

Quality evaluation of workers' compensation hospital in Korea

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Background: The length of hospital stay among occupationally injured workers was too long comparing to national health insurance patients in Korea. Also return-to-work rate was low comparing to other countries. The Korea Workers' Compensation & Welfare (COMWEL) has tried to upgrade the quality of care workers' compensation contract hospitals since several years. One of the tries was to evaluate the workers' compensation contract hospitals. However, many hospitals argued the appropriateness of the hospital evaluation.

Objectives: This study was performed to evaluate the appropriateness of the workers' compensation contract hospital evaluation.

Methods: The total number of 500 hospitals was selected to evaluate among about 5,500 contracts hospitals according to their size or the number of occupationally injured patients. The main evaluation items were hospital facilities and equipment, health personnel, including doctors, record keeping, appropriateness of hospital care, outcomes, including return-to-work, length of hospital stay, satisfaction, etc. Multiple logistic regression was performed to evaluate the appropriateness of the results of this hospital evaluation. The dependent variables were return-to-work rate and length of hospital stay and independent variables were severity of injured workers, disability rate, company size, etc.

Results: The hospitals were classified three categories according to the evaluation score; high, middle, and low quality. The return-to-work rate of high-quality hospitals was significantly higher (odds ratio 1.81; CI 1.27 – 2.58) than others. However, the length of hospital stay was not different among them.

Conclusion: Return-to-work rate is one of the useful indicators for evaluating the occupational health care. Even though these are preliminary results, this evaluation method for the occupational health care hospitals would be appropriate for the purpose. The more specific analysis should be needed.