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Perceptions of healthcare professionals regarding the main challenges and barriers to effective hospital infection control in Mongolia

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Despite growing efforts from international community to support developing countries, infection control in most developing countries remains either non-existent or ineffective. The WHO reported that only 23/147 (2010) developing countries have a functioning surveillance system for HCAs. For planning purposes, it is crucial to understand why policy makers and health professionals of developing countries are resistant to implementing international guidelines and recommendations. This study was conducted in Mongolia jointly with the University of Queensland, Australia and was aimed to identify the main perceived challenges and barriers that hinder the effective implementation of infection control programmes in Mongolia. In 2008, 55 individual interviews and 4 group discussions were conducted, involving policy and hospital-level managers, doctors, nurses and infection control practitioners. Thematic analysis revealed a large number of perceived barriers to the formulation and implementation of infection control policy, including poor capacity of local infection control professionals to generate evidence and a lack of existing local evidence to persuade stakeholders to allocate more resources to infection control. The study results suggest that the availability of infection control policy and guidelines, and the provision of specific recommendations for low resource settings, do not assure effective implementation of infection control programmes in Mongolia. Much more support will be needed for local infection control professionals to generate evidence for policy makers so that infection control receives appropriate attention and resources. The importance of more proactive international peer and local public pressure is highlighted.

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