Working Clothes – An All-win Solution for Happy Staff
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Introduction
Working clothes have become popular with heightened staff awareness on infection control after SARS. In 2013, Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital (PYNEH) started introducing working clothes to 2,700 staff of the nursing, allied health and supporting staff groups as substitute of uniform. Staff representatives were engaged in working groups to select the designs, fabric and colors of the working clothes for different staff groups. Staff representatives also proposed finer enhancement including pants length, maternity wear and odd-size arrangement to cater for specific needs. In the laundry, workers have been relieved of the heat stress associated with ironing uniform. To assure a continuous supply, PYNEH has developed an in-house Working Clothes Issuance System (WCIS) to automate and simplify the working clothes issuing process and inventory management.

Objectives
1. To achieve staff satisfaction by replacing uniform with comfortable and smartly designed working clothes
2. To improve the productivity and the working environment of the laundry by eliminating the processing of uniform items

Methodology
1. A staff survey was conducted to evaluate the user satisfaction. 2. Laundry workers were interviewed to gather their comments and feedback.

Result
403 staff completed the survey, over 90% of them were satisfied with the comfort,
functionality, supply and issuing process of the working clothes. Moreover, over 94% of the respondents agreed to have working clothes instead of uniform and their professional image was not jeopardized. The respondents indicated a lower satisfaction towards the design and cleanliness of the working clothes (82.6% and 79.7% respectively). Furthermore, Kruskal Wallis Test reveals a significant difference in the nurses who scored a lower satisfaction relative to other staff groups in aspects such as the design, cleanliness, professional image, supply and issuing process of the working clothes. In the laundry, tunnel finisher is used instead of the ironing press. As a result, the temperature has been lowered to 31.6°C WBGTi as confirmed in a heat stress assessment. Simplified processing has speeded up the production and consequently increased the productivity of the production team by 4 folds. Laundry workers expressed appreciation to the management in the elimination of OSH hazards. With the WCIS, management information on consumption and size distribution is available for better inventory management.