

Why? Background to the initiative



As aptly described by Touissant et al (2005), information is the lifeblood of healthcare and communication systems are the heart that pumps it. Effective communication is also pertinent in any quality assurance program and is especially useful in promoting organizational change and evidence-based practice.

The need to transmit timely information on quality issues, coupled with the fact that busy healthcare professionals do not have the time to read and appraise the best research evidence, prompted the project team to relook at our communication strategies.

This paper described our attempt to enhance communication, address quality issues and promote evidence-based practice within the nursing profession in Singapore General Hospital.

Touissant PJ, Coiera E. Supporting communication in health care. *Int J Med Inform.* 2005;74:779-81

3. Making it Fun!

In order to boost readership and get nurses excited about quality issues, special editions were published during festive seasons. During Christmas last year, the "fall prevention strategies" was sang to the tune of "12 days of Christmas". Quizzes on quality issues were also included in the monthly bulletin. Nurses stood the chance of winning prizes by participating in the monthly contest.



Chinese New Year Special



Christmas Special



Carolers for 12 days of Christmas

Adopting a thematic approach, the monthly **TOWN-HALL MEETINGS** allowed nursing leaders and ground managers to come together to discuss nursing-sensitive quality issues, and strategize plans for improvement. The meetings also acted as a channel whereby nurses could ask questions about new quality improvement initiatives. This was important in terms of promoting adoption of evidence-based practice.



Sharing experiences and strategizing for the future

The What and How

Details of the initiative

Quality, Effectiveness and Safety Taskforce (QUEST) for Nurses was launched in November 2012. It consists of monthly newsletters and town-hall meetings.

The monthly **NEWSLETTER** served as a platform to disseminate evidence based information and best practices. The newsletters were formulated using the following guiding principles:

1. Making it Easy to Remember

Efforts were made to ensure that information was delivered in 'bite-sizes' and kept relatively simple (e.g. use of acronyms to help readers memorise) to encourage adoption of recommended practices.



E.g. 'bite-size' information

2. Ensure it is Relevant

Pseudonyms, real-life examples and clinical incidents were featured in the newsletters. Annual work cycle was also taken into consideration when writing the bulletin. For example, a special issue for nurse managers, featuring key principles to strategize ward/unit based audits and competencies, was timed to coincide with the annual quality assurance planning exercise.

So? Our achievements

The meetings were well attended each month. Feedback from attendees showed that there is heightened awareness of quality issues and attendees appreciate the opportunity to learn about the works of colleagues in other departments. Polling of nursing staff demonstrated that readership of the newsletters has steadily increased through the months; with staff actively participating in the quizzes. The newsletters also prompted a two way communication, whereby nursing staff wrote to the project team, to highlight quality issues on the ground.

An effective quality management system depends largely on how information is received and communicated. Regular opportunities for people to come together and discuss, coupled with provision of 'bite-sized; ready-to-use' information could potentially increase the adoption of evidence-based practices and contribute towards a safety culture amongst nurses.

Acknowledgement

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