

## Kerala Accreditation Standards for Hospitals (KASH)



### Problem Statement

Kerala was among the first States of India to undergo NABH accreditation of its Hospitals, with accreditation of 3 such hospitals namely General Hospitals Ernakulam, W and C Hospital, Trivandrum, THQH Cherthala and blood bank Aluva. This is a remarkable achievement when we consider the fact that only 9 Hospitals in the State have been NABH accredited so far, out of which 6 are in the private sector.

During this period it was noted by the State Government that the NABH accreditation process is time consuming as well as resource intensive requiring a substantial investment in infrastructure, equipments and human resources. This made the process rather impractical for assessment of 1254 Government Hospitals in Kerala within a short span of time.

To address this paucity of implementation of quality assurance mechanisms in Health Facilities and Hospitals in the State, the State Government has introduced the Kerala Accreditation Standards for Hospitals (KASH); an accreditation program for Health Care Institutions covering all Government owned Health Care Institutions. This accreditation program was initiated in 2011, and assessments of institutions commenced in December 2012. The aim of the State Level Accreditation Programme is to provide the better patient care, health care quality improvement, patient safety, infection control, medication safety, facility safety and equity in health care. This accreditation program has been designed as complementary to and not a replacement of NABH accreditation.

### Programme description

The Kerala Accreditation Standards for Hospitals (KASH) are prepared for 4 different levels of hospital, namely Primary Health Centre (PHC), Community Health Centre (CHC), Taluk level Hospitals (THQH) and District level Hospitals including Specialty and General Hospitals. These standards were framed after intensive study of various accreditations and certification programs, currently existing

in different countries around the world. The Standards endeavoured to achieve optimal efficiency of the Health Care Institutions with a resource constraint setting. As this mechanism is complementary to other certifications hence after achieving the Kerala Accreditation Standards for Hospitals, the individual hospitals may opt for higher standards such as NABH, which require more investment and effort.

The KASH is a part of the Quality Assurance Program and comes within the purview of National Rural Health Mission. It is headed by the Mission Director, NRHM and is a three tiered structure present at the State level, District Level and the Hospital Level. The Quality assurance team assists the implementation of accreditation standards in health care institutions. A core committee has been formed in the health care organization to implement the standards. In selected hospitals different committees have been formed at the health care institution for the development and implementation of policies and procedures in the institution.

Sensitization and Training of all the Staff in the Health Institution on Quality Assurance is a major thrust of this Quality Assurance Team, in their endeavour to bring all the Health Institutions under KASH. These include sensitization of health care organization towards importance of quality healthcare services, involvement of staffs for improving the quality of patient service, development, review and implementation of policies and procedures for implementation of Quality Management System. Emphasis is also laid on conducting patient and employee satisfaction survey, develop and monitoring of the quality indicators, disaster management plan, infection control practices, implementation of patient rights and responsibilities, management of medication, facility management practices, incidence reporting system, hospital safety programme, patient information, inventory management, quality control, safety in diagnostics among others. During the past one year 353 such trainings have been held in various levels.

### **Impact of the Programme**

Since inception of Kerala Accreditation Standards for Hospitals, 7 Health Institutions have been accredited by the Board. The quality of services has significantly improved in these hospitals. Patient satisfaction and good treatment is now of paramount importance. The accreditation has led to better working environment, leadership and ownership of clinical processes. It has also led to greater confidence among individuals and communities, to access reliable and certified services by the Health Facilities.

## Scalability

The implementation of Kerala Accreditation Standards is possible within a resource constraint setting. This can be scaled to other States, and can be modified to the needs of the States.

## Conclusion

The KASH standards will be implemented in all Government Health Facilities within 5 years. The Quality Assurance team also envisages developing standards for Medical College Hospitals. Private Health Facilities may be included on a voluntary basis on a later stage, with an aim to provide quality health care in the state.

## For further details contact

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