A new Speak Up Tool to promote patient safety in Crew Resource Management Training

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Introduction
Good team communication is one of the key areas that may help prevent sentinel events. Apart from the well-known check list and time out in surgical and procedural safety, WHO advocates several communication tools like SBAR, call out, check back and graded assertiveness to enhance team communication. While the two challenge rule in graded assertiveness was used to promote patient safety in Western societies, direct verbal challenges may create negative emotional response or even block patient safety messages in Chinese culture.

Objectives
1) PQRST is a standardized clinical communication tool innovated and advocated to improve speak up culture in NTEC 2) The second goal is to align Speak up tool (PQRST) with local communication training in NTEC to further enhance team communication in surgical and procedural safety.

Methodology
A work group of 7 Chinese clinicians was formed and synthesized the graded assertiveness concepts over a 3-hour meeting as an innovative Speak Up Tool PQRST. The mnemonic stands for P – address the person by name & rank, Q – raise a question, R – give a reason S – repeat verbal alert a second time if message not got across, T – call a third party to remind on safety issue. PQRST tool was shared and improved with feedbacks received from NTEC OT staff and Surgical staff during eight 2-hr interactive workshops(n=218) on teamwork communication for patient safety.
One in situ workshop was delivered to a NTEC surgical department.

**Result**

In the April 2014 workshop evaluation with 38 participants the feedback response was 82%. In ascending scale of 1-4, the evaluation results showed achievement of objectives 3.7, appropriate rundown 3.6, contents useful 3.7, contents understood 3.8, presentation satisfactory 3.7, AV aids useful and informative 3.8, venue satisfactory 3.4. Most participants expressed appreciation towards the new speak up PQRST tool applicable in daily practice. Many requested to run workshops for both message sender and receiver (surgeon) in surgical settings. From June 2014 to Jan 2015, the new PQRST Speak Up tool for doctors and nurses was refined and shared by CRM instructors as one of the several CRM teamwork communication tools in NTEC attended by 10 classes of 128 attendants.