Barriers to quality care in medical imaging at a teaching hospital in Ghana: staff perspective

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Abstract

Evidence from clients' perspective shows low level of care of medical imaging services in Ghana. However, there was paucity of data regarding barriers to delivering high quality care. This study was carried out to determine barriers to quality care in medical imaging from medical imaging professionals' perspective at a teaching hospital in Ghana in order to inform policy.

Methods: This research was a descriptive cross-sectional study using a mixed-method approach based on the dimensions of quality of care of medical imaging services from medical imaging professionals' perspective: capacity and sustainability, timeliness, safety, equity, patient-centeredness, effective communication, procedural protocol and appropriateness of examination. A structured questionnaire and an In-Depth Interview (IDI) guide were used. A total of 36 staff and 12 management team members and key staff with vast experience participated in the quantitative and qualitative study respectively. Quantitative data were analyzed using Stata Version 13. Descriptive analyses were carried out. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis.

Results: The findings showed that imaging machines are frequently non-functional, servicing of equipment does not take place as scheduled and repairs of broken down machines take weeks to months. Additionally, there is inadequate human resource and supervision, lack of quality improvement programs and educational advancement opportunities for staff. Staff also reported that hospital gowns for patients were inadequate and organizational culture was poor. Additionally, the study showed that there is lack of safety checks and appropriate information for staff and clients from management. Further, there is lack of means of communicating urgent imaging findings to referring clinicians and lack of commitment from management regarding the quality of care. Moreover, there are frequent inappropriate requests and lack of timeliness to care from all cadre of imaging professionals especially the consultant radiologists.

Conclusion: This study concludes that the imaging staff are faced with many challenges in their quest to render quality care. The study elucidates the barriers to quality care in medical imaging thereby providing helpful information to improve the medical imaging care delivery system.