

The measurement and improvement of quality of care has become a crucial element of health system governance worldwide. Industrialised and transition countries alike are developing ways to measure quality of care and improve policies, with reliable measurement seen as a necessary first step in establishing the value of health care, and thus the performance of health care systems (OECD, 2010b). Hence, Health System Performance Assessment, as promoted by WHO, relies heavily on the assessment of quality of health care services. The chapter on quality of care in this 2014 edition of *Health at a Glance: Asia/Pacific* builds on the indicators used in the OECD's Health Care Quality Indicator programme.

With the worldwide shift in morbidity and mortality from infectious to non-communicable diseases, the collection of statistics on health care in the Asia/Pacific region is also shifting in focus. In this chapter, quality indicators related to child vaccination (5.1) are reported by 27 countries, based on an information infrastructure on infectious diseases developed over past decades. This contrasts with information on 30 day-case fatality rates for AMI and stroke, which is currently only reported by seven and six countries respectively (5.2). A similar situation exists for cancer care. Although mortality estimates are available for breast, cervical and colon cancer for 25 countries, data on screening rates for these cancers, as well as on five-year survival rates, are not yet reported because of the lack of cancer registries in the majority of countries in the region (5.3). Despite its shortcomings, this chapter illustrates that major steps have been made or are underway, and thus it is expected that in future editions of *Health at a Glance Asia/Pacific* the number of countries and indicators for which international comparable data are reported will increase.

Despite the scarcity of national statistics on quality of care, numerous policy initiatives to systematically evaluate and improve quality of health care services have been undertaken in a substantial number of countries in the region. These are documented in Section 5.4. Accreditation programmes for hospitals and the development of national quality improvement plans are common initiatives, as is a move towards encouraging continuing professional development for health professionals – although this is not mandatory in most countries. Programmes to develop guidelines, standards and indicators as well as national initiatives to measure patient experiences and improve patient safety can also be identified. There is also a trend towards pharmacovigilance and blood safety standards. These initiatives underscore the interest in quality of care in the Asia/Pacific region.



From:

Health at a Glance: Asia/Pacific 2014

Measuring Progress towards Universal Health Coverage

Access the complete publication at:

https://doi.org/10.1787/health_glance_ap-2014-en

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD/World Health Organization (2014), "Health care quality: policy context and measurement", in *Health at a Glance: Asia/Pacific 2014: Measuring Progress towards Universal Health Coverage*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1787/health_glance_ap-2014-38-en

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