



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Enhancing Safety in Inter-hospital Transfer for Paediatric Patients in a General Paediatric Unit

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Introduction

As there is no intensive care (NICU, PICU) and Paediatric Surgery service in Tseung Kwan O Hospital, paediatric patients are frequently required to be escorted to other tertiary institutions for necessary interventions. Safety during transfer is of top priority especially for ill paediatric patients. Various factors contribute a smooth inter-hospital transfer. Our department has therefore set up a Multi-disciplinary Safe Escort Working Group since 2015 including nurses and doctors, aiming to deliver the best results at multi-level enhancement.

Objectives

To enhance an on-going quality improvement on safe escort of paediatric patients.

Methodology

Strategies were formulated which aimed at three levels of enhancement and alignment. First, staff competency and compliance enhancement; second, guidelines promulgation and checklist or template development; third, maintenance of availability and optimal function of transport equipments and medications. Model of program developed was in the form of staff training -- neonatal and general paediatric transportation talks and drills; guidelines and cue cards development; regular on-going staff competency assessment of both neonatal and general paediatric resuscitation skills and use of transportation incubator and portable ventilator. Moreover, regular case reviews and debriefings for ill patients transferred were conducted to look for areas of improvement.

Result

From 2015 to 2017, about 20% of the all trans-out patients were transferred to PICU while about 10% were transferred to NICU, with all of them required nursing and/or medical escort. Debriefings for all of these ill patients' transferals were conducted, with written recommendations for future staff reference. Details of patient escort was also included in the staff orientation booklet with information to be briefed in phases.

Conclusion

Through the conjoint effort from both nursing and medical staff in the TKOH Paediatric Department, we have set up an effective program aiming to improve quality service

through enhancement in inter-hospital transfer safety. Related training and promulgation have become more structured. Communication and collaboration between various levels of staff were also strengthened.