



Service Priorities and Programmes
Electronic Presentations

Convention ID: 1257

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Occupational Therapy Empowerment Program for Memory Clinic Patients in Princess Margaret Hospital

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Keywords:

Growing Service Demands

Occupational Therapy Empowerment Program

Interdisciplinary Memory Clinic

Dementia

Introduction

The ageing population intensifies the demands for health care and community services for people with dementia. New referrals from Memory Clinic to Occupational Therapy (OT) Department of Princess Margaret Hospital for triage assessment and corresponding intervention increased dramatically (24.9%) from 173 in 2016 to 216 in 2017. Prompt and timely interventions for patients with dementia and their families are important to slow down their deterioration and improve their quality of life. The OT Empowerment Program is designed to provide comprehensive assessment, education and interventions for patients with moderate to severe cognitive impairment and their carers in order to facilitate them to tackle their problems and maintain our service quality with increasing service demands.

Objectives

1. To provide comprehensive assessment, education and training in order to facilitate both patients with dementia and their carers to formulate appropriate treatment and caring plans.
2. To empower them to better manage their disease in order to reduce the burden in the health care system.
3. To cope with increasing service demand and enhance service quality.

Methodology

Occupational therapists conducted comprehensive assessments on cognitive, functional, behavioral and emotional performance of Memory Clinic new patients and the caring stress of their carers. Therapists stratified the patients and conducted comprehensive education and interventions for patients with moderate to severe cognitive impairment in order to facilitate them and their carers to formulate appropriate treatment and caring plans. Outcome measures included Montreal Cognitive Assessment HK Version (HK-MoCA) and satisfaction questionnaire.

Result

Total 389 new patients (230 female, 159 male with mean age=79.6 years) were assessed from 2016 to 2017. Total 285 patients having moderate (17%) to severe cognitive impairment (56.3%) were selected and recruited to the OT Empowerment Program.

The OT Empowerment Program included comprehensive assessment, education and training. Sixteen carer education groups were conducted to 121 patients and their families. Cognitive reassessments for seventy three patients were completed.

Significant improvement was shown in HK-MoCA (mean scores of pretest= 9.233.84 & posttest= 10.234.60, $p=0.004$) after the program.

Over 92% of these families were satisfied with the program and reported that it enhanced their understanding about the disease, cognitive training activities and community resources. They also reported that the suggested caring strategies could empower them to better take care of their relatives.

It proves that the OT Empowerment Program is beneficial for patients with dementia by providing comprehensive assessment and interventions. It empowers both the patients and their carers which might postpone their deterioration and relief the growing demands and cost of dementia care.