Developing a Standard Operating Protocol for improving the quality and efficiency of eye care delivery for the rural poor by Sankara Eye Care Institutions, India

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Background:
Sankara Eye Care Institutions, India is a registered, not for Profit, Public Charitable Trust with a focus on providing "High Quality, cost effective, readily available eye care" at the door steps of rural India" at no cost through its 13 hospitals (units) spread across various states of India (Refer Fig 1). With the rapid expansion of Sankara in India and the associated socio cultural and regional variation, there was an acute need to standardize systems and processes in the form of a Standard Operating Protocol (SOP).

Figure 1. Sankara Eye Care Institutions, India Network

Program Objectives:
1. To standardize clinical and administrative processes (across 13 hospitals, 9 states covering a length of 2865 km and breadth of 1000 km of the country) for the following:
   a. Community Outreach services (Refer Figure 2)
   b. Base hospital services (Refer Figure 3)

2. To suggest Plan of Action for implementation at all units of Sankara along with audit and quality control mechanisms

Methods:
The entire project was done in a participative manner with active support of group leadership. The methodology followed is as shown in Figure 4

Figure 2. Gift of Vision
Community Outreach services

Figure 3. Base Hospital Services

Figure 4. Methodology for Development and Implementation of SOP

SOP Development Activity
Brainstorming Session: To frame SOP

- Drafting Manual Work
- Access to rich community level data
- Greater patient awareness due to standardized communication materials
- Keeping in all patient care work
- Clarity and logical surrounding

SOP Development Activity

- Principles
- Quality and best practices
- Goal and strategy
- Budget

Figure 5. Short term benefits of SOP

Long term results:
There is a plan to initiate an audit and quality control program for SOP in future. (Refer Figure 6)

Conclusion:
Quality of services generally offered in a charitable / non-paying setting is an area which receives the least attention in the general scheme of things and most of the non-paying activity is done in an ad hoc manner without any proper organization and order.

Recognising these overloading needs Sankara Eye Care Institutions, India embarked on the ambitious journey of standardising its systems and processes for non-paying patients with a focus on improving the overall quality of services.

Through the SOP, Sankara looks forward to providing world-class eye-care at no cost to the rural poor and at the same time make the processes and system so efficient that it can widen its coverage in rural India so that nobody goes blind due to preventable and curable blindness.

References:


For further information
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