



## Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

**Convention ID:** 1205

**Submitting author:** Ms SAU MEI NG

**Post title:** Advanced Practice Nurse, QMH, HKWC

### **Evaluate the Outcome of Setting Up the Telephone Center in Specialist Outpatient Department**

*Author: Ms NG SAU MEI<sup>1</sup>, Ms TSANG WING TUNG<sup>2</sup>, Ms Pang Shuk King<sup>3</sup>, Mr. Chan Kui Tim<sup>4</sup>*

*1 Advanced Practice Nurse, Specialist Outpatient Department, Queen Mary Hospital, Hong Kong.*

*2 Clerk III, Specialist Outpatient Department, Queen Mary Hospital, Hong Kong  
Specialist Outpatient Department, Queen Mary Hospital*

#### **Keywords:**

Telephone Center

#### **Introduction**

SOPD Phone Enquiry Office (PEO) launched its service since 1st March, 2016, and full gear operation from the 14th March, 2016 till now. All SOPD clinic's hotlines (ENT, CTS, SRG, GYN, MED and ORTHO) are diverted to enquiry office during office hours which to centralize the telephone system of SOPD and to handle public enquiries timely. In PEO, there were six call agents (all clerical staff) including one in-charge to support the daily operation. Although each call agent is responsible for providing first care to patients, some issues related to nursing care or medical advice will be passed to the corresponding clinic nurses by handover papers for further support. It would take maximum 7 working days to reply patients from each clinic floor.

#### **Objectives**

Before PEO was launched, there were numerous complaints regarding no staff picked up the calls in SOPD which required them to come along to SOPD for rescheduling, which was definitely time consuming. Some would lodge the complaint or requests through Public Relation Officer or Enquiry Officer. However, with the help of PEO, it has relieved the anxiety from patients as they could receive help immediately and had adequate support through telephone conversation.

#### **Methodology**

We adopted qualitative approach in data collection including direct interviews and survey through questionnaires for clients and staff. In June 2016, we had conducted staff satisfaction survey towards the setup of Phone Enquiry Office in SOPD. Within all frontline SOPD floors, 75 out of 80 samples were collected and most of them had positive feedback on their works after the change. The main reason was providing instant response to patients' enquiries and relieved the burden from counterwork. As for the patients' satisfaction survey, 250 outpatients were interviewed in mid-August 2016 in case they had experience in using the PEO service. To sum up, 76% of interviewees agreed PEO could handle their enquiries instantly and more than 78% of respondents satisfied our service and appreciated our staffs with their polite attitudes. Many interviewees appreciated the setup of PEO, as they got quick response, either

direct phone calls or emails. Overall, more than 85% patients especially for the elderly would like to use this service again because it was fast and convenience.

### **Result**

Result:

According to the statistics collected from Jan 2017 to Dec 2017, it showed the average monthly number of calls received was 12,279, and average monthly number of calls served by call agents was 10,133. When comparing to the past few years, it was recorded less than 1/3 of served calls were directly handled by SOPD. This shows it has enhanced the efficiency in handling patient enquiry.

Conclusion:

Developing a telephone center in SOPD could help answering patient's enquiries immediately, release patients anxiety, improve communication between clients and medical staff and increase our helping image to the public.