ENRICH: 6 accomplishments improving patient's perioperative experience

Mok YT¹, Sun TFD², Lee WWW⁴, Tsung PPK³, Wong LWM⁴, Chui ST², Liu YW², Lee WY², Chung KL¹, Cheng KF¹, Ho CH¹, Fung HY⁴

¹ Department of Anaesthesia & Intensive Care (Operating Theatre) Prince of Wales Hospital, ² Department of Surgery (Neurosurgery), Prince of Wales Hospital, ³ Department of Anaesthesia & Intensive Care (Operating Theatre), NTEC ⁴ Department of Surgery (Neurosurgery), NTEC

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Introduction
Anxiety affects patients' perception of the quality of medical care received. Anxiety is closely linked to satisfaction and for each 1% drop in satisfaction scores there is a 5% increase in risk management episodes. (Stelfox et al, 2005) Several studies have shown the beneficial effects of providing perioperative information to patients and their relatives. (Yazile, 2012).

Objectives
To reduce patient anxiety and to improve satisfaction during perioperative care.

Methodology
A cross-department working group consisting of operating theatre nurses, ward-nurses and surgeons, developed a preoperative visit program and a perioperative clinical handover process, to achieve the six accomplishments: Effective communication; Nurse-patient relationship; Reduce Anxiety; Improve Satisfaction; Continuity of care and Handover. Patients undergoing elective surgery were recruited from the Neurosurgical ward. These patients were all scheduled to have ultra-major operations and were known to experience high levels of anxiety. A preoperative visit using the AIDET Communication Framework was conducted by both theatre and ward nurses. This framework has previously been shown to be an effective tool in improving patient's satisfaction. (Studer, 2010). A modified STAI scale was then used to assess the patient's anxiety level before and after the program. A clinical handover form was also introduced to help in enhancing the communication between ward and theatre staff.

Result
After 2-phases trial of the preoperative visit program in 31 patients, the average anxiety levels of these patients according to the modified STAI scale decreased from 7.6 to 4.9. A paired t-test was suggested, the result was significant as p value was 0.005. (p <= 0.05) All patients expressed satisfaction with the program. A comparison survey by using the same modified STAI scale between 24 “non-visited” patients and 31 “visited” patients was also conducted. The average anxiety level scores were 10.8 and 4.9 respectively. It showed significant effectiveness on reducing anxiety by implementing the program. Furthermore, by collecting staff feedback, most of them agreed that the clinical handover form enhanced communication between ward and theatre staff.