Indwelling Pleural Catheter (IPC), Home Education Care Program, A Pilot Program

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Introduction
Recurrent malignant pleural effusion (MPE) is a common complication of malignant diseases, which causes dyspnea and reduces physical capability, worsens quality of life, and often heralds a rapid demise for the patient. The traditional management for recurrent MPE, thoracentesis may be quick and relatively easy to perform, but has a high recurrence rate. Chest tube placement with talc slurry is quite effective at achieving pleurodesis, but this procedure can be quite painful and requires a long hospitalization. Putnam et al (2000) commended that outpatient management of IPC patients with MPE can significantly reduce the healthcare charges during their end-of-life care as it can shorten hospitalization and reduces unplanned re-admission.

Objectives
To shorten the patient length of hospitalization and reduce the re-admitted rate by starting an IPC home care program

Methodology
Started in 2012, 1 Associated Consultant, 1 Advanced Practice Nurse, 2 Respiratory Specialty Nurse and 1 Community Nurse were assigned for the IPC home care program. This included: IPC home care program team members who had team meeting with patient and family member for the introduction of IPC home care program. Patients were required to self finance for buying the IPC catheter and accessory. One week IPC home care training program was provided to patients and carers. IPC patient education booklet was developed to enhance patient and carer’s knowledge and skill on IPC, so as to facilitate home care. Patient attended regular follow up in outpatient clinic after discharged from the hospital.

Result
Between 2013 to 2014, there were 2 patients discharged from the respiratory ward in Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH). The patients could be discharge after one week
after IPC insertion. Her quality of life was improved as the length of hospitalization was shortened and repetitive uncomfortable procedure can be avoided in their remaining life. According to our pilot study, IPC home care program can shorten the patient length of hospitalization and reduce the re-admitted rate. However, patents are required to buy IPC catheter by themselves, this is the key issue that has limited the patient size who are willing to join our program.