HOW TO ESTABLISH A QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM IN 8 WEEKS

An e-tutorial for clinicians in four parts

Improving the quality in your practice (public or private) may not require new and expensive equipment, more staff or huge expenses. This tutorial will demonstrate how a small investment of your time will have a profound impact on your clinical outcomes.

- **Auditing has been shown to decrease the occurrence of surgical complication significantly.** In general surgery, a study from Victoria (AUS) has shown that the anastomotic leak rate was cut to half, simply by the introduction of clinical auditing. In a vascular surgery study, the occurrence of strokes and unintended limb amputations significantly decreased after auditing.

- **Better health outcomes will not only benefit your patients but also the surgeon.** Complications can cause an enormous stress on the individual and their families. Therefore, reduced complications rates and happier patients may even improve your job satisfaction.

- **In a recent article, we published that auditing is extremely cost effective.** We modelled that a single colorectal surgeon who operates on 20 cancer cases per year could save between $25,000 and $50,000 annually by engaging in clinical audits (Gordon and Obermair, BMC Surgery 2010). Potential hospital savings for all operative colorectal cancer cases is estimated at AUD $30.3 million each year in Australia.

This e-tutorial will be delivered in four parts:

Part 1 will be on "The Patient Perspective". You will find out how to collect information on how well you perform from a patient's perspective and how your patients believe you can improve the experience of their health care sessions.

Part 2 will be emailed to you in two weeks from now. This chapter will introduce the most basic methods and metrics of treatment-related health outcomes into your practice.

Part 3 will focus on the issue of Morbidity & Mortality (M&M) meetings. This chapter will explain case selection, ground rules and the format of M&M meetings. It will also explain issues around confidentiality.

Part 4 will explain how checklists can help you to reduce errors.