



Service Priorities and Programmes
Electronic Presentations

Convention ID: 948

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Post title: Other(Please specify):, ,

Characteristics of Patients with Low Patient Engagement in Hospital Care

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Keywords:

Patient Engagement

Patient Experience

Patient Satisfaction

Introduction

Patient engagement was found to be an important area for further investigation due to a relatively lower score and counterintuitive views in hospital care based on the first benchmark Hong Kong Hospital Authority (HA) Patient Satisfaction Survey in 2010.

Objectives

This study aims to understand patients' views and experiences on their engagement in hospital care, and identify their characteristics with low engagement. The findings would facilitate health service manager and policy-maker for improvement action.

Methodology

A cross-sectional telephone interview using structured questionnaire was conducted in July 2013. All of the interviews were carried out within two weeks of the eligible patients being discharged from HA hospitals. Pearson's chi-square test/ Fisher's exact test was used to assess the bivariate associations between involvement and reported difficulties of patient engagement and other characteristics of medical staff. A difference was considered to be statistically significant if the p value was < 0.05 level.

Result

A total of 1,042 eligible patients were consent and completed interviews with response rate of 64%. Regarding to the inpatient care aspects, the findings suggest that the patients had different level of involvement of engagement during the hospital stay. A vast majority of the respondents expressed that they always ensured safe care together with healthcare professionals (82%) and were being engaged with dignity and respect (79%). However, more than two-thirds of the respondents had sometimes or even never involved being engaged in their last hospitalization such as implementing share decision making with healthcare professionals (89%), discussing choice in the care process (86%), receiving information of care process and treatment (80%) and gaining emotional support (78%). The findings also indicated that the degrees of patient involvement were significantly negatively associated ($P < 0.05$) with the patients perceived challenges with being engaged in healthcare, receiving government's allowance, without a full-time job, with lower education background and

long-standing condition. This study acted as a platform to engage patients with hospital staff to work together to improve the quality of care. The findings provide valuable information for stakeholders on how to develop action plans for enhancing the patient engagement in hospital care and towards patient-centred care.