



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The quality of teaching and training in hospital dental departments in Taiwan: Results from the 2008 national survey



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Abstract *Background/purpose:* The purpose of this study was to understand the overall conditions of dental teaching and training by dental departments in Taiwan's hospitals.

Materials and methods: In 2007–2008, a questionnaire survey (evaluation form) about dental teaching and training criteria was mailed to 165 hospital dental departments in Taiwan. After the questionnaires were mailed back, a field survey of dental departments of these hospitals was carried out. Each hospital was visited to check the answers to the questionnaire. The survey return rate was 62%. This research examined 28 criteria concerned with dental teaching and training, and the results were analyzed. Scores of the criteria in the questionnaire (evaluation form) were on a five-point scale, from high to low: A = totally achieved; B = above the average standard; C = the average standard; D = below the average standard; and E = not suitable. If an item was not applicable, then the respondent could choose NA. The percentages of A–E and NA were analyzed according to the location of the dental department (i.e., in a medical center, regional hospital, or district hospital), then for every respective criterion, and finally for the entire dataset.

Results: For overall dental teaching and training, 65% of medical centers received an A, 24% of regional hospitals received a C level, and 67% of district hospitals received NA. Dental departments that received above C were 98% of medical centers, 56% of regional hospitals, and 26% of district hospitals.

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Conclusion: For overall dental teaching and training, our study showed medical centers were superior to regional hospitals, which were superior to district hospitals. Medical centers (98% above average standard) provided satisfactory teaching and training in their dental departments. Copyright © 2013, Association for Dental Sciences of the Republic of China. Published by Elsevier Taiwan LLC. All rights reserved.

Introduction

In 1978, the Ministry of Education and Department of Health (DOH) began accreditation of teaching hospitals in Taiwan.^{1–3} In 1988, the DOH first began national hospital accreditation, and together with the Ministry of Education began accreditation of teaching hospitals.^{4–6} In 2005, the DOH announced “new hospital accreditation” to implement a patient-centered healthcare model, and in 2007 it was implemented.^{7,8}

The new hospital accreditation in Taiwan changed from primarily focusing on structure to mainly focusing on processes and results.⁹ The score also changed from a percentage to five levels, from high to low (A–E), with C being the qualified standard (average standard).^{10,11} If a hospital could not supply an item, it received “NA” (not applicable), and this was not included in the accreditation results.

Items of hospital accreditation include nearly all related departments in hospitals, yet dentistry was not included.¹² In 2006, the Association of Hospital Dentistry, according to the guidelines of new hospital accreditation, used the method of five grades, with the style of planning, doing, checking, and acting to assess the score of every grade.¹³ We selected 93 items related to dental departments from 508 items of the hospital accreditation criteria and 95 items of teaching hospital accreditation. In 2007–2008, a field survey of dental departments in hospitals was carried out. This research examined 28 of the 93 items concerning teaching and training, and the results were analyzed.

The purposes of this study were to prepare dental departments for hospital accreditation, to produce criteria for dental teaching and training, and understand the conditions of dental teaching and training of dental departments in hospitals nationwide.

Materials and methods

In 2007–2008, a questionnaire survey (evaluation form) was mailed to 165 hospitals with dental departments in Taiwan. After the completed questionnaires were returned, a field survey of dental departments of these hospitals was carried out. Each hospital was then visited to check the answers on the questionnaire. The overall survey response rate was 62%: 100% from medical centers, 81% from regional hospitals, and 35% from district hospitals.

Survey criteria were first selected and modified by an expert committee from 508 items of hospital accreditation and 95 items of teaching hospital accreditation that were suitable for dentistry. The sections relating to hospital dentistry were summarized and divided into three parts: administrative management, clinical dental care, and dental teaching and training.

This paper covers dental teaching and training criteria of dental departments and mainly includes the two topics of teachers and apparatus (item 3.1), and teaching and research (item 3.2). There were 28 total criteria in dental teaching and training. The other two parts (administration management and clinical dental care) have been separately examined in other papers.¹⁴ In order to choose the criteria, dental professionals were invited to hold six meetings. After the criteria were chosen, two survey consensus meetings were held in Kaohsiung and Taipei, in order to achieve quality assurance concerning the reliability of the results of field visits by different members of the research team. Also, six total communication and explanation meetings were held nationally in the northern, central, and southern parts of Taiwan. The criteria were then posted on the web page of the Association of Hospital Dentistry for 3 months to elicit final comments and modifications before the survey. The score was also changed from a percentage to five levels, from high to low of A–E, with C being the qualified standard. A indicates that an item is totally achieved; B that it is above the average standard; C that it meets the average standard; D that it is below the average standard; and E that it is not suitable. If a hospital could not supply an item, it received NA, and that item was not included in the accreditation results. As long as a hospital could meet the set criteria, then it received a qualified C.

Data analysis

A database was designed using Microsoft Excel. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 13.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA). Descriptive data were reported as frequencies and percentages. The percentages of A–E responses were analyzed according to the location of the dental department i.e., medical center, regional hospital, or district hospital, and then for every respective criterion. Finally, the percentages of A–E were analyzed for the entire dataset.

Results

Overall dental teaching and training

There were 28 criteria of dental teaching and training (Table 1), and out of the 19 medical centers in Taiwan, there was one that failed to meet one item, and two that failed to meet two of the 28 criteria selected. Thirteen items were NA. Regional hospitals were not qualified for one item, and 589 items were NA. For district hospitals, 508 items were NA. For dental teaching and training 65% of medical centers were ranked A, 24% regional hospitals were ranked C, and 17% of district hospitals were ranked C. The

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