Title: How to improve teamwork in emergency trauma departments?

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Abstract: Background: Trauma patient management requires contribution of several specialties and professions. The quality of teamwork is an important indicator of quality of care. A needs assessment inquiry determines the unique requirements of such institutions and will be the basis of teamwork improvement efforts. This study aimed to assess the needs of emergency departments of a level 1 trauma center to improve interprofessional teamwork.

Methods: In this qualitative study, needs assessment was done using direct observation of wards activities, participation in meetings of the hospital committees (during 18 months), and 2 focus group interviews with nurses and supervisors, and deep individual interviews with 5 physicians, 4 nurses and 2 supervisors. Thoroughly documentation of observations and verbatim transcription of interviews was done. Data analysis was conducted using qualitative content analysis. The improvement strategies were developed based on needs assessment data, review of scientific materials, participants' suggestions and researchers' experiences.

Results: Data revealed the need to improve coordination between different specialties, clarify the interprofessional challenges resolution method, define objectives, roles and directions operationally, anticipation of common critical situations and planning to overcome them, improve team members' teamwork competencies and mutual rapport, excluding some excess workload, etc. Interventions including revision of the wards practice guideline manual, simulation based teamwork training in which newly defined roles and guidelines are exercised, conducting debriefing sessions, revision in documentation process, etc. with active participation of all stakeholders were recommended accordingly.

Discussion: An important finding was the need to operational definition of team objectives, roles, processes, etc. which are recommended as practice guideline revision in this article. In addition teamwork training in the same department setting using its own resources, tailoring workload, etc. is also recommended. The findings revealed applicable solutions to teamwork improvement in these wards.

Interprofessional teamwork, trauma emergency departments, needs assessment

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