



Service Priorities and Programmes
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**EARLY BOWEL SCREENING THROUGH A COLORECTAL NURSE CLINIC OF
QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL: FIRST EXPERIENCE IN HONG KONG**

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Introduction

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the most common cancer in Hong Kong with 4769 new cases and 1981 deaths in 2013. Early diagnosis of bowel cancer can improve the treatment outcomes for patients. With increased incidence and public awareness of CRC, since June 2014, the Colorectal Specialist Nurse piloted the bowel cancer screening clinic to meet the service demand.

Objectives

This study aimed: (1) to describe the process and importance of establishing a nurse screening clinic for the benefit of patients; (2) to evaluate the outcomes of the clinic.

Methodology

A colorectal specialist nurse established the nurse screening clinic in Specialist out-patient department of QMH since June 2014. Patients with altered bowel habit, family history of CRC, positive faecal occult blood test or with history of polyp fast tracked to the nurse clinic. Comprehensive nursing assessment and required endoscopy examination would be arranged. Detailed explanation will be given on the colonoscopy procedure with its risk and implications. Patients were assessed for fitness to undergo colonoscopy and health education was provided as well. After the endoscopy examination, patients were followed for results. Proper referrals and future screenings were organized. Telephone consultation was given for subsequent care and support.

Result

From June 2014 to FEB 2016, 721 patients (351 male and 370 female) with the mean age of 61.32(SD 12.22, 18-90) attended the nurse clinic. 671 patients (93.07%)

underwent the colonoscopy service. Of 671 patients, 55.14% (370) patients had abnormal pathologies. There were 5.82% (39) patients diagnosed with colorectal cancer; 41.28% (277) patients had colonic or rectal polyps; 5.66%(38) patients had diverticulosis and 0.45%(3) patients had other abnormal pathologies. Early colorectal surgery or chemoradiation therapy could then be given promptly. Polypectomy were performed during investigation to prevent patients from threats of developing colorectal cancer in later years.

Conclusion: Population-based CRC screening programme will generate huge demand for screening, diagnostic and treatment services in public sector, nurse plays a vital role to facilitate a large portion of patients to be benefited by early screening access, early detection of cancer and therapeutic intervention.

Reference: 1. Hong Kong Cancer Registry 2013, Hospital Authority.