**Research Area: Defense Medicine**

**Topic**

An Evaluation of Defense Medicine in the Healthcare System and Its Impact on Quality and Cost of Health Services in the United State of America

**Problem Statement**

There is an acute increase in medical-legal issues in the healthcare system. Partly, it is because of the increasing knowledge of patient’s right and on the other hand is due to the increasing penetration of technology in the health sector. Consequently, the healthcare workers are at a constant risk of being sued because of a malpractice (Baicker & Olson, 2015). Due to the medical legal issues, there is a reflexive reaction that is cropping up which is meant to be a defense mechanism of healthcare workers. This reflexive reaction is known as defense medicine. In this case, health care workers, especially those dealing with the high risk patients, tend to do more diagnostic tests than needed when dealing with patient. A patient with a minor migraine has to be checked on MRI, CT-scan and other test before being treated only to cover the physician from medical legal issues in case it turns out to be a tumor (Baicker & Olson, 2015). In other case, patient are unnecessarily referred if they are seen to be litigious.

**Area of Research**

It is therefore important to research on the problems that are caused by the defense medicine in the healthcare system. Among the hypothesis of the problems associated with defense medicine includes:

1. Defense medicine is increasing the cost of health service provision to the patients and the health insurance companies.
2. Defense medicine is putting the life of the patient at risk due to over treatment and over diagnosis by physicians.

The data can be collected through self-administered questionnaires and analysis done to examine on the impact of defense medicine on quality and cost of healthcare services.

**References**

Baicker, K., Wright, B. J., & Olson, N. A. (2015). Reevaluating Reports of Defensive Medicine. Journal of Health Politics, Policy & Law, 40(6), 1157-1177. doi:10.1215/03616878-3424462