Autonomous Practice through Staff Empowerment

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Introduction

With the increasing comprehensive and holistic care management developed in hospital, patient admitted is usually cared and serviced by various departments and disciplines to address their needs. In order to provide an effective and efficient service, job division is adopted in the work process to make work into smaller tasks and being carried out by different health care team including clinical and non-clinical in multidisciplinary setting. In this way, is the patient that is not familiar to the health care team and especially those fragile is well assessed and planned before cared or mobilized? Incidents have being been reported that patient were hurt during care procedure. To provide a safer environment and to minimize injury happen to patient, an alert signage system was developed to provide a common language to empower all health care team members in providing appropriate care to patients during their patient journeys in hospital.

Objectives

1. To standardize communication with the unique tool and common language among health care team to ensure safe patient care. 2. To empower health care team members in decision making on the focus of patient care management during the care process.

Methodology

To promote patient safety culture, a standardized communication in alertness of fragile skin, limb problem and level of assistance required by patient is developed and piloted in the Orthopaedics and Traumatology ward in Ruttonjee and Tang Shiu Kin
Hospitals in 4Q 2011. Promulgation to implement this standardized communication tool among health care team and to empower the health care team members to execute autonomous practice in patient care in the whole hospital, an employee involvement model was applied: TELL: Several briefing and a large scale of hospital forum were conducted to all health care team. SELL: The positive aspects and the rationale were promoted to gain commitment from all health care team members. CONSULT: Consultation was made to special area like Operating Theatre, Endoscopy unit and Radiology Department to engage their participation. JOIN: Consensus was built in multidisciplinary team in collaboration. Evaluation survey was conducted in January 2015.

**Result**
Overall, the health care team members agreed the Alert signage system is useful in understanding patients’ mobility status and improving the team communication and enhancing patient safety. It also helps to alert health care team members who are not familiar with patient's condition to decide what care modality and assistance should be offered. And this is significantly reflected when they need to provide care and assist patient mobility in their first hand they meet the patient. In view of the positive outcome and benefits that the system in enhancing patient safety and empowering staff, it is worth and recommend to continue.