



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

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Revisit, Redesign and Reengineering process on Blood Taking of Out-Patients in TMH Central Phlebotomy Service

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Introduction

The daily attendance of blood taking for out-patients in Tuen Mun Hospital is usually over 700. In the past, no prior appointment booking was arranged. Patients just came with the investigation reminder forms at any time during the service hours. For their own convenience, most patients came early in the morning which caused heavy workload and congestion in morning sessions. Facing with rapid growing service demand, the waiting time for blood taking was long which resulted in congested waiting area, patient complaints and stressful working environment for phlebotomists.

Objectives

1. To improve efficiency by streamlining the workflow
2. To reduce waiting time for blood taking
3. To reduce patient complaints related to prolonged waiting time
4. To enhance level of staff satisfaction

Methodology

Service review and site visit were implemented. The workflow from doctors' order to blood taken was revisited to enhance efficiency. Through reviewing the workflow, staff and the environmental factors, strategies were constructed. An appointment booking system for blood taking was introduced since September 2014 in order to distribute patient attendances. In the first phase, it was pilot in Medicine and Geriatrics Department. To enhance effective implementation to patients or carers on appointment booking, information was promulgated via poster, reminder and individual encouragement by doctor, nurse and supporting staff. In the second phase, the program would be rolled out to other specialties. The key enablers for facilitation of full implementation of this program were identified and engaged. They include patient and staff engagement, information technology, infrastructure such as electronic Out-Patient Appointment System (OPAS), Queue Management System (QMS) and teamwork.

Result

From September 2014 to June 2015, data analysis was conducted and the following

significant outcomes were achieved:- 1) The longest waiting time during peak hours for blood taking reduced from more than 60 minutes to less than 15 to 20 minutes. 2) The number of complaints related to prolonged waiting time reduced from 3 cases in 2Q/2014 to zero after 4Q/2014. 3) The case of blood taking through the appointment booking system increased from 700 to around 3700 monthly and the compliance rate of appointment booking for blood taking reached nearly 100%. 4) Quarterly patient satisfaction surveys were conducted in April 2015 and July 2015 with the consequence: Over 90% rated excellent and good in waiting time and staff attitude, and near 90% rated excellent and good in blood taking experience. 5) Quarterly staff turnover rate decreased from 6.25% in 4 Q/2014 to zero in 1Q and 2Q of 2015.

The Appointment booking system in 2014 was a major breakthrough for the Central Phlebotomist Team. Staff engagement is the crucial factor for the success of this project. After service enhancement by evenly distributed patient attendances over different time slots in each week, the waiting time for blood taking was significantly reduced. Majority of patients and staffs welcomed the new arrangement and improved environment. It is expected that further improvement can be achieved through closely monitor and review.