

Royal College of Physicians Clinical Effectiveness Forum Report

Following on from previous year's meeting, it was noted that Clinical effectiveness Forum had been focussing on guidelines, setting standards and measuring them. However, how clinical practice makes the change identified in audit had not been addressed by the forum.

There was a discussion that several audits were due for renewal. However, DOH Commissioning Board changes were making identifying appropriate funding streams difficult. Progress was slowly being made, but was politically problematic at present. Generally, across all audits, suggested changes in the reporting of data collected, whether that information is relevant or not, are the subject of debate. It will make comparing new with old data difficult, will be more labour intensive, expensive, increasingly difficult to do and will lead to poorer outcomes at this time. The necessary electronic technology required to make the new reporting methods of any value, such as electronic patient records, is not yet in place and until they are the current method of retrospective data collection is more effective and useful.

A report was presented on recent visit to Oman by representatives from the Royal College of Physicians where they had been working on an education programme for appraisal and assessment for 3-4 years. This visit was to discuss guideline development and working with Royal College of Physicians on quality development.

A three year work plan has been discussed on guideline development, quality improvement and audit. Initially, this model will be used for stroke services but if it works it will be used to improve services in other conditions.

The update paper for concise guidelines was noted and all were asked to give thought to possible new guideline topics.

The feasibility of the RCP producing a hospital health care check was explored. The RCP holds much data on the performance of hospitals throughout its units, gathered through audit, training, etc. Pulling this information together it could be possible to provide a health check for hospitals, and could be used to lead improvement in service provision.

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