



CONGRESO

A Different Look at Patient Safety - Japan's Experience at National and Institutional Levels



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I. Hospital accreditation to improve quality and safety

Small group of experts began to discuss quality improvement in early 1980's that evolved into the Japan Council for Quality Health Care (JQ) launched in 1995 that carries out hospital accreditation. The hospital accreditation has shifted its primary focus from "Structure" to "Process and Outcome" over the last two decades.

II. International Accreditation Program served by ISQua

ISQua is an international organization that provides external evaluation to the accreditation bodies like JQ. The JQ is one of the ISQua's organizational members which is accredited by ISQua. I work as a board member of ISQua together with Dr. Ezequiel Garcia Elorrio from Argentina and Dr. Fabio Leite Gastal from Brazil. As seen here, Latin American countries are well represented in the ISQua Board.



III. National level projects of reporting and learning system (RLS)

i. National Reporting and Learning System (RLS) of Adverse Event targeting Hospitals and Clinics

National RLS was launched in 2004 according to Japan's national patient safety policy. The JQ was assigned to be an operating organization in reference to past achievements on quality and safety. The JQ has seen steady rise in the number of adverse event reporting ever since in close cooperation with National University Hospital Group which takes the lead in quality and safety in Japan. The RLS produces range of products for prevention including monthly alert featured by colorful pictorial figures. We believe that the pictorial figures, cartoons, illustrations etc. that people like to see in Japanese cartoon books and animations is an more effective tool to convey crucial message to the fronts rather than a long written report.

ii. National Reporting and Learning System of Adverse Event targeting Community Pharmacy As RLS proved to be effective in Japan, equivalent system targeting community pharmacy has been in place since 2008.

iii. No-fault Compensation System for Cerebral Palsy to influence Japan and Beyond

In response to shortage of obstetricians and rising litigation on birth injury, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) laid out a framework of no-fault compensation/investigation/prevention system for cerebral palsy in 2006. The novel system was launched in 2009 which JQ was assigned to be an operator in cooperation with stakeholders. It has successfully observed the fall in the number of eligible profound cerebral palsy, quality improvement on specific delivery procedures and decline in the number of lawsuit. I was invited to the House of Commons of the UK Parliament in early 2022 as a witness to describe the system. As you see, birth injury is one of the global topics to address.



IV. Healthcare Payment System for Promoting Patient Safety

I introduced a different perspective to promote patient safety which is a payment system. Specific fee point is listed in Japan's payment system which includes those to promote patient safety. Simply speaking, the more you promote patient safety, the more you are reimbursed.

V. Japan's International Commitment to Patient Safety

The JQ hosted 33rd ISQua Conference and co-hosted 3rd Global Ministerial Summit on Patient Safety in 2018. Japan is proactively engaged in hosting international events both in public and private sector. The JQ in private sector always support public events in close cooperation with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

VI. Patient Safety at Institutional Level in Japan - Organizational Structure and Specific Projects-

I work as a chief patient safety officer in Kyushu University Hospital which is one of the oldest and largest national university hospital with some 1,200 beds for patients who need advanced care. We have structured internal team led by the director to promote patient safety by conducting manual production for standardization, incident reporting, candid communication with patient/family, patient safety audit committee with patient representative, quality control circle competition, patient safety walk-round and quality indicator measurement and improvement.

VII. Six Takeaways

- a. Japan Council for Quality Care (JQ) is a neutral organization that has carried out hospital accreditation with continued interest in quality and safety.
- b. In response to growing concern on patient safety in the year around 2000, the government revised law and relevant regulations, launched subsidiary budget, and joined international movement for patient safety for decades.
- c. Private sectors such as medical professionals, professional societies, and academic societies also endeavored to promote patient safety.
- d. National reporting and learning systems and no-fault compensation for cerebral palsy are distinctive examples on patient safety promotion run by the JQ in close cooperation with stakeholders.
- e. At institutional level, standardization through production of manuals, QC(KAIZEN) circle, incident reporting and learning system, deployment of physician, nurse, pharmacist on full-time basis in the division of patient safety and so on are currently underway in anticipation of further expansion of its role and influence.
- f. As such, patient safety is seen as one of the core value in healthcare.