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Cancer care in Malaysia: towards quality performance

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by Bernama (/source/bernama)

KUCHING: A Healthcare Performance and Management Report System (HPMRS) study is underway to provide the Malaysian government with recommendation for the increased use of performance measurement and reporting for purposes of accountability and population health.

The research protocol of the HPRMS has been reviewed and approved by the Ministry of Health's Research & Ethics Committee, paving the way for clinical groups and healthcare providers to participate in the first ever program of its kind that aims to promote improvement in the delivery of care to patients.

Oncology is a key focus area, and the HPMRS for Breast Cancer hopes to provide a standard measurement for cancer department of hospitals in Malaysia (government and private).

"A set of key questions that we hope to answer are as follows, Firstly, in terms of disease staging - do Malaysian breast cancer patients present early or late, and what types of breast cancer do they present with?"

Secondly, it looks at timely access to treatment - post diagnosis, how long do patients have to wait for the appropriate treatment? Finally, the HPMRS study looks at 1 and 5 year survival rates - which simply translate to how long do Malaysian breast cancer patients live once they have been diagnosed?" explained Dr. Lim Teck Onn, the former director of the Clinical Research Centre (CRC) at Hospital Kuala Lumpur (HKL), who is one of the Principal Investigators of the HPMRS project.

It is hoped that the results of the HPRMS study will help identify opportunities where healthcare professionals can pursue quality improvement in cancer care and also provide valuable information that allows policy makers to evaluate with the aim of mobilizing policy change for better quality care.

"Although significant gains have been made in both the prevention and treatment of cancer, many Malaysians do not receive the evidence-based intervention, such as screenings and adjuvant therapies, that are known to be effective in the early diagnosis and subsequent management of their disease," said Dr Arni Talib, Pathologist at HKL.

"Clearly, with a maturing healthcare sector, the time has come for Malaysian healthcare companies to seriously consider introducing performance measures. The Board of Management of these companies must learn to demand more than just financial reports from their managers, not to mention the potential value of superior performance measure for marketing purpose and to differentiate one's self from the competition," elaborated Dr. Lim.

This study involves the active participation of representatives from across the spectrum of healthcare stakeholders, and is guided by a Committee comprised of experts from the cancer community, as well as others with expertise in performance measurement. Its Principal Investigators are Dr Gerard Lim (Head of Oncology Department, HKL), Dr Lim Teck Onn (former director of CRC), Dato' Dr Mohamed Ibrahim A. Wahid (President of Malaysian Oncological Society), Professor Yip Cheng Har (Breast Surgeon, University Malaya Medical Centre) and Dr Arni Talib (Pathologist, HKL).

The 3 year study is expected to conclude in 2013 and is supported by Roche (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd. An update of the study results will be presented every 6 months.

About HPMRS Founded in 2010 by Yun Consulting, ClinData & Stats Consult, HPMRS is designed to help healthcare industry implement routine healthcare performance measurement and reporting. It provides a complete one-stop solution including measurement protocol, on-line data submission, independent third party data audit, statistical reports & publishing. Healthcare providers measure performance for variety of reasons such as to comply with regulation or JCI accreditation, to meet the demands of healthcare payers or the requirement, of Health Tourism Council; but ultimately through rigorous and transparent performance measurement and reporting, HPMRS is meant to promote healthcare accountability and to improve the delivery of care for our population health. Managed by a total of 5 professionals comprising health researcher, data managers and statisticians, HPRMS is committed to their core business of health research and delivering excellent client service. For more information, please visit www.hprms.com.my

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