The SQUIRE statement
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Professional nursing and the healthcare industry are extremely focused on quality improvement. The seminal report from the Institute of Medicine: *To Err Is Human* (IOM, 2000) sparked the current inferno of quality improvement imperatives related to patient safety. The federal government, third party payors, and the public at large (patients) demand that quality of care provided by nurses and physicians be excellent and transparent. Healthcare providers place these same demands for quality upon themselves. Many hospitals are modifying their care delivery strategies and techniques to provide better patient outcomes through changes in their practice. To improve the nursing profession and healthcare industry these best practices need to be shared in a timely, comprehensive, and easy to understand way. To facilitate the sharing of knowledge the Standards for QUality Improvement Reporting Excellence (SQUIRE) guidelines for quality improvement reporting were created (Ogrinc, 2008).

The SQUIRE statement was released in 2008 and has been adopted by a variety of leading journals including the American Journal of Nursing, British Medical Journal, Quality and Safety in Healthcare, and Joint Commission Journal of Quality and Patient Safety. The obvious interest and need for quality improvement processes, science, and outcomes within healthcare has spurred a large volume of published literature. Quality improvement in healthcare is affected by a variety of disciplines in the field. Therefore, there is a variety of ways in which these findings have been shared in publication. The SQUIRE statement provides familiar publishing terms with modifications to meet the particular issues of quality improvement.

A group of academics, editors, authors, researchers, and clinicians met to form the SQUIRE statement as a consensus project. The SQUIRE statement uses the familiar major sections of published reports including; Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion. The American Journal of Nursing (AJN) has adopted the SQUIRE statement (www.squire-statement.org) and uses a variety of other guidelines: for original research, it uses the Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials (CONSORT; www.consort-statement.org) for randomized studies; the Transparent Reporting of Evaluations with Nonrandomized Designs (TREND; www.trend-statement.org) for descriptive and epidemiologic studies, as noted in the author guidelines (AJN, 2011). These publishing guidelines provide an “apples-to-apples” way of comparing the details of the authors work to help provide a more generalisable scientific knowledge to be adapted and replicated at other institutions.

The understanding for authors and editors is to use the guidelines to best explain the quality improvement project and not to strictly adhere to the SQUIRE statement. There will be a need for modification related to content flow, limited information, and unique circumstances of individual projects, as examples, that will require authors and editors to modify sections of the SQUIRE statement in actual publication. This is acceptable and expected given the nature of quality improvement work; however, authors should consider every item within the SQUIRE statement when they write (Ogrinc, 2008).
There is a concern about the distinction and separation between research and quality improvement (Newhouse, 2006). While the terms of the SQUIRE statement outline are similar and overlapping compared to research guidelines, there is clearly a difference between the purposes, processes, and publications. The SQUIRE statement may provide a clearer means to distinguish between research and quality improvement.

For a wider breadth of dissemination for the SQUIRE statement a website has been created and maintained (www.squire-statement.org). The website displays the SQUIRE statement along with access to the Standards for QUality Improvement Reporting Excellence (SQUIRE) guidelines for quality improvement reporting: explanation and elaboration (Ogrinc, 2008) and other supporting materials. This explanation and elaboration document provides a detailed description of the SQUIRE statement outline and acts as a resource for authors, editors, and reviewers who utilize the guidelines for publication. The SQUIRE statement should serve as a good means to standardize the published information reported regarding quality improvement.

References:


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