

Olgu Sunumu / Case Report



Kazakistan'daki tıbbi kuruluşlar için akreditasyon standartlarının geliştirilmesi süreci

The process of development of accreditation standards for medical organizations in Kazakhstan

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ÖZET

Sağlık hizmetlerinde kalite, önemli alanlardan biri olarak bilinir. Sağlık akreditasyon standartları, klinik pratiği ve organizasyonel performansı geliştirmeye adanmıştır. Bu nedenle, standart geliştirme, gözden geçirme ve onay süreçleri sağlık hizmeti akreditasyonunda çok önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Sağlanan tıbbi hizmetlerin kalitesini izlemek için farklı akreditasyon sistemleri mevcuttur. Kazakistan'ın kendi ulusal akreditasyon sistemi vardır. Kazakistan Cumhuriyeti Sağlık Bakanlığı (SB), ulusal akreditasyon için tek yetkili kurumdur ve aynı zamanda Sağlık Merkezi'nin geliştirilmesi için Cumhuriyetçi Sağlık Merkezi'ni (RCHD) sorumlu bir kuruluş olarak atamaktadır. RCHD'nin Akreditasyon Merkezi, akreditasyon için gerekli standartları geliştiren ve gözden geçiren kilit organlardan biridir. Bu yazıda, Kazakistan'da sağlık kuruluşları için akreditasyon standartlarının geliştirilmesi, gözden geçirilmesi ve onaylanması ile ilgili politikanın açıklanması anlatılacaktır. Ayrıca, sürecin sınırlamaları tartışılacak ve öneriler sunulacaktır.

ABSTRACT

Quality in healthcare is known to be one of the significant areas. Healthcare accreditation standards are dedicated to improve clinical practice and organizational performance. Therefore, standard development, review and approval processes play crucial role in healthcare accreditation. Different accreditation systems exist to monitor the quality of medical services provided. Kazakhstan has its own National accreditation system. The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MoH) is the only authorized body for national accreditation, as well as it assigns the Republican center for Healthcare Development (RCHD) as responsible organization for healthcare development. Accreditation Center of RCHD is one of the key organs that develops and reviews standards needed for accreditation, while MoH has key role in standard approval process. This paper is going to describe the implication of the Policy on development, review and approval of accreditation standards for healthcare organizations in Kazakhstan. Moreover, the limitations of the process will be discussed and recommendations will be presented.

INTRODUCTION

During the several decades, there has been developed a huge interest in the quality assurance, since it is known to have positive effect on health. Nowadays, as many health care systems are concerned on the quality of provided medical care, many health care developing programs have been investigated. In order to assure the provision of the effective medical care, besides the clinical care the administrative system should be also assessed. Special standards and policies that comply with and give legal status to these standards are developed. This is the base for implementing accreditation for medical organizations. The accreditation of the medical organizations is

the tool to evaluate the degree of compliance of the health care in the medical organization with these standards. Accreditation is a public recognition by a healthcare accreditation body of the achievement of accreditation standards by a healthcare organization, demonstrated through an independent external peer assessment of that organization's level of performance in relation to the standards.¹ Initially, accreditation was developed only for hospitals, however, then primary care, laboratories and other sectors were included into the assessment.² Finally, accrediting body provides a feedback with recommendations to the organization highlighting areas for improvement. This is one of the benefits of the accreditation, as it helps to shape the healthcare itself.

Additionally, there are different accreditation programs available nowadays except national programs, for example, Accreditation Canada, Joint Commission International Accreditation (JCI), which promote high quality health care worldwide.

Accreditation in Kazakhstan is also playing one of the crucial roles in healthcare development. Firstly, in order to enhance accreditation of medical organizations, accreditation process should be assigned to the organization, that is authorized to conduct accreditation. The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MoH) is the only authorized body for the accreditation of medical organizations and for issuing an accreditation certificate.³ In 2009 in collaboration with the MoH, the Institution for Healthcare development (now it is the Republican center for Healthcare Development (RCHD)) was identified as organization responsible for accreditation and Accreditation Center of RCHD was assigned to be responsible for accreditation process, which ensures awareness of medical organizations on accreditation.⁴ The second step is the development of the standards against which the medical organizations will be assessed. Standards state the conditions which are aimed to improve the quality of the provided healthcare. The first standards of national accreditation program were developed in 2009 and it covered inpatient hospitals, dentistry (outpatient care), tertiary and diagnostic care.⁵ In further years, national program of accreditation was reviewed, improved and expanded. As soon as standards were developed, Institution for Healthcare development started the implementation of the process via promoting accreditation among medical organizations, hiring and training surveyors, developing the rating scales.⁶ After that organization schedules the surveys and undergoes accreditation process completing it with reporting results and giving recommendations to the medical organization.⁴

Presently, there are different accreditation standards available in Kazakhstan, such as for inpatient hospitals, emergency services, ambulatory care, palliative care, rehabilitation services and specialized services, such as cardiology, insult, oncology, trauma and obstetric care.⁴ These standards are applicable in public healthcare organization as well as in private healthcare sectors.

