a stepwise approach with more emphasis on the high risk areas or improvement at the initial stage and gradually roll-out to other minor areas.
- ✧ Well design and coach the timeline for preparation of accreditation to reduce the “rush-in” approach in the final 1-2 months.
- ✧ Set up full-time working team involving various disciplines in local hospitals, such as doctors, nurses, allied health, finance and administrative personnel, to facilitate hand-on assistance to local departments.
- ✧ Establish a central database for sharing of information to avoid or reduce duplication of work.
- ✧ Increase the clerical support to departmental level for preparation of documents or notice.
- ✧ Increase the supporting staff for cleansing & housekeeping to reduce the workload of existing supporting staff or even clinical staff.
- ✧ Increase the technical support and administrative support.



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We think it is unavoidable to align with the international trend for quality assurance; improving safety; building reputations and meeting with public expectations in this modern world. Hospital accreditation is one of the means to achieve the above mentioned and thus it is justifiable to be continued with fine tuning in the pacing, structure and membership of the accreditation team (both at HAHO and local hospital level), manpower and financial support.

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