

ABSTRACT

Title: The Study on Competency Sustainability of Occupational Health Doctors in Malaysia

Name: Dr. Hanizah Mohd Yusoff, Dr. Muhammad Arif Muhamad Noordin

Email: hanizah [at] ukm. edu. my; drmuhamadariff [at] niosh. com. my

Year: 2021

Abstract:

In Malaysia, the competency of OHD which are based on the 3 registration renewal criteria must be attained during the renewal application in every 3 years. The issues related to this problem of renewal have never been studied in detail and the function and competency of OHD have never been developed as a guidance to OHD and other stakeholders. Thus, this research project was done to identify the issues related to renewal of OHD registration and suggest the effective and practical improvement strategies. It started with the development of benchmark for OHD functions and competencies as the basis to understand the issues and to identify the improvement strategies. A qualitative study with in-depth interviews among OHD and attainment of data saturation had been conducted to understand the issues of the registration renewal. This was followed by a cross-sectional study to determine the associated factors of OHD renewal of registration. Finally, based on the findings of these studies, improvement strategies were proposed based on the brainstorming of the research team and feedback from stakeholders who were involved with policies and training related to OHD. The benchmark for OHD functions and competencies was developed by considering all the three levels of disease prevention which are primary, secondary and tertiary. This approach was chosen because of its familiarity and usage in all the other healthcare services in this country. The findings of the qualitative study showed that the problems of OHD in sustaining their competencies could be divided into four main groups which are the need to provide high amount of effort in order to continue functioning as OHD, having low control in functioning as OHD, did not receive well-deserved reward as OHD and having problem in the process of registration renewal even though had fulfil the functions of OHD according to the registration renewal criteria. The findings of multivariate analysis of the cross-sectional data have shown that the duration of being an OHD was significantly associated with the active function of OHD. OHD who worked more than 6 years had 4 times the odds to renew their registration as compared to those who had shorter duration of being an OHD. All the findings of this study had been used to develop the proposed improvement for the sustainability of OHD competencies in Malaysia. Based on the findings of this research project, it can be concluded that the issues related to the renewal of OHD registration involve not only the fulfilment of the renewal criteria but also the motivation of OHD to continue functioning as one. The three main challenges faced by OHD are known precursors of job stress. Thus, the intervention proposed include factors that increase the job control, decrease inappropriate job demand and provide duly reward for OHD.

Keywords: Occupational Health Physician, Occupational Health Doctors, Occupational Health Services