

# OVERVIEW OF CLINICAL QUALITY SKILLS COURSE

A/Prof Goh Lee Gan

## INTRODUCTION

What is clinical quality? Quality of care must be defined in the light of the provider's technical standards and patients' expectations. No single definition of health service quality applies in all situations. Nevertheless, the most comprehensive and perhaps the simplest definition of quality is that used by advocates of total quality management: "Doing the right thing right, then doing it rightly." This will be the focus of this skills course.

This clinical quality skills course has been planned with the long view in mind, namely, the transformation of primary care to meet the patients' needs. It has been said that "until payment policies reward quality improvement, providers will not place it (meeting the patients' needs) at the core of their business strategy" (quote from Molly Joel Coye's writing in Health Affairs, Dec 2001). It is hoped that this skills course will stimulate participants in the adoption of continuous quality improvement as an ideal in health care. It is likely that the rewards will then follow.

In the shorter term, this clinical quality skills course has also been planned to meet the background reading requirements of doctors in the various postgraduate training programmes, namely, the MMed (FM), the MCFP, and the FCFP programmes.

Attendance of this course is therefore strongly encouraged for all.

## COURSE OUTLINE AND CME POINTS

Like in the other skills courses, the clinical quality skills course is made up of several components. You can choose to participate in one or more parts of it. These are described below. The CME points that will be awarded are also indicated below.

### Components and CME Points

- Distance learning course – 6 units (see attached) – each unit 1 CME point.
- 2 Seminars (2 CME points each).
- 1 Workshop (2 CME points).
- Reading papers on clinical quality – read 5 out of 10 recommended journals.

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## Distance Learning Course

- Unit 1 : Evolving Concepts of Quality: The Need for a Contextual Approach to Defining Quality  
(*Dr Lee Kheng Hock*)
- Unit 2 : Clinical Practice Audit (*Dr Julian Lim Lee Kiang*)
- Unit 3 : Significant Event Analysis  
(*Dr Gilbert Tan Choon Seng*)
- Unit 4 : Quality Improvement Tools (*A/Prof Goh Lee Gan*)
- Unit 5 : Medical Errors and Patient Safety (*Prof Ng Han Seong*)
- Unit 6 : Improving Clinical Quality in the Clinic  
(*Dr Chow Mun Hong*)

## COURSE DETAILS

### Unit 1: Evolving Concepts of Quality: The Need for a Contextual Approach to Defining Quality

- κ Definition of Quality, Clinical Quality, and Quality Assurance
- κ Dimensions of quality
- κ Structure, Process, Outcome
- κ Dimensions to measure quality in health care
- κ Correlates of quality
- κ Barriers of quality implementation in health care.

### Unit 2: Clinical Practice Audit

- κ Clinical audit as examination requirement
- κ Quality concepts
- κ Clinical practice audit cycle tasks
- κ Framework for written submission
- κ Audit versus research

### Unit 3: Significant Event Analysis

- κ Definition of a significant event
- κ Types of significant events
- κ Uses of significant event analysis
- κ Pitfalls and success factors
- κ Format of a significant event analysis
- κ Applying the principles to an event

### Unit 4: Quality Improvement Tools

- κ Quality improvement tools and concept models
- κ Information gathering tools
- κ Process analysis tools
- κ Quality improvement concept models as tools

Unit 5: Medical Errors and Patient Safety

- κ Definitions
- κ The importance of medical errors
- κ Medical errors and their causes
- κ Learning from medical errors
- κ Measures to ensure patient safety

Unit 6: Improving Clinical Quality in the Clinic

- κ Systems approach to improvement
  - κ Model of improvement
  - κ Starting off; self awareness
  - κ Identifying strategic focus; problems and solutions
  - κ Defining a clinical problem and a goal for improvement
  - κ Analyzing the problem
  - κ Developing changes that are likely to lead to improvement
  - κ Testing changes, measurement, implementing changes
  - κ Celebrating success
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