Health Informatics Enhancement in TMH AED – Program based vs Labor work based in the preparation of daily assignment

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Keywords:
Information technology
Manpower
Efficiency
Clerical staff
Administration

Introduction
In TMH AED, the daily assignment for more than 50 colleagues with a wide range of ranks, including NO, APN, RN, EN, HCA, PCA, OPA, WA & EA, was prepared manually by the clerical staff every day. It was a very time-consuming and complicated work which limited their time spending on clinical duties. Moreover, the layout of daily assignment was not well-structured for nurse in-charge to deploy manpower; the font size and space were too small for staff to identify their duties. To facilitate the workflow, an Excel-based programme was designed and commenced in TMH AED since June 2014. It was frequently reviewed and evaluated by means of staff opinion and time consumption.

Objectives
(1) To decrease time spent in preparing daily assignment; (2) to facilitate nurse in-charge in manpower management; (3) to increase the efficiency in duty handover.

Methodology
After collecting the ideas from our colleagues, a new daily assignment template was designed. An Excel-based programme was developed by the Departmental IT Sub-committee. Clerical staff can just copy-and-paste the weekly duty spreadsheet into the programme and it will automatically generate the daily assignment for all ranks in the corresponding date. A “Pre-test” vs “Post-test” was employed. Subjects were the clerical staff and clinical staff in TMH AED. Outcome measures were categorized as: (1) Time spent of clerks in preparing daily assignment; (2) Satisfaction survey.
Result
In June 2014, time spent in preparing daily assignment for our clerks was reduced by up to 30%. Nurse in-charge reflected that it provided a clearer picture for manpower distribution. Other clinical staff, especially the supporting staff, was satisfied with the larger fonts of new daily assignment. The Excel-based programme effectively reduced time consumption of clerical staff for preparing daily assignment. Time could be saved for their clinical duties so as to improve the patient care. The programme can also facilitate nurse in-charge in manpower allocation and increase satisfaction of clinical staff. Furthermore, no extra expenditure was needed since the Excel programme was provided by hospital. It was a milestone in enhancing Health Informatics. We are looking forward to more Health Informatics enhancement project to facilitate the departmental development.