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A Pilot Medical Night Admission Ward to Relieve AED Access Block

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Introduction

Access block adversely affects patients from having timely and quality medical care. Possible causes include lack of inpatient bed capacity and capacity mismatch. The latter refers to lack of a particular kind of bed, for instance, gender and isolation status. After analyzing the access block data, a pilot program of Night Admission Ward (NAW) was implemented in the Department of Medicine, Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital to solve the problem of capacity mismatch. A mixed gender medical ward with isolation facility was operated with 3 night shifts every week to receive AE patients. As a result, the access block was overcome and all patients were admitted to medical wards within reasonable time.

Objectives

To relieve the access block in AED medical admission

Methodology

The NAW with 16 beds opens at 9 pm of Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. Three nurses and 1 supporting staff operate this ward with backup by night nurse supervisor. All AE medical patients, except critical or dialysis cases (who are directly admitted to designed medical wards), are admitted to the NAW. All patients are transferred out to other medical wards after 5 am the following day and the NAW is closed at 8 am. The program was piloted for one month in Nov/Dec 2016. Admission data and access block situation were reviewed for the effectiveness of the pilot program.

Result

During the one month pilot, 14 night shifts were opened with total 114 admissions. The average admission was 8 per night shift from the range of 4-14 per night. The

admitted patients were well transferred to medical wards with extra beds added if in needed. The AED access block was no longer occurred after the pilot program. Other medical wards did not need to admit AE cases during the NAW opening hour and less busy was reported. No extra doctor was requested in the pilot, the on call doctor could stay in NAW and less rushing to different wards for case assessment, nurses could manage patients more efficient as a result.

The NAW helps to relieve the AED access block during winter surge without extra resources requested.