

The Effect of Implementing the Family Physician Program on Child health indicators in Tabriz district, North West of Iran

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Abstract

Background and objectives: Providing and promoting children's health, is a major task of family physicians in Iran health care system. This study was carried out to determine the impact of family physician program on health indicators of children in the rural area of Tabriz city.

Material and Methods: This Cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in children born in rural region of Tabriz city from 2003 to 2008 of which 751 were selected (12 percent of total population) using stratified sampling procedures and data were collected by a valid checklist that was constructed and performed by the researcher in the last research. The data were extracted from family health file records (child care forms) for two periods of time before and after implementing family physician plan and data were analyzed by SPSS 16 software.

Results: The results showed that there was a significant difference in children's health indicators including the number of cares for child, micronutrient Supplementation, child's age in the first time health care, the number of referrals and hospitalization case before and after implementing family physician plan. Meanwhile, the continuity of breastfeeding, anthropometric index of height and weight were not significantly changed in the improvement of indicators after the implementation of family physician program. ($p < 0.05$)

Conclusion: The presence of doctors and midwives in health team had a significant effect on some components of child care. However, there were no reliable evidences to prove its impact on child health indicators. Therefore, revision of the family physician responsibilities, reform of the family health information system and further studies to determine the exact impact of the plan is recommended.

Key Words: Family physician, Child, health care

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