ABSTRACT

Inter Hospital Patients Transportation (IHT) is an important event in patient care. It helps to provide specialized care for patients in need by reducing some service barriers. Therefore it improves quality of care and equity.

The IHT has its own risks. Making correct decision at correct time, availability of standard facility, preparation of the patient, availability of skill full staff to accompany the patients and monitoring during the transportation are some factors needed to reduce these risks. Aim of this study was to improve the IHT of District General Hospital Nuwara-eliya attempting to address the above by applying total quality management techniques and to assess the effectiveness of the new system.

This study is an interventional project done by applying both qualitative and quantitative methods.The study has three components.

The 1st component was assessing the available system and designing a new system. It was developed by series of focus group discussions and Key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders.

The new structured quality improvement plan is based on the guideline prepared by college of Anesthesia and critical care school in Sri Lanka and it consist of formation of transport management committee to monitor the system, identification of training needs, development of

the pre-departure readiness assessment, monitor minimum standard drugs and equipment and best practices.

Component two was implementation of the project using structured quality improvement plan.

The component three was to evaluate the effectiveness of new system. It was done by both qualitative and quantities methods. Focus group discussions and interviews with stakeholders were used to assess the level of perceived satisfaction of service providers with regardto improvement of effectiveness of the patient transport system. In the 2nd evaluation method, pre-departure administration time before and after the intervention was compared.

Perceived satisfaction of study participants (service providers)were improved in all assessed thematic areas. Pre-departure administration time after the intervention has improved significantly ($p<0.05$).

The results proved the feasibility of implementation of the structured quality improvement programme for improvement of patient transport system in DGH Nuwaraeliya. Further, results also showed that the new intervention leads to increased level of effectiveness of patient transport system.