



Osservatorio Nazionale

delle Buone Pratiche sulla sicurezza nella Sanità

Scheda per la rappresentazione dell'esperienza

Level: Local Health Authority

Topics:

- Training, information and management of healthcare workers
- Communication to citizens

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Information and training about COVID-19

BACKGROUND

SARS-COV-2 pandemic was one of the most complex challenges of recent years for healthcare facilities, that had to face a completely unexpected crisis whose effects are still hard to predict and measure. The COVID-19 crisis represented a stress test, but also a change accelerator for healthcare organizations (introduction of new technologies, telemedicine development, implementation of new organizational models, use of artificial intelligence, reorganization of spaces, etc). In particular, the emergency led to an immediate and profound cultural change in the population and in the medical community, alongside with a greater awareness of the importance of controlling spread of infections.

The experience gathered in managing our hospitals - whose changes in structure were quick and, in the initial phases of the emergency they happened on a daily basis- and healthcare services on the territory, committed to develop new care settings showed that there is the need for continuous organizational changes adapting the ways the organization responds to care needs to quick changes and, at the same time, the need to ensure an effective communication strategy to inform all the people accessing the services about the risk of infection.

DESCRIPTION

The pandemic stressed the need to implement actions aimed at supporting infection control programs, dissemination of good practices for prevention of healthcare associated infections and control of infectious disease, with particular regard to COVID-19. It is worth considering the social effects these disease have on the population, not only in terms of risk perception, but also in terms of resources used for disease management. An integrated framework is needed for



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managing clinical risk and infectious risk both in terms of planning and designing of the activities and synergies between the professional networks.

Implementing risk management methods and tools in the activity plans for infection prevention and outbreak control must call for collaboration of all healthcare professionals in dissemination of information to healthcare organizations and citizens, as recommended at international level, by national legislation and by regional guidance.

Therefore, specific actions were planned to ensure an effective communication strategy to inform all the people accessing the services about the infection risk and the related organizational choices.

With the aim of paying attention to both patients' safety and workers' safety, we deemed essential to ensure a proper communication strategy addressed to healthcare workers, patients and citizens with the following objectives:

1. Reducing damages due to "infodemic", against which the WHO stood up and warned countries and prevent spreading of an excessive amount of information, sometimes not accurately checked, which make it difficult to understand as they don't come from trusted sources.
2. Ensure healthcare workers are informed and trained: considering that SARS-COV-2 is a new virus which causes a disease mostly unknown or with limited knowledge about the pathogenic mechanisms and the treatments aspects, we aimed to foster widespread dissemination of scientific knowledge, regulations and procedures concerning COVID-19 and dissemination of information.
3. Sharing goals and values, both internally and externally: the strength of an organization depends on the strength of the community it belongs to. Especially during these tough times, healthcare facilities should support their territory becoming a reference point and offering skills.

Therefore, with the aim of fostering dissemination of scientific knowledge, regulations and information about the organizational choices implemented within the institution with regards to COVID-19 infection, a specific section of the ASL Napoli 3 sud website was developed (<http://www.aslnapoli3sud.it/sitoweb/jportal/JPDocumento.do?id=1839&rev=0>) with support from the Risk management Unit and the Public Relations Unit. The section is focused on the clinical and organizational aspects of the epidemic, and includes national, regional and local documents regarding COVID-19, as well as information and training material. In particular, alongside with procedures developed locally, posters, checklists, algorithms, addressed to both healthcare workers, citizens, patients and their families.

Furthermore, healthcare workers were invited to share materials, documents, news that were deemed helpful to disseminate knowledge and information.

The following sub-sections were defined:

- National updates, with regional details and daily infographic;
- Updates of Ministerial guidance;
- National Institute for Health: Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) – COVID-19 Technical reports
- Recommendations to healthcare workers and for accessing the facilities;
- Good practices and rules of conduct for healthcare workers for prevention and protection;



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- Guidance and recommendations for citizens;
- Guidance and recommendations for groups of people;
- Cleaning and sanitizing measures;
- Waste management;
- COVID-19 clinical management;
- Guidance and recommendations for GPs and Pediatricians for home care and medication of COVID patients;
- COVID-19 clinical trials;
- COVID-19: guidance for filling in the death certificate
- Stress management and psychological support;
- Training course for healthcare workers;
- Operating procedure for identification/management of suspected and confirmed SARS-COV-2 patients

In addition, direct observation activities were enhanced, with the implementation of safety walkabouts, which were powerful flywheel to help dissemination of information and ensured support by risk managers in monitoring and reviewing pathways of the healthcare facilities.

We can thus say that resilience, flexibility, knowledge, skills, and communication were the keys to face the challenges imposed by the pandemic and will be necessary to face future challenges alongside with the continuous update of integrated risk management systems.