Effectiveness of cardiology nurse clinic for acute coronary syndrome (ACS) patients

Cheung HW, Lee CK, Chow CS, Hung PY, Cheng SM, Chui WY
Medical & Therapeutics Department, Prince of Wales Hospital

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Introduction
Cardiology Nurse Clinic (CNC) in Prince of Wales Hospital (PWH) was set up in January 2012 to follow up acute coronary syndrome (ACS) clients for consecutive seven weeks after discharge for patient education and reinforcement, exercise training and ad hoc symptoms monitoring and control. It aimed to empower cardiac clients after heart attacks and/or after coronary interventions to modify their lifestyles to prevent further heart attacks; to improve return to work, back to community and to reduce mortality and mobility which ultimately reduce the expenditure on treatment of complications e.g. unplanned readmissions and etc.

Objectives
A study was implemented to determine the effectiveness of cardiology nurse clinic for acute coronary syndrome patients in respect to lowering of blood pressure, cholesterol, sugar, body mass index, life style modification, return to work and unplanned admission within 30-day.

Methodology
Phase 1 cardiac rehabilitation (education and exercise) was provided to ACS patients during hospitalization and 7-week Phase 2 cardiac rehabilitation was offered in cardiology nurse clinic upon discharge. Samples were recruited by convenient method: clients attending cardiology nurse clinic and those defaulted follow up from April 2013 to December 2014 were assessed and compared. Total 86 clients were assessed (follow up group = 43 and defaulted follow up group = 43). Both groups had similar baseline demographic data in respect to gender, age, pre-morbid conditions, medications upon discharge, blood pressure, cholesterol levels, fasting sugar and body mass index.

Result
3-month reassessment and blood results showed that follow up group got significant
lower systolic blood pressure and body mass index, better control in total cholesterol and sugar levels. Defaulted follow up group got significant high unplanned readmission within 30-day. As compared to the zero unplanned readmission for the follow up group there were 6 unplanned readmissions in the defaulted follow up group - 3 admitted due to heart failure / shortness of breath, 1 for chest pain, 1 for lower limb oedema and 1 for hyperglycaemia. Initial data showed cardiology nurse clinic prevent further coronary attacks and complications for ACS patients.