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Preparedness of non-hospital health centers to deal with life-threatening emergencies: a qualitative study of healthcare providers' and experts' perspectives

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Abstract:

Background: The life-threatening emergency (LTE) in urban and rural areas is an important challenge, which can affect pre-hospital mortality rates. Therefore, non-hospital centers must be prepared to deal with such emergency cases that may occur in the geographic area of activity of these centers. The aim of this study was to identify prevalent domains related to the preparedness of non-hospital centers to deal with the LTE using of healthcare providers' and experts' perspectives.

Methods: A qualitative exploratory study was applied using Semi-Structured Interviews (SSIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Prior to beginning on data collection, the study and its aims were explained to participants and their informed consents were obtained. Then SSIs and FGDs were conducted by two trained researchers using an interview guide, which was developed through literature review and consulting experts. In total, 12 SSIs were carried out with 4 clinical officers, 2 nurses and 6 physicians at different non-hospital centers in Tabriz. In addition, 2 FGDs were conducted with specialists in emergency medicine, primary health care, and executives of health centers, with over 5 years of work experience. Purposive sampling method was used as tool to select participants who have sufficient knowledge in our research scope. All SSIs and FGDs were transcribed and immediately recorded word by word. Framework Analysis was employed to manually analyze the interview transcripts from all the SSIs and FGDs.

Results: The interview transcripts analysis resulted in the emergence of 3 domains and 11 sub-domains, categorized according to Donabedian's triple model. 3 sub-domains were related to inputs, including fundamental infrastructures, support facilities, and human resources. 6 sub-domains were related to processes, including clinical interventions, maintenance of equipment, medicine storage capability, educating and training, infection control, and quality control. Finally, 1 sub-domain was related to outcome, which was also patient's satisfaction.

Conclusion: Existence of an efficient and effective assessment system can play a pivotal role in identifying the capabilities of non-hospital centers. Therefore, the results of this study can assist health managers to assess the preparedness of these centers.

Keywords:

Non-hospital Health centers, Preparedness, Assess, Life-threatening emergency

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