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Establishment of health information management system at Base Hospital Udugama

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Introduction
Digitalization of health system offers more convenient, efficient, safe and quality patient care services with the advances in Science and technology. At present, many aspects of healthcare have incorporated with Information Technology applications such as for admissions, diagnostics, treatment, imaging, planning, monitoring, inventory management, and maintaining statistics. As a developing country, Sri Lanka is not much integrated with this technology and still manages healthcare services with paper-based system and retrieving patient records are difficult with this. As a secondary care Hospital, Base Hospital Udugama (BHU) planned to initiate Health Information Management System (HIMS) to improve efficiency, safety and quality of service.

Objective
Aimed to establish a HIMS at Out Patient Department of the BHU.

Methods
After several stakeholder meetings, planning unit of the hospital developed technical and structural plan to establish HIMS at BHU. The plan included establishment of internal network system, purchasing of hardware, preparation of registration room, recruitment and training of staff with the guidance of responsible authority.

Results and Discussion
With successful planning, good inter-sectoral coordination and effective communication with the ministry of health and provincial ministry officials the HIMS was established at Base Hospital Udugama in 2021. Once a patient is registered to the system, at the Out-Patient Department (OPD), an identity card would be issued with a barcode number that could be used in subsequent hospital visits. Through this networked system, the patient Registration room, Doctors' consultation rooms, Laboratory, Outdoor dispensary, vaccination & dressing room, director's office and health information unit were linked to each other. Producing this one-time registration card, patients will be able to continue treatment in subsequent visits and clinicians will be able to review past records by just scanning the barcode without re-registration.

Conclusion
With the implementation of HIMS, OPD at BHU converted to paperless OPD. Through HIMS system, waiting time, and drug issuing errors have been significantly reduced, and patient satisfaction, safety of the service and stock maintenance have been improved.

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