

# Role Re-design: From Health Attendant to Patient Care Associate in SingHealth Polyclinics

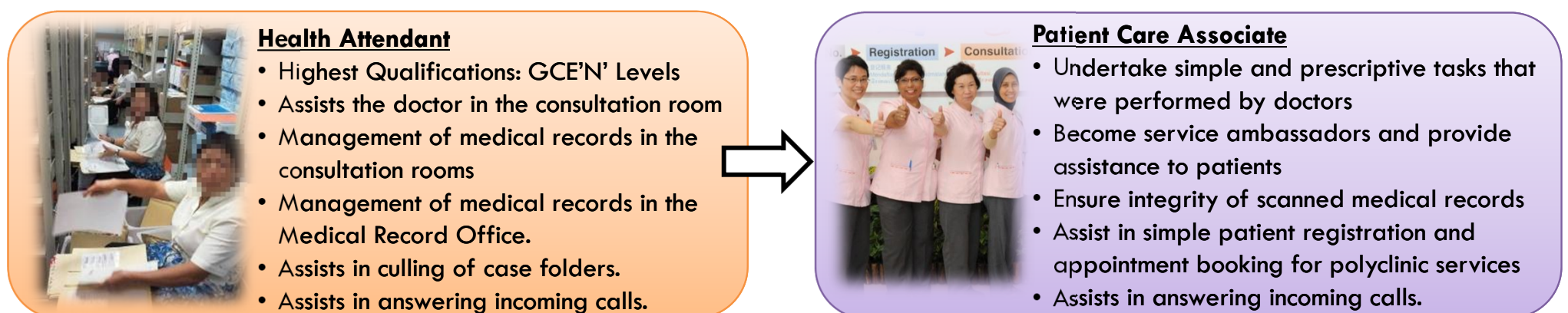
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## Background

With the changing expectations and needs of patients, a fresh approach to patient service is required. The transformation of Medical Record Office through the implementation of electronic medical records meant that Health Attendants are no longer required to manually trace patients' case folders for doctors' consultation. The need to re-design the roles and responsibilities of a Health Attendant in a polyclinic to take on a different scope of patient care was an integral part of the whole process of enhancing patient experience.

## Methodology

- Taking on a collaborative approach, Clinical Services working in tandem with Operations and Human Resource came together to operationalize the clinic work flow and to discuss the expansion of job scope for a Health Attendant. With the expansion of job scope, the level of critical skillsets required for a Health Attendant to deliver the enhanced patient care and experience is deliberated based on the following principles:
  - Tap on existing skills and experience of Health Attendants
  - Inject critical skillsets to enhance patient's care and experience in the polyclinics through structured training by professionally trained nursing staff
  - Increase the level of productivity
- A formalized training curriculum with the aim of enabling Health Attendants to operate Health Monitoring Station to collect important measurements from patients or to apply questionnaire tools that will be used by subsequent care team members was drawn up by a trained nursing staff. The training curriculum comprises of 3 modules: (1) weight, height and digital blood pressure measurements. This module equips Health Attendant with the relevant knowledge and skills to accurately measure weight, height and digital blood pressure of patients. (2) cardiovascular disease risk assessment. This module is designed to equip Health Attendants with knowledge and skills to take history from patients regarding smoking and family history of coronary heart disease. (3) asthma control assessment. This module is designed to equip Health Attendants with knowledge and skills to conduct history taking on asthma control test for the patients. Upon successful completion of the training programme, Health Attendants will be able to operate the Health Monitoring Station equipment, collect information and data consistently and accurately with minimal variations, enter data into the computer software accurately and respond accordingly when data or a reading is out of the given range.
- Only Health Attendants who had completed and passed the structured training programme as certified by a Registered Nurse would be promoted to the new role of Patient Care Associates. In addition, a competency skills assessment for Patient Care Associates is conducted once every 2 years.
- As part of the role re-design to enhance patients' care and experience, SingHealth Polyclinics also trained newly promoted Patient Care Associates to take on and embrace the additional role of Service Ambassadors. Donning on the badge "May I Help You?", the Patient Care Associates proactively reach out to assist patients in navigating through the clinic system.



## Results

- Patient Care Associates are regarded as an instrumental member in a multi-disciplinary care team in SingHealth Polyclinics.
- Patient Care Associates reported to have more confident to reach out and provide helpful assistance to patients in the polyclinics.
- Minimal manpower deployment issues at clinic operations' service counters as trained Patient Care Associates are able to take on the role of Patient Services Clerk.
- Patient Care Associates reported to have higher sense of job security and job satisfaction.

## Conclusion

The role redesign of Health Attendants had been successful in motivating staff to perform at a higher level. It has also enable the organisation to deliver better service and care to the patients.