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Indicators of quality of care for patients with dementia in the acute care setting

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Aim: The aim of this project was to establish a list of potential quality indicators to measure quality of care associated with patient outcomes for people with dementia in hospital.

Methods: A comprehensive review of the literature to identify existing clinical indicators was conducted. Indicators were identified, defined and a means of measurement was noted. These were mapped across the range of negative outcomes that are specific to or significant for, patients with dementia in the acute care setting to ensure all relevant areas were identified. A panel of 10 geriatricians, general physicians, nurses and allied health experts were invited to participate in an expert panel to review (and refine) the indicators. A draft set of indicators was established which included the 'expert panel' derived definition, form of measurement, and source of data. Capacity to collect the data was tested by following the hospital episode of 650 patients aged 70 and over in nine Australian hospitals.

Results: Potential indicators were confined to items that specifically focused on issues relevant to patients who had dementia. Nine process indicators and two outcome indicators were identified. A separate set of potential indicators was established which related to issues of cognition for the frail aged population generally.

Conclusion: Eleven indicators, both process and outcome oriented, were identified and defined as potentially suitable measures of quality of care for patients with dementia in the acute care setting. These included aspects of cognitive evaluation, capacity, and management of behaviour and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD).

Biography

Melinda Martin Khan is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Research in Geriatric Medicine at The University of Queensland School of Medicine, Australia.

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