

Currently, most hospitals have focused upon the quality improvement of services. Infection control nurse (ICN) is one of the key persons who develop infection control program to meet the hospital accreditation requirements. The purpose of this study was to describe roles, problems, and supportive needs of ICN in the hospital accreditation. The sample were 11 ICNs who worked in general hospitals where have already registered for the accreditation. Data were collected during April to May, 2002 by using questionnaires and semi-structured interview using the Standard of Infection Control Practice Jubilee Celebration Year 1999 as a framework. The content validity for the instruments was examined and content validity index was 1.0. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and data categorization.

The results revealed that the role performance of ICNs included eight roles that were : surveillance, outbreak investigation, employee health, education, consultation, management, quality improvement, and research. However, it was found that the following activities were not practiced by the majority of ICNs : a) participating in physical examination and providing immunization for the hospital personnel, b) recording surveillance data by themselves, and c)

evaluating of knowledge, attitude, and practicing regarding infection control of hospital employee (81.82%, 72.73%, and 63.63, respectively).

The reported problems and barriers of role performance were high workload, lack of specific position for ICN, lack of concern among hospital employee regarding hospital infection control policy, lack of budget for supporting the research and immunization program, insufficient knowledge about quality improvement related to infection control, and lack of procedure and work instruction model related to infection control. Major needs of support for role practicing were the specific position for ICN, be able to working full time as ICNs, allocated budget for conducting research, the collaboration from hospital employee to do procedures and work instructions, and supporting regarding an updated result of research.

The results indicated that ICNs perform roles comprehensively but insufficiently in some areas. ICNs needed allocated position and a clear job description. ICNs from general hospitals that have not been accredited could apply the results of this study to their roles and responsibilities to efficiently improve the quality in the area of infection control.