



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Use of a special color jacket/vest to prevent mentally incapacitated patient from missing

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Introduction

Dementia/delirium patients are labelled as “At risk” patient because they usually cannot orientate themselves and fail to return to ward once leaving the ward/hospital accidentally. Data for 2009-2012 showed that three dementia/delirium patients were found missing from hospital. Two of them were brought back to AED by Police and the other one went home luckily. Therefore, measures to prevent these patients from leaving ward/hospital are very important.

Objectives

To study if wearing of a special color jacket by mentally incapacitated patient can help their identification and thus prevent them from leaving the ward/hospital.

Methodology

A purple color patient jacket was provided to patients with dementia/delirium after obtaining consent from their relative. An ink-stamp was chopped onto the Clinical Management Sheet (CMS) to document whether relative had agreed or not . For review purpose, a record form was designed for keeping related information. Whenever these patients wearing these vests reached security station at hospital exits and they are cooperative, security staff will accompany them back to ward. But if they are uncooperative, security staff will call ward staff for assistance. The program was piloted in three in-patient wards from 1 March 2013 to 31 May 2013 and extended to AED and all in-patient wards on 1 June 2013.

Result

During the pilot period, 14 patients had put on the jacket, two of them had been found missing in ward and were brought back to their wards by security staff. During the full implementation period from 1 June 2013 to 31 December 2013, 28 patients had worn the jackets. Five patients had been found missing in wards, four of them were found by ward staffs at lift lobby near the ward exits, the other one was found by security staff at hospital exit. Staff evaluation was done in January 2014. 152 evaluation forms were received from 13 work units including nurses and patient care assistant of in-patient wards, allied health professionals and security staff. Overall positive response was 86.4%. The six evaluation questions were: the purple jackets/vests are

convenient for staffs to use (88.3%), mentally incapacitated patients who wear purple jacket/vest are easily identified by staffs (96.7 %), wearing of the purple jacket/vest can remind staffs to pay attention to these patients (94.7%), the ink-stamp helps staff to document the application (77.6%), wearing of this purple jacket/vest is well accepted by relatives of mentally incapacitated patients (75%). In conclusion, the special color jacket/vest may help in preventing mentally incapacitated patient from missing, Overall I think that purple jack/vest is helpful in taking care of mentally incapacitated patient (86.2%). In conclusion, the special color jacket/vest may help in preventing mentally incapacitated patient from missing.