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<p>Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract</p> <p>A constructivist, evaluative study for the development of an evaluation tool for the evaluation of the quality of 24 -hour care and services for the elderly, competitive tendering and self-evaluation of operations.</p> <p>The task of the present study was to develop an appropriate quality assessment tool for the evaluation of 24-hour care and services for the elderly. The theoretical base for the development of this tool was Total Quality Management, TQM, on which quality award models rely. The indicators selected to measure quality of the content of care of the elderly were the indicators of good care according to the Resident Assessment Instrument (RAI). The study also examined the application of the quality evaluation tool to be developed in the opening of constant attendance for the elderly to competitive tendering. On the basis of the self-evaluation of units providing care for the elderly further indications of the functionality of the criteria in practice were obtained.</p> <p>The purpose of evaluation is to generate information for guidance. The aim of the evaluation tool for evaluation and development is also the immediate promotion of change, a formative task. The objective of the work at hand was to create a tool in keeping with the purpose described above by which to evaluate the quality of round-the-clock attendance as service for the elderly and in the future to utilise the information obtained through the evaluation tool as a basis for decision-making, the further development of operations. From the perspective of good care for the elderly the need emerged to introduce directly into the criteria with the help of the RAI instruments those elements by means of which it is possible to evaluate and direct the implementation of good care.</p> <p>The structure of the study follows to some extent the progress of a constructivist study including a relevant problem, anchoring it in theory, the construction of the evaluation tool and an assessment of the functionality of the solution. The theoretical frame of reference for the study relied on the principles of Total Quality Management and evaluation research.</p> <p>Applying the theory of Total Quality Management to the evaluation of services in the field of social and health care was contemplated through the literature addressed in the study. A questionnaire was distributed to experts in social and health care to gather information on round-the-clock care and services for the elderly and the main quality criteria from the perspective of opening them up to competitive tendering. The experts assessed the main quality criteria to be strategic planning, number of personnel and the structure of professions therein, the systematicity of care, safety and satisfaction of clients and their relatives with the care provided and the existence of quality systems and comparison of operations to best practices. With regard to the operating environment important factors included fire safety of premises and the chance to move about using mobility aids. The self-evaluation model developed in the study and the functionality of the evaluation frame were tested on the basis of a self-evaluation conducted in several units caring for the elderly. The outcome of the self-evaluations carried out in a long-term care unit connected to be public health care centre, a residential home and sheltered housing also provided evidence of the functionality of the self-evaluation model and evaluation framework.</p> <p>The battery of quality criteria developed would appear to be applicable to the evaluation of the quality of round-the-clock care of the elderly. A list of criteria to be born in mind and to assist in the situation of opening up service to competitive tendering is a help to decision-makers in selecting the provider of services. The theoretical frame of reference of the study and the evaluation tool developed were combined into a model for the evaluation of 24-hour care and services for the elderly described with the aid of a flowchart.</p>			
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