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Conclusions

Though transparency, as a new tool for public health reforms dealing with civic responsibility and accountability, has been diffusely pursued, its application is scarce or variable all over Europe. Our results confirm that the transparency is likely to influence services' improvement and productivity. Nevertheless in Mediterranean Countries, like Italy, a coordinated effort ought to ensure a high and homogeneous diffusion of transparency.

Key messages

- Public involvement and main stakeholders are pressuring on transparency in healthcare. How this drives to positive effects in terms of care outcomes was shown among public hospital.
- Data availability on health care organizations planning activities, results and resources utilization, driven by patient centeredness and choices, has positive impact on quality.

Is there a relationship between transparency and outcome in hospital care? An analysis on the Italian public hospitals

Marta Marino

S Bucci, M Tanzariello, M Avolio, A Izzi, M Marino, AG de Belvis, W Ricciardi and the Italian healthcare transparency collaborative group
Department of Public Health, Catholic University "Sacro Cuore", Rome, Italy

Contact: sabina.bucci@rm.unicatt.it

Background

Given the growing interest in outcome measurement and transparency among the European healthcare systems, our study evaluated the relation between outcome and transparency among the Italian public hospitals (IPHs), so to analyse their own availability of reliable and understandable informations on planning and management activities and care results, respectively.

Materials and methods

To address outcome measurement four indicators dealing with caesarean sections, PTCAs, cholecystectomies and hip fractures were selected from the ECHI Heidi data tool and the Italian Performance Measurement Program (PNE). Five transparency indicators (patients' right chart, waiting times, waiting lists, budget and professionals' biosketches), selected from the Italian Transparency Law 33/2013 and the Eurohealth Consumer Index were evaluated by searching on the hospitals' websites. Descriptive and inferential analysis and logistic regression analysis were performed.

Results

Outcome and transparency were evaluated from 222 IPHs: 145 Public Hospital Trusts, 63 Independent Public Hospital Trusts, 14 Research Teaching Hospitals and Research Hospitals. 112 hospitals are located in the Northern Italian regions, 49 in the Centre and 61 in the South. By performing the chi-squared test, we didn't find a correlation between transparency and geographical area ($p > 0.05$). A relationship between outcome and geographical area and outcome and transparency were found ($p < 0.05$). The application of a logistic regression model showed that lower outcome was likely to be associated with lower transparency rating and hospitals in the Centre of Italy ($p < 0.05$).