No More Morse Code: SBAR - Common Language for Handover
Yeung W(1), Poon WS(2), Sun TF(1), Chan SH(1), Poon CY(1), Man HK(1), Chan YF(1), Cheng BW(1), Leung WM(1)
(1)Department of Surgery, Prince of Wales Hospital, (2)Department of Surgery, Shatin Hospital

Keywords:
SBAR
Clinical Handover
Communication

Introduction
There is no on-site doctors in surgical wards in Shatin Hospital. Nurses communicate with doctors via phone and fax for patient situations requiring medical attentions. Effective and accurate communications between nurses and doctors is crucial. The Situation, Background, Assessment and Recommendation (SBAR) communication skill promotes better communication in clinical settings. It offers a solution to bridge the gap in communication, including hand-offs, patient transfers, critical conversations and telephone calls.

Objectives
The objective is to promote better communication in clinical settings by applying SBAR communication skill.

Methodology
Document Design A new SBAR communication form was designed based on the generic NTEC SBAR Form. As nurses communicate with doctors via phone and fax, information of the sender and receiver was added. Moreover, a critical point, a box for information of drug allergy and adverse drug reaction is included. Staff Training Briefing and training sessions were provided to ward nurses. Training material was uploaded to iSurg for reference later on. Cue cards were prepared to facilitate nurses filling the SBAR form and communicate with doctors. Reinforcement Period Staff compliance and technique of using SBAR communication format was monitored and reviewed randomly. Reinforcement to individual staff and sharing among colleagues were provided.

Result
An audit was conducted during September 8-19, 2014. Staff compliance and technique of utilising SBAR communication format was assessed. 9 cases employed SBAR communication form during the period were reviewed. The compliance rate of using the SBAR communication form correctly was 98%. By using the SBAR Communication Form and the quick reference cue card, nurses were able to communicate with medical officers effectively and efficiently via phone and fax.