Editorial

What are the leading keywords of IJQHC in last 3 years?

International Journal for Quality in Health Care (IJQHC) has existed for >25 years since its inception in 1989. In the last 3 years (2012–2014), IJQHC has published 248 papers (2012: 86; 2013: 85; 2014: 77) in the disciplines of health services research, health care evaluation, policy, health economics, quality improvement, management and clinical research focused on the quality of care and patient safety. For every paper, its keywords play a vital part for dissemination of its findings. These keywords are freely available to all users and get sent to many online sources, from which users undertaking online searches can locate the paper. If someone wants to retrieve any paper, the keywords play an important role in it.

The keywords field is essential, because it is the most frequently searched field if search results need to be narrowed. The title is a very concise indication of the content of the paper, and the abstract is a more detailed but still concise description of the content. Keywords usually codify the 'key' words and terms from the title and abstract and text of the paper, if necessary. Therefore, we felt that visualizing a paper's keywords would help authors and readers worldwide to more precisely explore IJQHC’s contents to see what kinds of papers were published in the last 3 years.

We adopted a simple methodology. First, we collected 2012–14 keywords from Scopus database (http://www.scopus.com/ (25th Mar 2015, date last accessed)). Secondly, we processed tense, singular and plural number of the same keywords. In the final step, we used Wordle which is a free text online visualization tool to create the keywords visualization (http://www.wordle.net/ (25th Mar 2015, date last accessed)). We also tokenized each keyword by using a space between the words and then calculated each separated keywords’ frequency.

From 2012 to 2014 in IJQHC, there were 637 different keywords. The total frequencies were 1218. We observed that ‘Quality Improvement’ (45 times, 3.69% (45/1218)), ‘Quality Measurement’ (43 times, 3.53%), ‘Patient Safety’ (42 times, 3.45%) and ‘Quality Management’ (33 times, 2.71%) were the most frequently used keywords. These are the words that are most likely to have reached a global audience. Moreover, ∼79% (504/637) of the keywords such as ‘Knowledge Translation’ or ‘Long-Term Care . . . etc.’ have a frequency of only one. Figure 1 shows the keywords visualization of IJQHC published in last 3 years by using Wordle.

After separating keywords, there are 576 unique keywords and 2509 total keywords.

Figure 1 Keywords of IJQHC published in last 3 years.
We found that the most frequent words were Quality (231 times, 9.21% (231/2509)), Care (141 times, 5.62%), Patient (102 times, 3.63%), Health (91 times, 3.63%) and Safety (81 times, 3.23%) as shown in Fig. 2. This indicates that there are a lot of papers available for readers worldwide related to quality and patient safety in health care. Using data visualization to display large amounts of data is nothing new; however, its value remains since it allows big data to be universally understood at a glance and exposes trends. Keywords visualization will make it easier to understand IJQHC publication characteristics.

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Figure 2 Separated unique keywords of IJQHC published in last 3 years.