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A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH ON ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF CLINICAL COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION

Good quality information is a driver of performance for clinical teams and helps ensure the right services and best possible care is provided to patients. Clinical Dashboard is the master electronic dashboard at workstation displays the information including investigation appointment, patient care activities, laboratory & radiology requests, alerts, surgical operation booking, etc. Clinical Dashboard is a clinical information system developed to provide healthcare members with the relevant and timely information to improve quality of patient care. The system gives easy access to the information on patient care activities that enhance clinical communication on patient care. The Clinical Dashboard was piloted in Ward 6A(M&G) of United Christian Hospital (UCH) in 2008.

OBJECTIVES

With the support from the Hospital Authority IT Division and staff commitment, a quality improvement program to enhance clinical communication was launched in April 2009 to prepare for the release of Clinical Dashboard System to Clinical Management System (CMS) workstations in 9 wards of UCH.

- (a) Department of Medicine & Geriatrics: Ward 2D, 6B, 12A & 13A
- (b) Department of Orthopaedics & Traumatology: Ward 10A
- (c) Department of Paediatrics & Adolescent Medicine: Ward 4C
- (d) Department of Psychiatry: Ward 3C & 3D
- (g) Department of Surgery: Ward 8B

The objectives of the project are:

- (a) Enhance efficiency in patient care - Provide frontline care-givers with timely essential patient care information.
- (b) Enhance quality of patient care - Enable healthcare members to keep track on the patient care.
- (a) Enhance communication – act as a communication channel at the point-of-care to release the latest patient information among various information systems in the course of treatment and investigations.

METHODS

The I₂E₂ (i.e. Inspiration, Infrastructure, Education and Evidence) strategies are adopted for facilitating the implementation of the project:

- (a) Collaborate with subject officer and stake-holders for the project
- (b) Conduct training and competency assessment
- (d) Prepare for the rollout of the system to meet operational need
- (e) Collect staff feedback
- (f) Assess the readiness for implementation and provide timely feedback
- (g) Keep log book for monitoring the implementation
- (h) Monitor the utilization

The project team has been preparing the Patient Activity Form (PAF) of individual wards and has been working with hospital IT colleagues on granting of access right to users prior to live run. To facilitate our ward users on understanding the features of Clinical Dashboard, briefing sessions and on-site support is provided to our ward users.

RESULTS

With the collaboration from stake-holders and staff engagement, the project was successfully rolled out by phases in 1Q 2010. The concept of Clinical Dashboard was generally supported by staff. Clinical dashboard can facilitate clinical communication and improve work efficiency. The project demonstrates significant value-added work. Positive feedback and good suggestions from staff on enhancing the system are followed up for further improvement. The architecture and framework of Clinical Dashboard are essential for the overall design in the long run and this would align with corporate and IT strategies on operational perspectives.

CONCLUSION

With a good initiative on enhancing quality of care to our patients, collaborative approach significantly contributes to a positive outcome to patient safety culture. Inspiration, infrastructure, education and evidence (I2E2) are key elements for facilitating the change of practice. We have demonstrated our concerted efforts and synergy in contributing to the smooth implementation of project which in return helps in upholding the quality of patient care as well as creating positive practice environment and sustaining the corporate mission on "Happy Staff, Healthy People".

