



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

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Submitting author: Ms Yee Ping VONG

Post title: Physiotherapist I, North District Hospital, NTEC

Effectiveness of interactive training for equipping student volunteers to support respiratory patients in the community

Vong YP(1), Choo KL(2), Wai SF(2), Tong MH(3), Man CS(2), Chan CY(2), Cheung NY(2), Tsang C(2), Chan YY(1), Wong WY(1), Leung V(4), Lee YK(1), Chim CK(3), Lau E(2), Tong M(2), Chow A(1), Wong KK(2), Man CY(5)

(1)Physiotherapy Department, (2)Medical Department, (3)Community Outreach Service Team, (4)Occupation Therapy Department, (5)North District Hospital Chief Executive

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Introduction

Since 2010, second-year Institute of Vocational Education (IVE) students taking the Higher Diploma course in Community Education (Gerontology) participated in a home visit service programme for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) patients in North District. Due to the students' limited medical background, intensive training is vital to ensure patient safety. However, manpower constraints meant that supervised home visits by hospital staff was not possible for the 2012-13 programme. As a result, an interactive training programme was designed.

Objectives

To evaluate the effectiveness of an interactive training programme

Methodology

Pre-reading materials on COPD disease management were sent. Small group interactive training included dyspnoea and stress management, inhaler therapy and crisis medication, exercise therapy and home visit techniques. The full day workshop began and ended with a 16-question quiz. Student responses were made via electronic voting. Questions covering COPD pathology and risk factors, diagnosis, therapy (including inhalers, oxygen and exercise), dyspnoea, stress and crisis management were designed by physiotherapists, nurses and occupational therapists of Respiratory Collaborative Care Team of North District Hospital.

Result

Among 92 students, mean improvement in quiz responses was 20.7%. Greatest improvement was in oxygen therapy (69%) while the least was in COPD crisis management. Fifty-three (58%) students submitted complete sets of responses to all

16 questions. Mean pre-test score was 10 and post-test score 13 ($p < 0.01$). Positive feedback was highest for pre-reading materials (98%), followed by home visit simulation by COPD patient volunteers (96%) and their sharing (95%), healthcare professional-led skill workshops (94%), electronic voting (93%) and smoking cessation lecture (86%). Overall, 92% students reported readiness for home visits and 94% agreed that the workshop led to improvements in their knowledge, skills and understanding of COPD patients' feelings. Conclusion A well-designed multidisciplinary-component interactive training workshop has the potential to equip non-medical volunteers with skills necessary for home visits to COPD patients. Engaging patients in role plays was treasured by students. Patient sharing also enhanced students' empathy for the chronically ill. Future workshops should include more training on COPD crisis management.