

085: THE FIRST ANNUAL REGIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD IN HEALTH CARE FOR THE REGION OF LATIUM, ITALY

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Objective:

This annual regional health care Award, managed by the Public Health Agency of the Latium Region (PHALR – Italy) and addressed to the 115 public and accredited private hospitals of the Region, isn't intended to be just a public sign of honour, but a real device to carry out health care policies and foster a positive approach towards change through strategies of empowerment and learning organisation.

Methods:

Following the Regional Plan of Health Care 2002-2004, the Award was instituted in May 2002 by the PHALR. To improve the quality of health care service culture, involvement of professionals in integrated and patient-oriented initiatives is essential. The PHALR conducted research, mostly web-based, and an analysis of the existing literature in the field and of the widest-spread models used for evaluating awards, whether institutional or non, and whether in health care or other service areas.

The PHALR chose as its theoretical model for the Award J. Øvretveit's "Integrated Development of Quality"(SIQ): a result-oriented model based on the patient's central position in health care. Every health care organisation was invited to present a two-level document. The first, a short description of the organisation (problems, objectives, CQI projects in progress and projects completed between January 2001/June 2002); the second, a description of one of these completed projects, and a detailed explanation of how excellence was achieved.

There are three steps in the evaluation process:

- screening and selection by the PHALR
- cross-assessment between organisations: each received blinded projects of the others
- peer review of the finalists

The PHALR, to motivate participants and to encourage training on a permanent basis, has offered courses and gave permission to use the Award logo for one year to the winning professionals.

To facilitate participation and understanding of the Award's philosophy, an informative meeting/press and television conference was held in Rome and a CD-Rom was distributed.

Results:

- Success of the Award, considering the widespread participation in the event. The PHALR received applications from 53 of the 115 health organisations; project documents from 33 of them. The initiatives reported in the period considered were 337 (35% concluded, 65 % still in progress).
- From the results of the evaluation process, three ex aequo winners were jointly determined:
 - *Radiotherapy Service of Catholic University Sacro Cuore, Policlinico Gemelli* (voluntary accreditation obtained by the American College of Radiation Oncology)
 - *Centre of breast-cancer screening of Hospital San Giuseppe Albano, Health Service Organization Roma H* (ISO 9001 Certification of a breast-cancer screening programme directed to 57,000 women in a rural area)
 - *Operative Units of Sandro Pertini Hospital of Health Service Organization Roma B* (Risk Management project)

Two organisations received "honourable mentions" from the Commission for results achieved through CQI projects:

- *Day Surgery Unit of University Torvergata*
- *Department of Mental Disease of Health Service Organization Roma D*

- The Commission evaluated and carried out the peer review. It consisted of CQI experts, epidemiologist, a member of the National Agency of Regional Health Services and six members of the press.

On December 16th 2002, the PHALR hosted a ceremony to award the winner and to announce 2003 Edition.

Conclusions:

The Award, the first of its kind in Italy and based on the international experiences, could be used as a model for other public health services. It has given a real contribution to the advance of the Quality and Accreditation strategy of the Regional Health Plan, combining explicit criteria, culture of self and cross-evaluation, peer review.