Enhancement of efficiency of auto-refill system for linen supply

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Introduction
The auto-refill service for linen supply to wards was reviewed to further improve efficiency. The processing time for the auto-refill service for linen supply to wards is long. And the repeated manual handling works induced high risk of staff injury on duty.

Objectives
(1) To reduce the processing time by 30% (2) To reduce manual handling & operation (MHO) tasks

Methodology
Lean and six sigma concepts such as fish bone diagram and process control were applied to study the causes of long processing time of auto-refill system for linen supply. Besides, since the linen is very heavy and staff are required to refill the linen on the racks, risk of Occupational Safety & Health for the whole process was evaluated. A Task Force was set up with the participation of multi-disciplinary staff including administrative and supporting staff, Physiotherapist to work out the solutions.

Result
(1) 32.7% of processing time was reduced and the total processing time for refilling the linen for 9 wards were trimmed down below 1 hour. (2) The refill quantity of some linen items were trimmed down to minimize the excess supply (3) Minimized the counting works by using labelling system at rack to indicate the refill level (4) The route of travelling was shortened. (5) 100% staff welcomed the project and agreed to have benefits on safety and reduce the risk of MHO after process re-engineering.