

ABSTRACT

The Quality medical record keeping facilitates the management of patient information for better quality care. The preprinted structured format of record keeping could improve the documentation quality which has been proved by overseas studies. The aim of this study was to evaluate the impacts of structured paediatric records on the documentation quality as well as the performance satisfaction of the staff in a Sri Lankan district general hospital.

A prospective comparative study was carried out in two paediatric units of Ampara District General Hospital. One hundred preprinted structured records (one record has a set of six forms: admission record, daily status sheet, drug chart, observation form, investigation form and discharge summary) introduced to patients admitted to one unit (intervention group) were compared with the traditional free text records of 100 patients of the other unit (control group) over a period of two months. The major outcome measures were the completeness and legibility of documentation which were scored on a ranking scale. Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare both groups. A staff performance satisfaction survey using a self administered questionnaire was carried out at the end of the study among the nurses and doctors those who involved in documenting on the newly introduced structured records.

The implementation of the structured records had positively influenced the documentation quality as well as the staff performance in many aspects. In terms of completeness the daily status sheet, investigation chart and discharge summary improved significantly ($p < 0.0000$) and with regard to legibility observation chart, drug chart, investigation chart and the discharge summary showed significant improvement ($p < 0.0000$) in the intervention group. The satisfaction was high among staff on newly introduced format of documentation during their routine ward work. Replacing the traditional paediatric records with preprinted structured records would improve the documentation quality and staff performance satisfaction in future.