

EDITORIAL

Improvement methodology. One more step towards quality care

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The Institute of Medicine (IOM) defines the quality of health services as “the degree to which health services for individuals and populations increase the likelihood of desired health outcomes and are consistent with current professional knowledge.” This and other definitions share the view that the quality of healthcare is a complex and multidimensional concept, encompassing components or dimensions such as effectiveness, efficiency, user satisfaction, accessibility, appropriateness, and professional competence.

Although the ultimate aim of medicine is to meet the medical needs of the patient, it should also take into account the expectations of the family, healthcare providers, institutions, and society in general. Quality of care has gradually become the cornerstone of healthcare, and after the publication of the report “To Err is Human” in the USA, concern about the adverse effects of healthcare has increased enormously. In recent years, patient safety has become more important as one of the key dimensions of quality. This interest is even more evident in pediatric emergency medicine due to its social and economic impact.

Similarly, WHO defines quality care as “that which identifies the health needs (educational, preventive, curative, and maintenance) of individuals or populations in a comprehensive and accurate manner and allocates resources (human and other) to these needs in a timely manner and as effectively as the current state of knowledge permits.”

As early as 2004, the Spanish Society of Pediatric Emergency Medicine (SEUP), with the aim of providing a tool to evaluate and monitor the quality of care, published the first edition of Pediatric Indicators to measure the quality criteria of healthcare. A second revised and updated edition was

published in 2018, and it is currently being continually updated based on real-life evaluation of some of the empirically defined standards.

Fortunately, the commitment to provide the best care for our patients and their families does not waver; therefore, in this issue of *Emergencias Pediátricas*, Dr. Javier González del Rey and Dr. Gisella Valderrama describe the Interactive Course on Improvement Methodology that was initiated in Latin America and will soon be started in Spain. As the authors write, “Improvement methodology has taken on a key role in healthcare. Quality improvement initiatives can involve a wide range of activities, from implementing evidence-based practices to improving patient safety and satisfaction.”

The main objective of this course is to break down barriers and promote education to provide quality care to pediatric patients in the emergency department. In addition to acquiring knowledge in improvement methodology, leadership, and psychology of change, key tools for implementing an improvement project will be taught.

Undoubtedly, this new initiative will provide pediatric emergency physicians with concepts and skills needed to pursue excellence in our daily work, which involves curing and caring for the patients and families who place their trust in us. We therefore owe our gratitude to Dr. Javier González del Rey and Dr. Gisella Valderrama for their generosity in sharing their time and knowledge by teaching this interesting Interactive Course on Improvement Methodology.

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Received on June 3, 2024
Accepted on June 3, 2023

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