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Specialty Training Advancement Recognition (STAR) program for care-related support workers—Pilot project
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Introduction
Tracheostomized children are fragile and are at risk of infections, accidental decannulation and sputum retention. To enhance the care of these children, it is recommended that healthcare providers other than doctors and nurses should also learn the basic care of tracheostomy and related emergency management. Previous studies showed that skills transmission between experienced and inexperienced hospital workers may provide opportunity for staff’s personal development and improve quality and safety of healthcare. We piloted a program, the “Specialty Training Advancement Recognition (STAR) program for care-related support workers (CRSW)”, to promote positive practice environment in our ward with specialized rehabilitation program including that for ventilator assisted children.

Objectives
(1) To increase CRSW’s knowledge in caring patients with tracheostomy (2) To promote happy workplace environment

Methodology
The STAR program consisted of 3 parts: (1) theory sessions; (2) clinical observation & practice; and (3) evaluation. There were two 30-minutes theory sessions on the basic concept of tracheostomy, tracheostomy care, preparation for outing, crisis management, suctioning and use of manual resuscitator. Then CRSW had a one-on-one clinical practicum (i.e. attached to a trainer to assist in changing tracheostomy tube; practice tracheostomy care and change of tracheostomy tube on manikin; and change tracheostomy tube under supervision). The evaluation was conducted in questionnaire format. There were 25 questions with a total score 25 to assess the knowledge delivered during the theory sessions. CRSW’s satisfaction was
measured by another 3 questions (support from colleagues; team relationship; and happy workplace) using a 10-point Likert scale. A “pre-test” versus “post-test” design was employed and was tested for significance using paired t-test. A p-value of <0.05 was considered to be significant.

**Result**

From August to November 2014, all the 12 CRSWs in the ward (100%) had completed the STAR program. Primary outcome: There was a significant increase in the mean score of the knowledge questionnaire from 21 to 24.25 after the training. The mean difference of score between pre-test and post-test was 3.25 (95% confidence interval: 2.1-4.3; p<0.0001). Secondary outcome: As for the 3 questions related to CRSW’s satisfaction, there had been significant improvement in response to team relationship from 6.17 to 7.33 (p=0.015) and response to working in a happy workplace from 5.75 to 6.83 (p=0.0081). There was no significant change in the response to support from colleagues.