



Service Priorities and Programmes
Electronic Presentations

Convention ID: 589

Submitting author: Ms Amy Ngar Yee CHEUNG

Post title: Registered Nurse, North District Hospital, NTEC

Surmounting oneself - a patient self-help programme for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease patients

R/N Cheung Ngar Yee Amy

Keywords:

a win-win program

Introduction

Pulmonary rehabilitation programme (PRP) was started in North District Hospital since 1999. Established in May 2012, BreatheStrong is a patient self-help group of PRP graduates. Apart from reinforcing disease self-management skills, these chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) sufferers underwent mutual help training by physiotherapists, respiratory nurses and chaplains. As BreatheStrong members grew in confidence, they registered as hospital volunteers and started visiting COPD inpatients in 2013. This study aims to evaluate the outcome of volunteers' ward visits.

Objectives

(1) To assess patients' response to volunteers' visits (2) To assess volunteers' feedback

Methodology

Ward visits were made on a monthly basis. Volunteers were divided into groups led by nurse, chaplain or trained chaplaincy volunteer. Before each visit, nurse would seek consent from six to seven inpatients. Targeted patients included smokers or those with psychosocial problems. Volunteers were briefed and notified if patients had hearing impairment or specific issues. Between September and November 2013, patients and volunteers completed satisfaction questionnaires after each ward visit.

Result

Seventeen volunteers (including one wheelchair-bound and three oxygen-dependent patients) visited 19 patients during this period. Eight volunteers participated in all three visits, five visited twice while four visited once. Nineteen (three passed away during subsequent readmissions) patients were visited. All felt that the volunteers were caring and able to empathise with their feelings. Eighteen (95%) felt that they could express their views freely to the volunteers. Similarly, volunteers felt that they could convey a caring message and communicate effectively during 94% of the 32 volunteer-patient encounters. Conclusions Due to breathing difficulties, COPD patients were often home-bound and socially withdrawn. Through building mutual help skills, this programme led COPD sufferers to look beyond their own limitations. Whether wheelchair-bound or oxygen-dependent, the volunteers supported one another and delivered a caring message to sufferers who were less informed and more distressed than they due to acute hospitalization. This programme achieved a

win-win situation for both groups of COPD sufferers (inpatients and volunteers).