Abstract

Establishing criteria for hospital nutrition care ensures that quality care is delivered to patients. The responsibility of the Hospital Food and Nutrition Service (HFNS) is not always well defined, despite efforts to establish guidelines for patient clinical nutrition practice. This study describes the elaboration of an Instrument for Evaluation of Food and Nutritional Care (IEFNC) aimed at directing the actions of the Hospital Food and Nutrition Service. This instrument was qualified by means of a comparative analysis of the categories related to hospital food and nutritional care, published in the literature. Elaboration of the IEFNC comprised the following stages: (a) a survey of databases and documents for selection of the categories to be used in nutrition care evaluation, (b) a study of the institutional procedures for nutrition practice at two Brazilian hospitals, in order to provide a description of the sequence of actions that should be taken by the HFNS as well as other services participating in nutrition care, (c) design of the IEFNC based on the categories published in the literature, adapted to the sequence of actions observed in the routines of the hospitals under study, (d) application of the questionnaire at two different hospitals that was mentioned in the item (b), in order to assess the time spent on its application, the difficulties in phrasing the questions, and the coverage of the instrument, and (e) finalization of the instrument. The IEFNC consists of 50 open and closed questions on two areas of food and nutritional care in hospital: inpatient nutritional care and food service quality. It deals with the characterization and structure of hospitals and their HFNS, the actions concerning the patients’ nutritional evaluation and monitoring, the meal production system, and the hospital diets. "This questionnaire is a tool that can be seen as a portrait of the structure and characteristics of the HFNS and its performance in clinical and meal management dietitian activities."

Keywords

Nutritional care, Hospital food, Hospital food and nutrition service.