



Service Priorities and Programmes
Electronic Presentations

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Submitting author: Ms Sharon Ka Lam LEE

Post title: Hospital Administrator II, Prince of Wales Hospital, NTEC

Listen to the Little Voices

Shing MK(1), So HY(2), Dai DLK(2), Wang JML(2), Chan SNW(2), Lee SKL(2)

(1) The Department of Paediatrics (2) The Patient Relations and Engagement Committee, New Territories East Cluster (NTEC)

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Introduction

In modern healthcare service, active efforts should be made to engage patients in the planning, delivery and evaluation of healthcare service for continuous service improvement. Focus group meeting serves as a qualitative approach which allows members to have an in-depth discussion on specific topics for identifying the strength and weakness of hospital service.

Objectives

To promote active patient engagement for enhancing healthcare service and foster the partnership between patients and healthcare providers.

Methodology

A focus group meeting with parents of paediatric cancer patients was held in 2012 to evaluate the inpatient service of the Paediatric Department. 4 patient representatives, 2 members of staff from the department and 5 representatives from Patient Relations Office participated in the meeting. The scopes of evaluation included the communication on patients' clinical condition, treatment received and post discharge care. The procedures involved from patients' admission, hospitalization to discharge were also reviewed.

Result

a) Areas of excellence and rooms for improvement were identified. e.g. Setting up of "Home of the Little Life Warriors" was appreciated. It has provided a comfortable area for patients to make good use of their time by joining tutoring program and using internet service etc. available in the home while waiting for consultation. It also largely reduced their chances of infection by staying there instead of the common waiting area. b) Group members found the focus group useful as it enabled our staff to better understand patients' needs and concerns, while the active efforts contributed by the Department of Paediatrics in service improvement were recognised and appreciated by patients. Mutual respect between patients and healthcare professionals were thus enhanced. c) Staff realized that minor changes could bring huge service improvement. e.g. It was reflected that the breakfast serving time at 7a.m. was too early since most

children were still asleep at that time. In liaison with the Administrative Department, the serving time has been postponed to 7:45a.m after the meeting. d) Staff had increased awareness on some important issues (e.g. patients' privacy). Conclusions: a) Engaging patients in the evaluation of hospitalization service helps to enhance healthcare service. b) A focus group meeting is proved to be a successful approach to foster the partnership between patients and healthcare professionals.