



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Implementation of Careful Hand Feeding for End-of-Life Care Patients

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Introduction

There is a famous Chinese idiom that 'eating' is the most important quality of living (?????). This saying is demonstrating the importance of 'eating' in the Chinese culture.

For older patients, owing to the aging process and prevalence of end stage illnesses, feeding problems are very important issues. These patients are usually restricted from eating by mouth due to high risk of aspiration.

Nurses at the forefront in the caring of patients are to ensure safety in feeding and adequate nutritional status to those patients under their care.

In order to enhance the quality of care for patients recruited to the 'End-of-Life Care Program', a 'Careful Hand Feeding Program' was launched in the Medical-Geriatric Department for these patients.

Objectives

- 1) Enhanced official documentation for the patient care service under the Careful Hand Feeding Program;
- 2) Expand frontline caring staff's understanding of the aim of feeding care from nutritional improvement to adding quality to life;
- 3) Enhanced inter-disciplinary collaboration in feeding care for patients.

Methodology

- 1) Deliberate feeding care plan was jointly planned and implemented by the care team whose members included Physician, Speech Therapist, Nurses and Support Staff;
- 2) Through the program, target patients who are at risk of aspiration are allowed to enjoy feeding by mouth under deliberate feeding care skills;
- 3) Seamless inter-disciplinary collaboration in managing feeding risks in target patients was demonstrated in the program.

Result

- 1) Nutritional care is catered according to patients' wish as feasible;

- 2) Under the program, one third of at risk patients consumed not less than half serve of meals provided;
- 3) There is reduced use of intravenous / subcutaneous infusion in the target patients reduced for the program;
- 4) There is reduced use of restraint in the target patients reduced for the program.