The aim of this paper is to discuss the implication of the Policy on development, review and approval of accreditation standards for healthcare organizations in Kazakhstan, through describing current situation in Kazakhstan and international experience of other countries on accreditation of medical organizations. Moreover, it will highlight the cons and pros of this policy and suggest future directions for improvement of the policy.

DEVELOPMENT OF ACCREDITATION STANDARDS IN KAZAKHSTAN

In order to develop effective standards for accreditation of medical organizations, the Ministry of Health of Republic of Kazakhstan, which is accrediting body in Kazakhstan, has established the policy on development, review and approval of accreditation standards for healthcare organizations as well as the standards review schedule are developed by RCHD.⁶ Accreditation is necessary for self-evaluation and external comprehensive evaluation (surveying) health care entities.

Development as well as revision of the accreditation standards is done by Accreditation Center RCHD according to the order of the Ministry of Health together with stakeholders such as health and non-governmental organizations in accordance with the plan for development and update of standards, approved by the MoH. Prior to starting the work, accrediting body defines the timelines, namely the beginning and end of each subsequent Step in standards review process.⁷

Before review and approval of the standards procedures occur, two-month analysis in the field of accreditation standards is done in order to identify trends, understand international experience and methods of accreditation standards and identifies what would suit Kazakhstani medical organizations best. This may help to shape the view about accreditation and form the model for national accreditation. Accreditation Center of RCHD does this Step and performs preliminary analysis of gathered information. In addition, they are also responsible for collecting preliminary feedback from health care organizations, accreditation experts (surveyors) and public authorities.⁷

After all necessary material is collected and analyzed; task force is formed by Accreditation Center of RCHD, which will be the main authors of accreditation standards. Task force includes international, national experts in the field of accreditation (surveyors, representatives of the accrediting body, experts of Accreditation Center of RCHD and representatives of medical organizations). Moreover, Accreditation Center of RCHD defines responsibilities of the task force and sets deadlines and further discusses them with the task force.⁷

As soon as the responsibilities are defined, task force conducts an external scan of information, literature review, analyzes issues of accreditation standards and sets design and content for standards. Upon the analysis of information, task force identifies the content of standards based on the situation in Kazakhstan and international experience. This process takes around

60 days, after which the first draft of accreditation standards is proposed for review. On the basis of review and approval of draft accreditation standards, Accreditation Center RCHD decides whether include or not include given suggestions and prepares reports with comments.⁷

However, the second draft of accreditation standards is performed within 30 days after the first draft was analyzed. In order to do this, Task force agrees on the draft accreditation standards and sends them electronically to interested parties in the Republic of Kazakhstan such as, state bodies, NGOs, healthcare organizations, accreditation experts/surveyors. Also Task Force uploads draft of accreditation standards onto websites of accrediting body and RCHD, so that interested parties can access the draft and give their recommendations. The review should be completed within 30 days of posting on the Internet or e-mailing.⁷

Upon the completion of the review, the Task Force collects all the feedback, suggestion and comments made by different stakeholders. Afterwards all collected information and suggestions are analyzed and Task force decides whether to accept, reject or accept with modifications recommendations suggested by different stakeholders. As soon as final draft of accreditation standards is formed, it is sent to the Expert Council of RCHD for approval. It revises the accreditation standards with the appropriate structures in the organization and helps to shape developed standards.⁷

The next step is the pilot testing of draft standards which is done at selected healthcare organizations. In order to perform a pilot testing, health care organizations are selected based on the level of achievements in past accreditation and the types of provided medical care. The results of pilot testing are also analyzed and the decision about acceptance or rejection of the suggestions is done.⁷

It is significant that the standards comply with the requirements of normative legal documents of the Republic of Kazakhstan required for the application, as well as standards do not contradict standards and documents to which they are referenced. Therefore, accreditation standards are developed and reviewed in accordance with the forms of health care provision and health of people.⁷

As soon as final draft is formed, the next step is an approval. In order to approve developed standards different committees are formed. First of all, Draft accreditation standards are reviewed and approved at the meeting of the Expert Group on accreditation under the Joint Quality Commission at MoH, which consists of healthcare professionals that have enough

knowledge, experience and competency to develop accreditation standards. Expert Group on accreditation takes 30 days to review the standards and then the standards go to Joint Quality Commission at MoH. After 30 days, the next step of the approval is by the Authorized body, which is the Ministry of Health. This step takes for about 6 months to be proceeded.⁷

Accreditation standards should be consistent with policies of Kazakhstan, thus it needs to be approved by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Ministry of Justice checks whether developed and reviewed standards comply with normative legal acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan. This process is final and takes at least 30 days.⁷

