

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF THYROID CANCER CARE: HOW DOES THE THYROID CANCER CARE COLLABORATIVE CROSS THE INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE'S QUALITY CHASM

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Background/Purpose: The current systems of healthcare delivery in the United States suffer from problems that often leave patients with inadequate quality of care. In their report entitled “Crossing the Quality Chasm,” the Institute of Medicine (IOM) identified reasons for poor and/or inconsistent quality of healthcare delivery and provided recommendations to improve it. Our purpose is to describe features of an innovative web-based program, called the Thyroid Cancer Care Collaborative (TCCC) and see how it addresses IOM recommendations to improve the quality of healthcare delivery.

Methods: Review article paralleling the TCCC with the IOM’s report on quality in healthcare.

Results: Some features of the TCCC include: 1) Automated disease staging based on three validated scoring systems; 2) Highly-illustrated educational videos on all aspects of thyroid cancer care; 3) Personalized clinical-decision making modules for clinicians and physicians; 4) Portability of data to share amongst treating physicians; 5) Virtual tumor boards, “ask the expert,” and frequently asked questions modules; 6) Physician workflow integration; 7) Data for comprehensive analysis to answer unanswered questions in thyroid cancer management.

The TCCC addresses the three actionable IOM recommendations directed at healthcare organizations and clinicians to redesign the care process. It does so by exploiting information technology (IT) in ways suggested by the IOM and fits within a set of 10 rules provided by the IOM.

Discussion & Conclusion: The TCCC promises to improve thyroid cancer care delivery and offer several benefits to patients, clinicians, and researchers. The TCCC is a valuable example of how IOM initiatives can improve the healthcare system.