

Information Needs of Medical Officers Attached to Rural Hospitals (D H Type - C) in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Information is an important commodity for medical officers to upgrade their knowledge and in many countries efforts to improve health care in rural areas are hampered by lack of competent medical professional who are provided with access to adequate and appropriate information resources. The present study attempts to identify the information needs, perceived barriers and challenges of medical officers attached to “D H Type -C” (rural) hospitals in Sri Lanka. Objectives of the study is to explore the need of medical information and to identify the barriers if any, encountered by MOs attached to rural (D H Type- C) hospitals in Sri Lanka in obtaining medical information. This study carried out as a descriptive study and research approach is inductive. There are 252 medical officers who attached to the Divisional Type C were hospitals selected for the study. A questionnaire and interviews were used as data collection instruments. Data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel 2016 and SPSS (version 22) software packages. When analyzing the areas of information patient records and disease information ranked as very high and drugs and diagnosis information ranked as high. the information need regarding Diet and Nutrition, medical statistics, Medico legal 15% very high ,23% high and 55% indicate as to some extent. This study revealed formal and informal ways of sourcing for information by the respondents. 140 (58.3%) of the respondents relied on Textbooks, Journals, Colleagues, specialists and consultants in hospitals, 160 (56.7%) made use of conference and research papers, newsletters and technical reports were relied on by 90 (37.5%) respondents, while (17.9%) 43 respondents are not satisfied with Drug companies presentations. The barriers that were identified and analyzed into four main themes: personal barriers 33%, paper related barriers 23%, electronic based barriers 33% and channel related barriers 11%. According to the study it is quite obvious that the information resources and services provided for the use of respondents in the studied medical libraries were inadequate, this could be due to the neglect of health information and services by the authorities.

Keywords: *Medical Information Need; Medical Officers; Sri Lanka; Medical Information Sources; Medical Information Barriers*