

REVIEW ARTICLE

**Does Audit Improve the Quality of Care?**

Areti Tsaloglidou, RN, MSc, PhD

Nurse "AHEPA" Hospital of Thessaloniki, Greece

Clinical Collaborator Alexander Technological Educational Institution of Thessaloniki, Greece

Corresponding author:

Areti Tsaloglidou, RN, MSc, PhD

Address: Agathoupoleos 25, 40 Ekklisies, 54636 Thessaloniki, Greece

Tel.: +302310200378 Fax: +302310531483 Mobile: +306948377619

E-Mail: atsaloglidou@hotmail.com

**ABSTRACT**

**BACKGROUND:** The quality of health care and quality assurance are concepts which have been established for many years. Audit nowadays is adopted as a means of developing high quality care.

**AIM:** This study aims to identify the perspectives of audit in practice and its relationship to quality assessment and assurance, quality improvement, and clinical effectiveness.

**METHODS:** There were used the databases Medline and Cinahl to identify studies related to clinical audit. These databases were searched up to May 2009.

**DISCUSSION:** Audit is used as a tool to assure and assess the quality of patient health care. It is also an educational tool as it creates a lot of opportunities for professionals to think about practice and to learn from the experience of others.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Although that audit is a powerfull and useful tool to improve and evaluate the quality of health care, on the other hand there are many barriers that make its use difficult in everyday practice.

**Key Words:** Clinical audit, quality of care, quality assessment, quality assurance, clinical effectiveness.