“Family engagement in early rehabilitation program” in Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of Prince of Wales Hospital

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Introduction
Acquired weakness is a common condition found in patients with critical illness that can lead to severe physical and respiratory impairment. Early physical rehabilitation may contribute to improvement of physical function and decrease the length of stay in ICU. Family members can be good partners to motivate patients in the course of rehabilitation. They are invited to learn and assist patients to do exercise during visiting hours. A “Family engagement in early rehabilitation program” collaborated by ICU nursing and Physiotherapy was developed.

Objectives
To enhance limb exercise and motivate patient to do exercise as condition allows.

Methodology
From the fourth day onwards after admission to ICU, patients who were anticipated to have prolonged stay are selected for entering the program. The selection criteria are 1) condition of the patient was stable for exercise, and 2) family members were available to join the program. The program 1. Nursing staff coordinate the ward logistics including invitation, training appointment and enquiry, and on-site supervision if required. 2. Physiotherapists teach family members a set of functional exercise of 4 limbs to be done on patients, follow-up revision of exercise also provided if indicated. A pamphlet was provided for enhancing information transfer. 3. Program feedbacks from the family members were collected through a survey with questionnaires.

Result
Total 30 patients’ relatives participated in the program from 1/1/2014 to 31/1/2015. Nineteen questionnaires were returned. Results are shown in the following:
Percentage of agree/strongly agree 1. The programme objectives were clearly defined to you? 94.7% 2. The content of the programme was well organized and easy to be followed? i. Adequate time for training 73.7% ii. Clear instruction from physiotherapist 94.4% iii. Any difficulties to learn 84.4% 3. The exercise was easy for you to perform for the patient? i. Competency to perform 88.8% ii. Supervision from nurse/physiotherapist 73.7% iii. Access/Resources for revision 47.4% 4. The exercise program is useful for your relative? 61.1% 5. Feeling of stress while performing the exercise for the patients? 44.4% 6. Overall satisfactory of the programme? 66.7%

Conclusion Result of the questionnaire revealed that 67% (Q6) of the family members are satisfied with the program. The program limitations encountered are 1) inadequate visiting hours for the family to assist patient to do exercise, and 2) some of them felt stress for being take care of a sick patient. For future improvement, flexible visiting hour and demonstration video are offered to the family members. Review of the stress level of the family members is also warranted.