



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Build a safe emergency nursing workforce in Hong Kong emergency departments

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Introduction

The overarching aim of assuring emergency nursing (EN) competency research is to improve the safety and quality of care for patients and enhance EN competency in emergency department (ED) throughout the world. Ensuring EN competency is important for delivering quality patient cares. ED of New Territories West Cluster attempted to achieve excellence to ensure high hospital standards and quality patient cares through a stringent process of organization-wide survey. Three set of Competency-based Assessment Tools for EN were developed with 154 competency statements under 22 domains for novice, competent & expert levels of EN workforce in the ED of NTWC in 2011. It's a great challenge for nurse leader to assure all nurses to equip all competencies.

Objectives

To identify an effective training strategy to ensure a safe EN workforce in a cluster ED.

Methodology

In view of the effective deliveries of the 154 competency statements, the 80/20 Rule has been purposed to start the strategy. The rule means that in anything a few (20 percent) are vital and many (80 percent) are trivial. In Pareto's case it meant 20 percent of the people owned 80 percent of the wealth. According to this value of the Pareto Principle, nurse leader should pay most attention to focus on the 20 percent in order to expect to maximise 80 percent of our EN competency statement results. Identify and focus on those 20 percent specific EN competency statements were suggested to assess EN standards in levels in order to strengthen nurses' abilities and to implement priority patient safety interventions.

Result

Twenty percent of the 154 EN competency statements were sorted into 15 (novice), 13 (competent) & 3 (expert) levels with the measurement of nursing perceptions on

levels of importance and categorised as priority areas (PA) for nurses leader to develop the training strategy. In order to establish a recognizable and understandable credential usage process across all spectrums of nursing, the following order of credentials are recommended for different level of nurses:- For novice group, some examples of PA such as Point of Care Testing issues, resuscitation equipment and procedure, wound management and essential clinical investigations management can be illustrated for setting training strategy. Those PA are expected to go through introducing joint departmental orientation programs for the new comers and tailor-make intra-department training lectures to enhance their skills. Furthermore, all the novice nurses will be reassessed by designated senior nurses to ensure their standards are met the credentials requirements. These results provide detailed information specific to meet the EN Credentials requirements regulated the ED in a SMART approach. For competent level, it would be benefit to inspire their leadership by a systematic and well organized deputizing charge nurse program to help them to cope with daily difficulty practice and facilitate them to expert level. In addition, some competent nurses presented a certain degree of hesitation on handling workplace violence, monitoring departmental policy and complaint management cases. It also found that a certain degree of tolerance on sub-optimal standard on novice group in assisting resuscitation and handling disturbed patient cases. It is also suggested delegating them in deputizing advanced practice nurse (APN) to enhance their skills and knowledge in daily difficulty practice and facilitate them to APN level. For expert level, since there are only 16 statements identified in the study, it is realistic to focus all statements then develop strategy to further enhance management and leadership skills for senior workforce. It is a great challenge for nurse leader to assure EN competencies in the ED. An on-going training and development strategy is crucial with an effective tool can ensure quality standard to patients.