

ABSTRACT

Based on the quality and coverage, all member states of WHO South East Asian Region have given the priority for health care services. Good quality health care services are also an integral part of WHO's goal of health for all, with primary health care as the key approach. This situation in changing the effectiveness and efficiency is now of equal concern to policy makers, health care providers and communities as well.

Nursing Officers are directly involved in patient care services in several ways. Therefore their knowledge, attitudes and level of practices on quality concepts are very much important for overall improvement of health care services in Sri Lanka.

A descriptive cross-sectional study based on (a) Self administered questionnaire and (b) observation check list were used to determine and describe the current knowledge, attitudes, and practices on Quality Concepts among Nursing Officers working at Base hospitals in the Kalutara District. Further the study describes the factors affecting the knowledge, attitudes and practices on quality concepts among Nursing Officers working at Base Hospitals in the Kalutara District.

A sample of 422 was randomly selected from two Base Hospitals in Kalutara District for this study. The data were analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) v 13.0 (SPSS inc, Chicago, III) for univariate analysis. Statistical associations between categories were evaluated with the Chi-square test with Yate's correction or fisher exact test.

The basic data revealed that the nursing officers were mostly females and have wide age distribution. The majority of nursing officers had participated in one or more training programmes in addition to their basic training at Nursing Training Schools, while substantial percentage of them have not participated single such a programme.

In general the understanding on Quality Concepts among Nursing Officers was good. According to the results of the study, there was a statistically significant association between knowledge and training programmes held at their place of work.

The majority of nursing officers possess more favorable attitudes on quality concepts.

The perceived obstacles to practice quality programmes were also assessed in various aspects. According to the nursing officers' perception most important obstacles to practice quality programmes at hospitals level were poor intersectional coordination and lack of proper understanding towards the improvement of quality of services, Unavailability of accepted strategic plan for quality improvement and lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation system in the Department of Health has also been identified as obstacles to implement quality programmes at hospital level..

Finally, it is necessary to improve continuous education programmes in relation to quality concepts for Nursing Officers to update their knowledge, attitudes and practices in this field. In addition, implementation of proper strategic plan for quality improvement and establishment of well planned monitoring and evaluation system within the institutions and at departmental level is very much important to overall improvement of the quality of services at hospital level.