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Strengthening clinical documentation and mortality reporting: insights from a state-level capacity building workshop on medical certification of cause of death and international classification of diseases-10

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Abstract

Inadequate clinical documentation by treating doctors and nursing officers continues to be a significant challenge in routine practice. A major contributing factor is heavy workload, which often leaves limited time for thorough and accurate record-keeping. This deficiency in documentation creates multiple challenges at both clinical and administrative levels, including difficulties in establishing precise diagnoses, conducting meaningful case analyses, and accurately identifying and certifying the cause of death. The discussions highlighted the pressing need to strengthen and integrate key frameworks such as the Medical Certification of Cause of Death, International Classification of Diseases, and maternal death surveillance and response into routine clinical workflows. Enhancing these practices is crucial for ensuring high-quality, reliable health data, which forms the foundation for effective clinical decision-making and informed public health planning.

Keywords: Clinical documentation, Health data quality, International classification of diseases 10 classification, Medical certification of cause of death, Maternal death surveillance and response, Mortality reporting

1. Introduction

The Multidisciplinary Research Unit (MDRU), Shyam Shah Medical College, Rewa, successfully organized a 1-day state-level capacity building workshop on Medical Certification of Cause of Death (MCCD) and International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) on 22 March 2026. The workshop was sponsored by the Department of Public Health and Medical Education, Government of Madhya Pradesh. The workshop was graced by distinguished dignitaries. The Chief Guest was Dr. Jyoti Singh, Founder Nodal Officer of MDRU and former Head of the Department of Pediatrics. The Guest of Honor was Dr. P. C. Dwivedi, former Dean, and the Special Guest was Dr. Beenu Kushwah Singh, Director of Nursing and Paramedical, Policy and Regulation. A total of 120 participants attended the workshop, including faculty members, postgraduate medical students, nursing officers, and expert faculty from various departments. The program aimed to strengthen competencies in accurate death certification, standardized disease classification, and improvement of medical record systems.

2. Scientific Sessions

A series of expert-led sessions was conducted to provide both conceptual understanding and practical training:

1. Death Reporting and MCCD in Madhya Pradesh: Current Status, Practices, and the Way Forward; Overview of ICD-10 and Hands-on Training on MCCD and ICD-10 presented by Dr. Atul Shrivastava, Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal (M.P.). The session highlighted existing gaps in death reporting systems and emphasized the importance of accurate certification and coding practices.
2. Maternal Death Reporting and Documentation: Strengthening maternal death surveillance and response (MDSR) and MCCD Linkages by Dr. Beenu Kushwah Singh. The focus was laid on improving maternal death surveillance and integrating reporting systems for better health outcomes.
3. Medico-Legal Death Reporting: Practical Guidance for Clinicians by Dr. Prateesh Shukla, Government Medical College, Satna. The session addressed medico-legal aspects and common challenges faced by clinicians in death reporting.

4. Clinical Documentation and Reporting Practices: Role of Clinicians, Pathologists, and Multidisciplinary Teams in Accurate Data Reporting by Dr. Ajit Kumar Marko, Shyam Shah Medical College (SSMC), Rewa. An emphasis was placed on the importance of coordinated documentation for reliable health data.
5. Closing Gaps in Medical Records to Improve MCCD, Maternal Death Reporting, and Health Indicators by Dr. Lokesh Tripathi, SSMC, Rewa. Practical strategies to improve documentation quality and reduce reporting errors were discussed.
6. Charting the Road Ahead: MCCD, Maternal Death Reporting, and Health Indicators by Dr. Chakresh Jain, SSMC, Rewa. The session outlined future directions and institutional strategies for strengthening reporting systems.
7. Panel Discussion: "Why Are We Still Missing the Numbers? An Integrated Approach to Improve MCCD, Maternal Death Reporting, and Medical Records in Madhya Pradesh" Panelists: Dr. Sunil Agrawal, Dr. Atul Shrivastava, Dr. Chakresh Jain, Dr. Rajneesh Kumar Pandey, Dr. Ambrish Mishra, Dr. Ajit Kumar Marko, Dr. Gaurav Tripathi, and Dr. Lokesh Tripathi. Moderator: Dr. Beenu Kushwah Singh. The panel discussion facilitated interdisciplinary dialogue and highlighted systemic challenges and actionable solutions.

3. Key Recommendations from Panel Discussion

The panel proposed the following key recommendations:

1. Administrative directives should be issued to all Heads of Department to ensure accurate documentation of discharge summaries and modes of discharge by the concerned faculty.
2. Regular research methodology workshops should be conducted, with mandatory incorporation of ICD-10–based questioning at the departmental level.
3. Certification programs on MCCD, MDSR, and ICD-10 should be integrated into internship training.
4. Periodic workshops on MCCD in medico-legal cases and multidisciplinary meetings should be conducted to establish accurate pathological and radiological diagnoses.
5. The role of diagnostic departments in diagnosis and certification must be emphasized and duly integrated into reporting systems.
6. Maintenance of logbooks for interns should be made mandatory to ensure accountability and skill development.
7. A structured postgraduate orientation program should be initiated to standardize training practices, which should include MCCD and ICD10/11 training specifically.
8. Standard operating procedure formats should be developed and incorporated into the medical records department.

4. Conclusion

The workshop provided comprehensive guidance on MCCD, maternal death reporting, ICD-10 classification, and the strengthening of medical records systems. Participants benefited from both theoretical insights and hands-on training, enhancing their practical competencies. The workshop was successfully conducted under the guidance of the organizing committee, in which Prof. Sunil Agrawal (Chairman), Dr. Lokesh Tripathi (Member Secretary), Dr. Sanjay Pandey, and Dr. Sweta Pandey (Co-Secretaries) played pivotal roles in planning and execution. Overall, the workshop marked a significant step toward improving the quality, accuracy, and reliability of health data, thereby contributing to better public health planning and policy implementation.

5. Acknowledgments

Sincere thanks to all staff of MDRU for their role in the workshop.

6. Conflict of Interest

None.

7. Funding

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