



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Review of Two Decades of the Multi-disciplinary Seating Service and Wheelchair Bank Project

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Introduction

Since 1994, the multi-disciplinary seating and mobility service was established for the one-stop clinical services to the children with severe neuromuscular diseases. The seating team has built up a unique service delivery model with the partnership of the charitably funded Wheelchair Bank service that seamlessly provides the necessary therapeutic seating and mobility equipment to the children using the recycle approach.

Objectives

This article shares the experience and concept on the seating service delivery and the enhancement of service through the wheelchair bank project.

Methodology

The multi-disciplinary seating team consists of the paediatric orthopaedic surgeon, rehabilitation engineer, physiotherapist, occupational therapist and prosthetist-orthotist. Besides the clinical role of professional advice on the medical issues, the seating team also provides technical supports on the fabrication and modification of the specialized seating and mobility system. In order to minimize the need of surgical treatment, we advocate early postural correction and maximize their functional capacity in daily activities. This requires a series of expensive positioning devices which will serve that child through to skeletal maturity. In view of the increasing demand, the wheelchair bank was created to provide proper positioning and mobility devices.

Result

Results The seating clinic has been following up 390 children with scoliosis (90%) and hip dislocation (40%). 25% of total clients were referred to our service under 4 years old. Each child requires change of sizes of wheelchairs and seating systems for an average of 1.9 years. A single wheelchair could serve up to eight different patients. The total expenses on the seating devices using the recycling approach to self-purchasing was 1:2.3. This leads to the cost reduction of 55.7%.

Discussion The musculoskeletal conditions of these children deteriorate definitely without the proper positioning devices being prescribed and reviewed through out the growth period. The multi-disciplinary seating team comprehensively takes care of their needs in medical, physical, psychosocial and ultimately enhance their quality of life. The children can receive the right treatment at the right time through the one-stop team approach with the support of the wheelchair bank service. This service aim at to prevent musculoskeletal condition from further deterioration, and minimizes the risk of surgical treatment. This also significantly reduces the treatment cost by using the recycling approach of the wheelchair bank.