



Singapore Healthcare Management 2017

NO PAIN YES GAIN

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INTRODUCTION

The team comprising of DSAs and SDSA from Geriatric Special Care Dentistry Clinic(GSDC) at Level 1 started looking into the issue of staff safety and well-being, in particular back strains in staff. There were 2 cases of staff injury in November 2016 & February 2017 where staff was given 2 days MC and 1 day MC respectively. In the GSDC clinic, most of our patients are wheelchair or bedbound and transferring them to/from wheelchair and dental chair causes back strains in the staff. Thus, the team came together and embarked on this continuous improvement initiative focusing on making staff safe at work.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROOT CAUSES

The team did an observation on the current process and identified that the root causes to staff having back strains in their daily routine of transferring patients are due to inappropriate transferring technique and no proper device.

OBJECTIVES

The team aims to achieve the following objectives by June 2017.

- 1) To ensure staff's ergonomic wellness is not compromised.
- 2) To reduce back strains in staff due to the transferring of patients.
- 3) To reduce staff's absenteeism due to back strain.

INTERVENTIONS

The team did research online to find out proper techniques in reducing staff's injury and also brainstormed for interventions based on the staff's experience and the clinic setup and proposed the following :

a. Hands-off technique (Figure 1) -Not to allow patients to place their hands on healthcare provider during transfer.

-Patients can easily be directed to hold onto arm rest of chair, or bedrails.

b. Ergonomic (Figure 2) -Moving patient from one place to another by maximising ergonomics. Examples :

- Adjust the bed chain as needed.
- Use a wide base of support.
- Maintain natural curves of your backs, bend your hips and knees.
- Get your body mass close to your patient's centre mass.

c. Use of hoist (Figure 3)

- A hoist is a device used for lifting of lowering a load by means of a drum of lift wheel around with a rope or chain wraps.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

BENEFITS

The management has approved the purchase of the hoist ; estimated delivery date Q2 2017.

The hoist device provides many benefits, including

- ✓ Lesser risk injury to patients and staff with proper used
- ✓ Safer work practices
- ✓ Easier transfer of patients

CONCLUSION

The initiatives taken have helped the Centre to :

- ✓ Enhanced safety for staff,
- ✓ Increase work productivity,
- ✓ Maximize staff's efficiency,
- ✓ Increase staff attendance,
- ✓ Better staff morale which will lead to staff retention,
- ✓ Reduce fall risk to patients.

STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINING

As the clinic staff have benefitted from the interventions, the team will leverage on the Dental Surgery Assistant meeting to spread the good practices to the other levels in the Centre.