



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Development of an “at-risk of falling” alert method by application of yellow vest in palliative care unit

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Introduction

Falls incidents are common hospital problems especially in palliative care unit. Despite being instructed, a few patients always attempt to get out without calling. The yellow vest was eye-catching for patient identification of high fall risk. Staff will be more alert on this highlight and give active and faster assistance. The pilot fall prevention program with yellow vest of NTWC was launched in 2012 for 8 months and life-run continued in 2013.

Objectives

1.Improve patient safety and enhance patient care quality 2.Increase awareness of high risk fall patients for ward staffs 3.Nurture team atmosphere of safety culture

Methodology

1.Inclusion criteria of high fall risk patients: -the Morse Fall Assessment Score 45 -non-compliance to fall prevention measures -Walking with an unsteady gait by clinical judgment. 2.High fall risk patients were invited with verbal consent obtained 3.Refused patients were regular re-invited periodically 4.Program review was conducted among nursing and supporting staff in 2013. Vest usage statistics was analyzed and staff attitude was surveyed by using 5-point Likert Scale.

Result

Total 142 patients were identified as high risk in 2013 and 82% agreed to wear the vest. Their refusal reasons were feeling distinguished among others and their wishes to appear independently. Overall 90% (n=30) of nurses (n=16, 95%) and supporting staffs (n=14, 87%) agreed the program was effective on identifying “at-risk of falling” patients and capable of providing more prompt assistance. Only 10% staff disagreed its easy utilization. Staffs also agreed increasing their alertness to fall prevention and perceived as cost-effective. The correlation of application of yellow vest and fall rate was significant in 2013, 76% fall are related to non-vest applicants. Still 24% falls with vest were most happened at night with limited manpower around. In mid-term review, we found occasional vest shortage due to sluggish laundry turnover, the problem was

resolved by expanding vest stock. In conclusion, the yellow vest program was effective in fall prevention and continuation was recommended.