

CHAPTER VIII

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Evaluation of Risks and Benefits

There should not be any significant risk resulting from the proposed intervention since the CDC guidelines selected for use have been proven beneficial in other studies. Further, the prevalence of controllable nosocomial UTI is expected to be high. If no control measure is being contemplated, many patients will have to suffer from the complication.

The possible benefit from this intervention can be substantial. If this programme can show the reduction of infection rate it will benefit both the patients and the health care facility.

Patient's benefit	: Decrease morbidity
	: Decrease hospital stay
	: Less expenditure on medication and hospital costs
	: Decrease risk to other patients
Health care facility	: Decrease hospital expenditure on antibiotics
	: Decrease excess use of antibiotics
	: Decrease chance to have more multi- resistant pathogens in hospital environment due to antibiotic use

- : Be able to give service to more patients as a result of the shorter hospital stay of patients
- : Improve quality of care of hospital personnels

Protection of Subjects

This study should not do more harm than good for both the patients and the health personnels included in the study. Patients should not get any further complications due to hospitalization apart from those of their own diseases. They should be better protected from hospital associated infections. The human rights of patients should be preserved conscientiously by health care providers although the patients have signed their informed consent to submit themselves to treatments in the hospital. In developed countries the law of human rights is stricter and people are more aware of their rights than people of developing countries. Patients often claim compensation if malpractice occurs to them during their hospital stay. Most health service clients in Thailand are not yet much conscious about this issue especially among low educated group of people. It may be because they are not aware of their rights. However, health care providers should not take advantage of this situation and neglect their quality of care. They should perpetually be aware of giving a good standard of care to every patient.

The programme of application guidelines plus education for giving care to patients is one way among others to assure a good quality of care and control of cross-infections. It does not cause any harm nor is it difficult for personnels. On the contrary, this will help them to maintain their standard of care. When considering the seven Ds (Death, Disease, Disability, Discomfort, Disharmony, Dissatisfaction and Dollar) of clinical events as a result of the study, all Ds will surely proceed in a positive direction with respect to the patient. With respect to the health personnel, the study may have an effect of creating some dissatisfaction. However, this factor will not affect within good standard performing personnels. The substandard performing personnels will be only a group to get this effect. Nevertheless, this group of personnel is in need for upgrading their care quality as soon as possible. When striking the balance between dissatisfaction of this group of personnel and the worse consequences according to their performance (creating risk directly to patients and to themselves for some extent ; e.g. they get infected from patients whom they take care as a result of poor handling or carelessness), the latter is far more predominant.

The application of the guidelines with education to ward personnel is a putative intervention which certainly does no harm but rather does good and help both patients and health personnels. The problem of ethics may be questionable in the point that the control group does not receive such a treatment in first period. Thus to avoid this problem, the design of the

study consists of two periods. Each period lasts three months. First period, the intervention is assigned to one group and the other group in the second period.

To summarize, this study project does not have problem of ethics. Furthermore, the benefit from the programme is very promising.