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A Generic Quality Assurance Model (GQAM) for successful e-health implementation in rural hospitals in South Africa

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Abstract

Although e-health can potentially facilitate the management of scarce resources and improve the quality of healthcare services, implementation of e-health programs continues to fail or not fulfi l expectations. A key contributor to the failure of e-health implementation in rural hospitals is poor quality management of projects. Based on a survey 35 participants from fi ve rural hospitals in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, and using a qualitative case study research methodology, this article attempted to answer the question: does the adoption of quality assurance (QA) models add value and help to ensure success of information technology projects, especially in rural health settings? The study identifi ed several weaknesses in the application of QA in these hospitals; however, fi ndings also showed that the QA methods used, in spite of not being formally applied in a standardised manner, did nonetheless contribute to the success of some projects. The authors outline a generic quality assurance model (GQAM), developed to enhance the potential for successful acquisition of e-health solutions in rural hospitals, in order to improve the quality of care and service delivery in these hospitals.