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Retrospective Review of Occupational Therapy Home Support Service in Palliative Care Unit of OLMH

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Introduction

Palliative care patients with advanced progressive disease often have complicated caring needs. In order to facilitate early discharge of patients, enabling them to live as long as possible at home and pursue their wishes of family reunion, Occupational Therapy (OT) of OLMH has provided early tailor-made home support service to palliative care patients under discharge planning.

Objectives

To assess OT needs of palliative care patients referred for discharge planning and provide post-discharge support in the community.

Methodology

Patients in palliative care ward referred to OT for home visit from Dec 2014 to Dec 2015. OT interventions included tailor-made home support service, e.g. home assessment and modification, carer education, prescription of ADL aids and post discharge support. Outcome measurements included Modified Barthel Index

(MBI), Palliative Performance Scale (PPS) and Readiness for Home Care Measure (3 factors rated at a 10-point scale: wish to return home, readiness for return home and competence for home care, adopted from OTCOC Palliative Care Specialty Group).

All outcome measurements were conducted pre and post OT home visits.

Patients were divided into two groups for data analysis: Group 1 (poorer functional performance group) consisted of patients with PPS score $\leq 50\%$; Group 2 (better functional performance group) consisted of patients with PPS score $>50\%$.

Result

A total of 6 patients were recruited from Dec 2014 to Dec 2015. There were 3 male and 3 female patients, aged from 48 to 79 (mean=62). All patients were successfully discharged. All patients in Group 1 maintained similar functional

performance whereas forty per cent of patients in Group 2 showed deterioration in functional performance upon discharge. Pre- and post-assessment of all three

factors of Readiness for Home Care Measure showed a positive increment from mean values 5.05 to 7.28 and 3.90 to 7.43 in patients and their carers respectively.

Group 2 was more prepared to return home with a higher mean value (7.8) of “wish to return home” in pre assessment. OT intervention can easily boost up the

“readiness for return home” and “competence for home care” mean values by 77.7% and 47.6% respectively. Group 1 has a lower mean value (5.0) of “wish to return home” in pre assessment. OT intervention can only boost up the

“readiness for return home” and “competence for home care” mean values by 70% and 25% respectively. Similar trend is found in their respective carers.

Discussion: “Readiness for return home” is likely a facilitator for successful early discharge of patients, relating to the availability of rehabilitation equipment, acquisition of caring skill, and suitability of home environment after modification.

“Competence for home care” factor is likely related to the caring confidence among patients and carers, which was affected by patients’ functional level.

“Wish to return home” factor is likely related to the psychological component of patients and carers as patients might be worried about becoming a burden to their families. OT home support service has remarkable contribution to the discharged patients of PCU.