Drug overprescribing and mismanagement continues to be a problem in Jordanian hospitals

A study conducted at the King Hussein Medical Center showed that antibiotics were prescribed in over one third of the prescriptions surveyed, and recommended that “Military prescribers and healthcare providers in the RMS [Royal Medical Services] should be aware of the problem with over prescribing and over consumption of antibiotics.” This poses a serious issue not only due to the unnecessary costs that the hospitals incur, but also because it contributes to the emergence of resistant bacteria. URC’s USAID-funded Jordan Healthcare Accreditation Project (JHAP), along with the Health Care Accreditation Council (HCAC), is tackling such issues by working with hospitals to prepare them to achieve accreditation standards.

Queen Alia Military Hospital saves $100,000 through URC’s quality project initiative

At Queen Alia Military Hospital in Amman, one of the nine hospitals owned by the Royal Medical Services (RMS) and the first public hospital accredited by the HCAC, JHAP worked with the hospital’s Quality Improvement Committee to improve the management of drug use and consumption. Following the implementation of a quality improvement project, significant changes ensued.

Improved drug management system is helping prevent loss and waste of medication

“In addition to saving costs, this project has also improved patient safety.”

– Dr. Hassan Malkawi, Director of Queen Alia Hospital

As one of the 24 pilot hospitals under JHAP, Queen Alia Hospital participated in an activity to test and implement changes in a real setting. During this activity, the Queen Alia Quality Improvement team was able to identify

problems with its existing system and make necessary changes to eliminate them. A four month long study in 2008 conducted by the hospital before and after the improvements showed a 45% reduction in medication consumption. This has resulted in considerable cost savings for the RMS, with over $100,000 saved in one year, as loss and waste of medication is now being prevented.

**Improved drug management system adopted by other RMS facilities**

Dr. Hassan Malkawi, Director of Queen Alia Hospital explained that “In addition to saving costs, this project has also improved patient safety.” Under the new system, medication is now being ordered directly by the physician who is in charge of the patient. “It is no longer possible for just anyone to ask for anything,” said Dr. Malkawi. The clinical pharmacy is now supervising drug supply, and orders are being written daily by patient name. Emergency medication is also available in the wards daily. Dr. Malkawi explained that the Queen Alia system has proven so successful during the past year that it is now being adapted at the King Hussein Medical Center, the largest medical institution in Jordan, comprised of five centers. Future improvement plans include connecting outpatient prescription to a computerized system for the whole RMS.

This story illustrates the ground-breaking work of the Jordan Healthcare Accreditation Project, which is building the foundations of a strong quality assurance system to address changing health needs and sustain health care improvements. It highlights not only JHAP’s impact on improving the quality and safety of health care services in Jordan, but also the cost-effectiveness of its interventions.

“**This has resulted in considerable cost savings for the RMS, with over $100,000 saved in one year, as loss and waste of medication is now being prevented.**”

New drug management system ensures that the correct medication is given to the correct patient.