

# Are we Moving to a System of Report Cards?



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# Overview

- What is a report card?
- Why are report cards becoming more popular in the health care setting?
- What is the USA and UK experience on use of report cards?
- Are report cards becoming more common in Australia?
- Do report cards improve quality of care?



# What is a report card?

- Comparative information on health care performance
- Two general types exist
  - Those that measure process eg. medication use, screening tests (assumed to be related to outcomes)
  - Those that measure outcomes eg. Mortality rates after surgery
- Quality of Care Reports typically include both



# Increasing use of report cards

- To increase accountability of health services
- To maintain standards or stimulate improvements in the quality of care provided
- Institute of Medicine defined quality as:  
*the degree to which health services for individuals and populations increase the likelihood of desired health outcomes and are consistent with current professional knowledge (1990, Swan et. al)*



# Increasing use of report cards

- Report cards have been in use in the USA and the UK for more than 15 years.
- Focus has changed significantly in this time from just looking at mortality data to a large range of process and outcome data.



# USA experience of report cards

- USA introduced report cards ~ 1988
- 39 States have introduced legislation re public reporting (death rates, infection rates, Acute Myocardial Infarction, heart failure, pneumonia, cardiac surgery)
- Decreased mortality in some hospitals following public reporting
- Risk adjustment critical for meaningful comparisons between hospitals
- Difficult to define useful benchmarks



# USA experience of report cards

- Mechanisms that support use of report cards in the USA include:
  - Financial incentives for reporting
  - Performance management
  - Appeal to the desire of health care professionals to do a good job



# UK experience of report cards

- Report cards for about 15 years – mainly mortality data
- Star rating system of accreditation introduced in 2001 – now ceased
- [www.drfooster.cok.uk](http://www.drfooster.cok.uk) an independent initiative that makes hospital data available on the web
- Picker Institute studies of patient satisfaction
  - 84,000 heart disease patients from 194 hospitals
- Use of control charts rather than league tables



# UK experience of report cards

- Following Bristol NHS establishing independent Office for Information on Health Care Performance
  - Collection of data
  - Analysis of data to identify good and poor performance
  - Publication of data (national & local report cards)
  - Conduct patient and staff satisfaction surveys
  - Assess data quality – improve data systems



# Common performance measures

## ■ Process

- Timely administration of perioperative antibiotics
- Vascular catheter insertion
- Hand hygiene

## ■ Outcome

- ICU infection rates for central venous catheters
- Rates of reoperation/readmission for surgical site infections



# Australian report card experience

- Victoria is the only State who have a Quality of Care Report and participation indicators
- Both acknowledged by the National Health Performance Committee as being very good
- Currently publishing their findings from the study 'Reporting on Health System Performance: What do Australian Consumers want?'
- NSW also doing some good work



# Australian report card experience

- In Australia most people do not have a choice regarding public hospitals
- Still believe doctors are ‘God’
- Consumers don’t trust Government information
- Often ask their GP or health care workers to interpret data and information for them-  
written information must be accompanied by a verbal explanation



# Australian report card experience

- Australian consumers most interested in how their healthcare journey is affected – process indicators
- Public reporting has not really empowered the public yet although they are keen to be engaged
- Long term strategy needed with more discussion between States to learn from each other



# Benefits of using report cards

- Report cards provide accountability and may enhance trust
- Consumers can make informed choices
  - Selection of high quality hospitals and services
  - Selection of best performing doctors
- May improve quality of care



# Disadvantages of report cards

- Little research exists on the effect of public reporting on health care delivery
- Lack of consensus on types of measures
- Design format and type of information presented can affect interpretation and use
- Can be considered as a tokenistic approach to consumer involvement / consultation / participation
- Doctors may shy away from performing surgery on high risk patients



# Successful use of report cards

- Success could be defined as improving the quality of care provided – this requires:
  - Interdisciplinary collaboration to improve process and outcome data
  - Resource commitment for areas of poorer performance
  - Information to be used in staff and community education programs on patient safety
  - Sustained support to help staff improve practices



# Successful use of report cards

- For report cards to improve quality of care:
  - Participation must be mandatory, and
  - Performance measures universally adopted
  - Encourage adherence with evidence-based guidelines in response to data
  - Chart review, continuous feedback on performance followed by team workshops



# Successful use of report cards

- Involving consumers in the design, reporting and communication of performance measures will be important if report cards are to drive quality improvement in health care delivery
- Information must be well presented and understandable to a lay person, otherwise consumers will continue to prefer anecdotal information from friends and family and media reports regarding hospital performance and mortality rates than officially available information



# Are we moving to a report card system?

... an Australian version that meets the specific needs of our consumer and community groups...



# Summary

- The main value of public reporting is as a mechanism for accountability – this perceived value is difficult to challenge!
- Need a Government led long term strategy with short term measurable outcomes to evaluate progress with consumer consultation, participation and reporting.



# For further information?

- Werner, Asch (2005) JAMA
- Marshall, Shekelle, Davies, Smith (2003) Health Affairs
- Weistein, Siegel, Brennan (2005) The New England Journal of Medicine
- Romano (2005) The New England Journal of Medicine
- Covino (2005) Nat Hlth Perform Comm



Questions?