



How do we fix SA's Healthcare? – Does OMR have a critical role to play?

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Improving Patient Care

***Southern Africa
Outcome Measurement &
Reporting Conference***

Friday, 16 September &
Saturday, 17 September 2022



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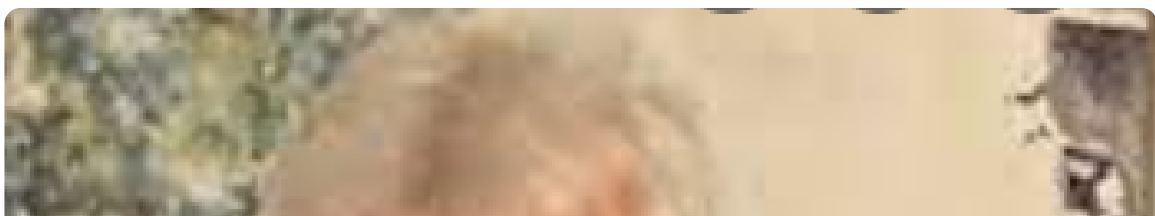
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South Africa has many challenges. A well-functioning South African healthcare system that provides access to affordable quality care is one of these challenges. There is widespread consensus that the public sector service delivery must be improved. The private sector is challenged by rampant price increases. This means the cost of belonging to a medical scheme is becoming increasingly unaffordable for citizens who prefer not to rely on the public sector. The cost of belonging to medical schemes has been increasing above inflation since the 1980s.

Do South Africans just need to accept the current state of our health system? Should clinical practitioners just stand back and wait for someone else to fix these problems?

What can we do, when we see daily news headlines showing mismanagement, incompetence, corruption, political patronage, and corporate patronage? What can we do when faced with funding models that fragment care, undermine care coordination, incentivise overservicing and allow for the promotion of unaffordable technology?



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new financial model? Do we wait for our health budgets to disappear into the trust accounts of personal injury lawyers?

Or do we roll up our sleeves and work collaboratively to improve care? And if we don't, who will fix our healthcare system?

Clinical practitioners must take charge of fixing our healthcare system. But how can we as individual clinical practitioners make a difference?

The answer lies in getting better at measuring what we do, measuring the results (outcomes) we achieve for our patients and using this information to make us better practitioners, deliver better care and improve the system. This process is called Outcome Measurement and Reporting (OMR).

Outcome Measurement and Reporting (OMR)

As Michael Porter says – “The most powerful tool in healthcare is measuring results”. This view is shared in the Health Market Inquiry ‘s (HMI) final report published three years ago (September 2019) that listed an OMR framework as critical to our health system.

Internationally, OMR is seen by health experts as a “no brainer” with clearly documented positive financial return being demonstrated in all countries prioritising OMR.

Despite this, no meaningful progress has been made to develop a South African National OMR framework and/or convene any national OMR projects.



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healthcare resources.

In our public facilities, measuring and reporting on health conditions will give us all a better understanding of the performance of public facilities and how the tax collected is being used.

OMR in the medical scheme environment will improve scheme funding, the allocation of funding and the efficiency of the use of scarce resources.

More importantly, the use of OMR will translate to better care to patients.

One of the more interesting results shown by OMR projects globally is that clinical practitioner who are early adopters of OMR principles outperform their colleagues and provide better patient care in a perpetual fashion.

How do you find out more about OMR?

Join the experts and colleagues at the 2nd Annual Outcome Measurement and Reporting Conference (OMRC) to be held virtually from 16-17 September. (To register, and get more information, go to:

<https://omrc.co.za/conference-2022>

OMRC is a dialogue platform set up with the sole objective of fostering dialogue and discussion about how OMR can help improve patient care in South Africa.

Firstly, that despite the Health Market Inquiry (HMI) final report being published several years ago that listed an OMR framework as critical to our health system, no meaningful progress has been made to develop such a national framework and/or convene any national OMR projects.

Secondly, the complacency and belief amongst many stakeholders that we can relax as NHI is coming and at the “wave of this magic wand” the nation’s health care problems will be sorted out. Our view is that NHI is unlikely to be a “silver bullet” or “wonder drug” that will sort out our health systems. While additional financing can improve health systems, this will only happen if expenditure on scarce resources is used effectively. OMR needs to play a prominent role in monitoring resource use and – allocation.

Thirdly, that experts in OMR seem to agree that outcome measurement must be driven by clinical practitioners and must not be subject to government interference and commercial influence, so that if we wait for government and / or funders to start the process, clinical practitioners will not be able to drive and control the OMR process.

The conveners hope that the dialogues organised through OMRC will progress the level of healthcare measurement in South Africa and improve patient care.

How do we fix Southern Africa’s health systems?

The analogy we like to use at OMRC is to describe how we need to approach fixing South Africa’s health system is as follows.



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We would all agree that the road must service everyone in the country.

We would all agree that there should only be one road – we need to stop seeing public and private separately but see them as one system that is interlinked.

We would all agree that the road must serve the needs of all our people – whether they rely solely on the public system or choose to spend their hard-earned after tax cash on private health

We would all agree that we should all work together to make the road work as best it can.

We would all agree that we would like to be proud of our road when compared to other countries

We would all concede that currently, our healthcare road has many potholes.

I think we would all agree that fixing the potholes is important, even if a new fancy financing model looms on the horizon.

As New York City showed, fixing broken windows, one at a time can heal a city.

Maybe by fixing one pothole at a time, we can improve the healthcare provided to each and every South African.

We encourage all clinical practitioners to join the debate and dialogue on the 16th and 17th of September 2022. The national OMR framework

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practitioners must own the system and use OMR to improve patient care and ensure that political interference and undue commercial influence are kept at bay.

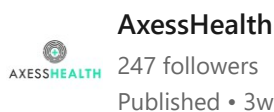
Stakeholders must appreciate that without clinical practitioners we have no health system. Without clinical practitioners, patient care will suffer. We must work with stakeholder to ensure that the working conditions for clinical practitioners remain conducive of professional practice. We must ensure that clinical practitioners are recognised and rewarded.

But that said, as clinical practitioners we have a responsibility to build a health system that works for us and our patients. Let's work together to improve patient care and our healthcare system. Let's use OMR to achieve this goal and get OMR projects up and running.

By Dr Andrew Good (pictured), Co-founder Southern Africa Outcome Measurement and Reporting Conference (SA OMRC)

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