Implementation starts right after the approvals from MoH and Ministry of Justice are taken. First of all, the order of the authorized body on approval of standards should be announced. Thus the order with developed or revised standards is posted on the website of the RCHD. Secondly, regional and local health authorities, surveyors, trainers are informed on revised and approved by MoH accreditation standards. Moreover, Accreditation center RCHD and certified trainers conduct trainings on new or revised accreditation standards to medical organizations and other stakeholders. Together with this, training materials and guide are developed and placed on the website of RCHD, so that everybody can be familiar with them. The process of informing about new or revised standards takes not less than 6 months. It is considered as a sufficient time for implementing newly approved accreditation standards. The pathway of accreditation standards development, revision and approval is listed in Table 1.

COMPLETION OF DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Accreditation standards development has positive impact on healthcare as it helps to organizations to be up to date with current innovations in the field of health care. Moreover, with the help of feedback gathered from different health providers and stakeholders, issues faced while providing medical care are assessed and addressed in the form of accreditation standards as well as challenges occurring worldwide in the field of medicine are taken into account (i.e. high prevalence of infectious diseases). Therefore, development and revision of national accreditation standards are essential contributors to health care services of high quality.

Due to the fact that the process of approval of new or revised accreditation standards takes about 1 year, there might be some issues arising from this. One of

Table 1. Process of development, review and approval of accreditation standards

#	Process	Performer	Duration
Development and revision of accreditation standards			
	Analysis in the field of accreditation standards	Accreditation Center RCDH	2 months
	External scan of information, literature review and proposal of the first draft	Task force	2 months
	Proposal of the second draft	Task force	1 month
	Formation of final draft of accreditation standards	Task force	1 month
	Approval by the Expert Council of RCHD	Expert Council of RCHD	2 months
	Pilot testing of draft standards	Task force, Accreditation Center RCHD	2 months
Approval of accreditation standards			
	Approval of final draft by committees under MoH	Expert Group on accreditation under the Joint Quality Commission at MoH, the Joint Quality Commission at MoH	2 months
	Approval by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan	2 months
	Approval by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan	1 month
Implementation of approved accreditation standards			
	Announcement about approved accreditation standards	Accreditation Center RCHD	2 months
	Trainings on new or revised accreditation standards to medical organizations and other stakeholders	Accreditation center RCHD and certified trainers	2 months

the crucial issues is that Ministry of Health, its Joint Quality Commission and Ministry of Justice are not regulated by RCHD, thus there might be delay during all procedure in getting approval from these entities. The similar situations are common in CIS countries, since the right of approval of the regulatory documents are not on the independent body, thus is dependent from the governmental organization. Moreover, standards development process consists of many stages which is also the limitation of the study. Moreover, it should be noted that dedicated time for completion of development and revision of standards is not evenly and fairly distributed. For instance, process of development, namely completion of the first and second drafts, takes 3 months, while the process of approval takes 12 months in total.

RECOMMENDATION

In order to improve the process of development and revision of accreditation standards, several measures can be done. First of all fulfillment of the schedule should be controlled strictly within all process of development, revision and approval of accreditation standards. In addition, the period of approval by MoH can be reduced as it takes 6 months. This can also ensure fair time distribution among development and review of the standards and approval of standards.

Thus, standards will be more specific, evidence-based and clearly-written. Another alternative is to limit the approval process to the Joint Quality Commission at MoH only, as the Joint Quality Commission is comprised of highly competent experts, who can guarantee the quality of approved standards.

Moreover, separation of Accreditation center from RCHD and MoH as an independent accreditation body can be good option to improve accreditation development process. As the best world practices such as Accreditation Canada, JCI, have revealed, this will give an opportunity to Accreditation center to approve newly developed or revised accreditation standards without participation of RCHD and MoH. In order to fulfill this recommendation, Accreditation center is working on transition to self regulatory organization (SRO) that will provide more benefits and flexibility to accreditation process. The main opportunity that can be common to the countries with the similar regulatory processes is that transition to independent environment as a SRO will give authority to approve accreditation standards and accredit medical organizations.

CONCLUSION

Quality in healthcare is a crucial component of healthcare provision. The process of standard development is essential to improve accreditation, thus

advance quality in healthcare. Moreover, accreditation standards need to be based on best experience and adopted to the medical organizations of Kazakhstan. In fact, the process of development and revision of standards in Kazakhstan is well-structured. It takes into account existing literature, current situations and international experience as well as the feedback of medical organizations and all other interested parties. The policy of development, review and implication of accreditation standards was discussed and the study has revealed that despite of the actual standard development such as wording, structure and content, factors that influence and hold the implementation of accreditation standards are needed to be investigated and analyzed. It is crucial to follow the scheduled times, nevertheless it is the main limitation of the process.

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