Brazil

The Clinical Engineering Status in Brazil

State of Clinical Engineering (CE) - Health Technology Management (HTM) – Body of Practice (BOP)

Slowly but steady, Clinical Engineering in Brazil is learning that Maintenance Management is only part of the Universe of activities available to develop. Many hospitals have Risk Management, equipment strategic planning and Health Technology Assessment in their CE Body of Practice.

The number of Hospitals with Clinical Engineers is growing, seeking to reduce cost to comply with accreditation but also reduce costs as well as optimizing the use of medical equipment.

Several Clinical Engineering groups in Brazil are already applying activities such as Health Technology Assessment, Usability – Human Factor Engineering, Health Metrology programs and helping in the development of new healthcare system models.

How would you suggest to show the Value of and from having CE-HTM program.

A CE-HTM program, if well managed, can generate a maintenance cost reduction, an equipment selection that will really harmonize with the real needs of the hospital and improve the patient safety. All this can be measured through a Financial and Risk management program.

Example of success stories where CE supported patient outcomes

- Despite not being recognized as a profession in Brazil (no under graduation course), Clinical Engineering is respected by the body responsible for Supervising and regulating professional activities (CREA), uses the Brazilian Clinical Engineering Society (ABEClin) as a reference on matters related Engineering in Health.
- CREA, with support from ABEClin has initiated a process of supervision in healthcare services by increasing the hiring of skilled labour, generating a market for clinical engineers and improving patient safety in hospitals.
- To improve patient safety, The National Accreditation Organization (ONA), responsible for the development and management of Brazilian health quality and safety standards, with ABEClin’s help, created a specific chapter for Clinical Engineering to charge minimum processes and assist healthcare institutions.
CE Education program available (levels and content) – Body of Knowledge (BOK)

Brazil has today several Clinical Engineering Training courses. The basic contents (core of knowledge), where harmonized and endorsed by the Brazilian Clinical Engineering (ABECLin) in 2010. Since then, this basic core of knowledge is offered but each course adapt the additional subjects according to the needs of the region.

CE Association/Society and Credentialing/Certification program if available

For many years a CE certification program is being discussed in Brazil. There are several problems holding the final decision such as prices of the exam, background authorized for examination, examination board and so on. But Soon these discussions will settle and, with the help of the CED international certification group, the program will start

CE major challenges

- CEs lack of confidence to face the new and constant challenges that appear periodically in the health area. CEs despite the acquired information given by the training courses, are still afraid to face more sophisticated projects other than maintenance management
- As a consequence, Health Administrators do not know that CEs can solve some problems related to technology and hire people from other professions, with less knowledge within the healthcare area, to try to solve the problem.
- Teams that develop exclusively Preventive maintenance and repair, call themselves Clinical Engineering Department or Division and health care people see them as CEs

What is the most important action you will support to increase CE recognition.

- Improve the quality of Clinical Engineers in Brazil through a Certification program strongly supported by the CE society.
- Through Scientific events, present the resources and activities that can be offered by Clinical Engineering and the advantages this will bring to the healthcare area
- Upgrading and improvement of Clinical Engineering training courses to propose practical activities to the students, that may boost CEs confidence and help them to propose more complex activities to hospitals administration.
- Clinical Engineering groups in Brazil are not united. They works separately and do not communicate to each other, partly afraid of corporate compliance.

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