Performance indicators in primary care commissioning

A validation methodology in Portugal

Pereira A, Machaqueiro S, Rosa M, Nogueira P, Biscaia A

Project Commissioning in primary health care in Portugal: research and practice – a joint approach (ref. INSA/2011EXT554)

andre.rosa.biscaia@gmail.com
silvia.machaqueiro@gmail.com
Primary care commissioning in Portugal

Definition

Process of evaluation of a population’s health needs, and planning, implementation and monitoring of services in order to meet those needs, according to availability of resources.

Process with strategic and operational dimensions whereby an agent acts on behalf of a population and contracts services with health care providers.

Key principles

Evaluation of practices against performance targets

Financial incentives linked to achievement of performance goals

Performance targets negotiated with practices for a set of outcomes/indicators

Technical and scientific rationale for selecting indicators

(DH, 2010; The Nuffield Trust, 2010; Smith, Curry, Mays & Dixon, 2010)
Aims of this work

Objectives
Contributing to the definition and validation of indicators which are:

• Consistent
• Relevant
• Viable
• Aligned to national and local health planning

Methods
Review of international literature
Analysis of 2009-2014 national database – results for commissioning indicators and socio-demographic variables across all PHC practices in Portugal
In-depth interviews with stakeholders
Workshops with political, professional and academic stakeholders
Some national findings

Shortcomings of current indicator-setting processes:

- Lack of **scientific evidence** to support some performance indicators
- Insufficient detail in **indicator specifications** for measurement
- Indicator development & implementation still poorly linked to:
  - National health priorities
  - Practices’ context characteristics

Impact on practice and performance measurement:

- Inaccuracies & errors in **clinical records**
- Lower reliability of indicators’ **final results**
- Consistently higher performance targets regardless of **context specificities**
Proposed approaches and recommendations

Widen the scope of national-priority health conditions’ indicators ✓
Introduce patient-reported outcome indicators (PROM) ✗
Introduce an upper threshold for performance targets ✓
Use of systematic audits for practice performance ✓

Better overall indicator validation process:

• Identification of performance outcomes according to national, regional and local health priorities ✓
• Definition of multi-disciplinary commission for ensuring indicator usability ✓
• Use of indicator validation tool for testing indicator usefulness ✓
In line with national priorities:
National Health Plan, local health plans

Wide stakeholder consensus:
Professional bodies
Unions
National Association of USF
Portuguese Society of General Practitioners etc.

Clinically relevant:
Ambulatory Care Sensitive Conditions (ACSC)

Indicator assessment and validation tool
(adapted from Perera, Dowell, Crampton & Kearns, 2007)

- Policy Environment
- Health Sector Environment
- Media/Public Opinion/Other

Relevant health and other related policies
Evidence base
Clinical validity/health outcomes
Purpose of indicator
Perspective
- Cost effectiveness/cost containment
- Professional competence/accreditation
- Population health – Personal health
- Patient/Consumer
- Country/region specific
- Health inequalities

Is the practice team accountable for the outcome being monitored?
Economic impact study
Local specificities

Technical characteristics
Indicator
Ease of implementation
Key messages

Performance measurement *indicators* should:

• Develop from confirmed health priorities

• Be subject to technical discussion among stakeholders

• Be assessed against their: scientific validity, reliability, usefulness, implementation readiness (for monitoring or contracting practices’ performance).

• Introduce patient’s assessments

Performance *targets* should:

• Take into account practices’ context characteristics
References


Thank you

Pereira A, Machaqueiro S, Rosa M, Nogueira P, Biscaia A
andre.rosa.biscaia@gmail.com
silvia.machaqueiro@gmail.com

Project Commissioning in primary health care in Portugal: research and practice – a joint approach (ref. INSA/2011EXT554)