

Establishment of National Medical Registries: The Time has Arrived

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Medical registries have now become the norm rather than an exception. Medical registry is a prospective or retrospective collection of data set for patients with specific health characteristics.¹ The collected data is stored in a central database and analyzed either as a whole or fragmented data set. Registries provide information on demographics, characteristics of a particular disease or condition, specifics of management and treatment. It can also serve as a tool for monitoring of quality of care and epidemiological research.² Clinicians, health organizations and health providers all benefit from the information obtained from registries.

The value of any registry depends on the quality of the data contained in the registry.¹ The drawback of a registry system is entry of incorrect patient data or not making any entry at all. Another major issue is maintaining security and confidentiality of the database. Organizations and healthcare providers also need to secure funding for a robust registry system. Initiation and maintenance of a registry system requires equipment and trained manpower.³

In our country, hospital based medical record system is being utilized by many hospitals. However, the data obtained from this medical record is majorly confined to patient billing and demographics and does not include the disease characteristics and the details of management and imaging findings.

Nepal Health Research Council along with respective stakeholders has now initiated a country wide cancer-based registry system. Also, preliminary planning on establishment of a national spine trauma registry has begun in collaboration with Association of Spine Surgeons of Nepal. It is imperative to involve the respective associations or organizations to make the registries inclusive and encourage as many participatory centers.

The future of management of a specific disease or condition will be based on its impact on the general population. Also, management protocols need to be formulated for effective treatment of disease with significant public health impact. Health financing and cost analysis are domains that need to be factored in when designing a registry system. Only a robust medical

registry with quality data can contribute towards better medical care.

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