Paediatric Home Care Team enables safe, effective and efficient early discharge of technology dependent children from acute Paediatric wards
Yeung YMI(1), Lee MSJ(1), Chan MY(1), Cheung YL(1), Ng LS(1), Wong YF(1), Lau SW(1), Cheng SY(1), Tse WYW(1)
Queen Elizabeth Hospital

Keywords:
Paediatrics
technology dependent children
patient & parent empowerment
home care

Introduction
With medical and technological advances in neonatal and paediatric intensive care, increasing number of young infants and children can now survive extreme prematurity, birth trauma, life-threatening illnesses and traumatic accidents. Many of these patients can become medically stable but heavily rely on long term complex health care while some may even require mechanical aid for breathing. These patients are categorized as technology-dependent children. Along with the emerging population of technology-dependent children, some medical equipment has been designed to permit home care needs. The gap resides in parents who are not confident and competent enough to perform home care and operate these lifesaving machines. Promotion of home care in the department of Paediatrics has been ongoing for 20 years primarily carried out by an experienced Paediatric intensive care nurse. In 2013 a Paediatric Home Care Team (PHCT) composing of experienced paediatric nurses was set up. Varies educational programs were established to empower parents to take care of these children at home.

Objectives
Setting up of a dedicated team to enable safe early discharge of technology dependent children from hospital

Methodology
PHCT consists of 4 main specialty sub-teams including respiratory, gastroenterology, DM care and Haematology. Each led by an APN with corresponding training. The team is integrated into the department patient care process through adoption of referral forms for physician use, forms to assess suitability of parents and patient for
self-care at home, training manual for different types of care and utilization of check lists for case manager to ensure safe patient outcome before discharge

**Result**

Before the setting up of PHCT, 140 patients over 20 years were discharged home for invasive mechanical ventilation, parenteral nutrition, BiPAP, tracheostomy, nasogastric tube and gastrostomy feeding as well as central venous catheter care. Since October 2013, the PHCT has received 76 referrals from physicians and 70 cases have been successfully sent home for self-care. The PHCT enables technology dependent patients to receive safe and adequate care in their own home who, otherwise would remain in acute hospital care indefinitely