ABSTRACT

Quality of health care services provided by general practitioners has become increasingly important. A survey study was conducted at the Family Medicine Unit (FMU), Bhumibol Adulyadej Hospital, Bangkok Thailand. The objective of this study was to describe the socio-demographic characteristics, accessibility of the health care services and the health status of the respondents. The three essential components, namely structure, process and outcome of quality of health care services, were also evaluated by respondents and the qualified clinicians.

There were 308 respondents selected from the Royal Thai Air Force staff, as well as from their family members within the catchment area of the FMU. Self-administered questionnaires were used among these respondents. The auditing system based on the reference guidelines was also performed by four internal auditors and one external medical auditor from Thammasat University Hospital in order to assess the quality of this service unit.

The results of the study showed that the majority (80%) of respondents were male who were military staff or retired officers. Most of them (70%) were over 49 years old and they were able to access the services by paying not more than 50 baht. Ninety-five percent of the respondents had health insurance under the Civil Servant Medical Benefit Scheme (CSMBS). Age and family income were found to be statistically positively significantly correlated (p-value < 0.05) for most of the aspects of quality of care. There were significant differences in the median scores of almost all aspects of patients’ satisfaction between two groups of different health status. The assessment score given by the respondents and medical auditors were good in most aspects of quality components (structure, process, outcome) which were mainly based on the United Kingdom General Practitioner Assessment Survey Form (GPAS) and the Hospital Accreditation Institute, Thailand (HA) Standard.

It is suggested that the FMU should, however, continue to improve in the areas of continuity of care, inter-personal care, and nursing care practices. In addition, a well-organized management system and the use of clinical practice guidelines under a well-defined and established system that is suitable for Thai society is recommended.