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Take a Small Extra Step: Reducing the Patient Default Rate
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Introduction
Optimizing the utilization of operating rooms is a key issue in Operating Theatre management because of the high running cost as well as the high demand for both elective and emergency cases.   Rate of patient default on the day of operation rose from 2.5% in 2012 to 4.5% in 2014.   Since July 2014, trained Ambulatory Surgery Centre (ASC) staff started making "Telephone reminder call" to patients before admission. It was shown to be effective in reducing patient default rate and optimizing theatre utilization as well.

Objectives
1. To optimize the utilization of Operating Theatre.   2. To reducing patient default rate.
3. To enhance the ambulatory and operating theatre service.

Methodology
Nursing and supporting staff of ASC were trained, using a standardized script, to make reminder call within one week from the operation date to remind patients of the followings: Admission Date & Time   Fasting Time   Pre-operative Preparation   Statistics of default on admitting to ASC from Jan to Jun 2015 was collected.

Result
Results   Among the 1583 planned admission to ASC in the study period, 42 patients defaulted admission. The default rate was significantly lowered from the 4.5% in 2014 to the 2.7% in the study period.   Conclusion   The figures confirmed this "Telephone reminder call" is a simple yet effective tool in reducing patient default rate. Furthermore, it does not involve additional resources. The result suggested that this extra step though small can bring about big benefits to both patients and hospital in optimization operating theatre resources.