

User satisfaction survey of pathology laboratory services

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Introduction: Laboratory investigations are used for decision making in patient management by clinicians. Laboratory service user satisfaction is a quality indicator tool used to assess the quality of laboratory services as per SLS ISO 15189:2007.

Objective: To assess the user satisfaction of the pathology services provided by the pathology unit.

Methodology: A close ended validated questionnaire was administered to 220 users of pathology laboratory service including staff of various levels and patients. The questionnaire covered sample collection, report accuracy, delivery and communication support given by the laboratory with regard to biochemistry, histopathology and fine needle aspiration cytology services. The response of the users were categorized as satisfactory, unsatisfactory and no answer.

Results- Of the users of biochemistry tests, 80% (127/158) were satisfied, 14% (22/158) unsatisfied and 6% (9/158) had no answer regarding sample collection procedure. Regarding report turn around time 67.5% (115/170) were satisfied, 29% (49/170) unsatisfied and 3.5% (6/170) had no answer. On the accuracy of reports, 68% (42/62) were satisfied, 26% (16/62) unsatisfied and 6% (4/62) had no answer. Here 84% (185/220) showed satisfaction, 11% (25/220) were unsatisfied and 5% (10/220) had no answer with the communication support given by the laboratory. Of the users of histology and FNAC services, 99% (102/103) were satisfied with the procedure of sample reception / collection and 1% (2/103) unsatisfied. Turn around time of reports elicited 84.6% (99/117) satisfaction, 6.8% (8/117) dissatisfaction and 8.6% (10/117) no answer. Seventy five percent (9/12) of specialist were satisfied with the accuracy and 25% (3/12) had no answer. Regarding communication support, 88% (147/167) were satisfied, 4.8% (8/167) were unsatisfied and 7.2% (12/167) had no answer.

Discussion: The dissatisfaction related to report turn around time and accuracy of biochemistry reports raises the need to educate the users with regard to the quality control measures installed in laboratories and to seek accredited laboratory reports. There is also the need for the 'no answer' groups to be educated about the services of a pathology laboratory.