

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

According to the Eight National Public Health Plan, the Division of Regional Hospitals set a target of developing central regional hospitals and general hospitals to reach the 4 aspects of quality which are the quality of administration, service, academic affairs and personnel.

Roi-Et Hospital is a general hospital with 549 beds under the administration of the Division of Regional Hospitals, the Ministry of Public Health. Located in the district of Muang Roi-Et City , Roi-Et Province.

According to the hospital report of the year 2000, there are 32 specialized doctors, 20 general doctors and 380 nurses. The hospital have 23 wards. Each day, the hospital gives service to 867 outpatients and 500 inpatients and allows 136 patients to return home. (From the Roi-Et Hospital Report of the year 2000)

In order to receive a cure, outpatients need to have a cure record card which is called OPD Card. After being admitted to the hospital, each patient will have record files literally called "Chart". This so-call chart comprises a summary sheet, a temperature form, a doctor's order sheet, a laboratory form, a nurse's note, a medicine form, a progress note, etc.

OPD Card and Charts are very important to both patients and the hospital. All details of patients are recorded in charts such as records of medicine allergy, chronic disease, urgent cure or continuous chemical treatment. If charts were lost, it would be a waste of time for patients to restart their new treatment and to retest medicine for their treatment. Besides, doctors could not know the patients' medicine allergy record. they may prescribe wrong medicine or medicine that is allergic to patients. This will be a great danger to patients' life. Charts also can be used as evidence to protect a damage or an insurance claim in court. As for a social aspect, loss of charts will reflect a negative image of services in the hospital.

Charts are also important for the hospital because they contain all the hospital information that is always used to ask for a yearly budget allocated to each hospital by the Ministry of Public Health. By using DRGs as a basic data, the budget will be allocated by means of refunding high cost cure services.

Charts have to be completed accurately, arranged orderly and easily accessible. There should be no loss of charts. Seeing their importance, the hospital administrators begin to launch an improvement of the hospital policy by using public health information as a basic way of the improvement.

In the past, since the Roi-Et Hospital had no unit to be responsible directly for providing information, it asked the academic unit to coordinate with other units in gathering all the information and sent it to the Ministry of Public Health or the relevant organizations. This process faced several problems. For example, there was an incomplete data and it is not arranged orderly. When the data is needed, there must be a new request for it. There is no person in charge of the data. The coordination for data collection was ineffective. The data was complicated and could not be used effectively. These problems led to an establishment of Hospital Information Unit in October 1998. It is composed of Medical Information Center, Computer Center, Internal Medical Record Statistics Unit and External Medical Record Statistics Unit.

At the same time, Roi-Et Hospital has initiated the TQM technique for the hospital quality development. This technique can solve the problem of data permanently and it encounters the cause of the problem directly. Several strategies have to be done for the solution such as setting good cooperation among personnel, using a scientific method for reasoning, planning carefully and following work continuously. Hospital Information Unit arranged a meeting in October 1999 and Internal Medical Record Statistics Unit raised the problem of overdue summary discharge charts to be solved. There were 852 overdue charts and 480 lost charts. Internal Medical Record Statistics Unit did not know how to find them. At the same time, numbers of overdue and lost charts tended to increase continuously.

It can be seen obviously that the mentioned problem concerns every unit of Roi-Et Hospital. And it has to be solved urgently since it affected directly to patients, the service quality and the allocation of budget to the hospital. Medical Information Unit has an unanimous agreement that the TQM technique should be applied to solve this problem.