

INTRODUCTION

Food is an important part of nutrition care for hospitalized patients. In KKH, a total of 9 standard diets (Chinese, Malay, Indian, Western, Chinese Vegetarian, Indian Vegetarian, Delight, Confinement, Toddler) as well as over 20 therapeutic diets are available to meet the patients' food preferences and therapeutic requirements.

The provision of tasty and attractive food, as per the patients' choice, increases the likelihood that the meal will be consumed. Moreover, therapeutic diets which are also suitable for the patients' medical condition has an impact on the patients' overall wellness and recovery from surgery, stress or illness.

We are driven in providing safe, correct, nutritious, tasty and attractive meals for patients. Thus, preventing diet errors is our top priority for ensuring Total Patient's Safety in the Catering Department

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this paper is to present on the nature of diet errors and recommendations for prevention in a tertiary hospital.

1

To review the history and frequency of diet errors

2

To discuss the multi-factorial nature of errors

3

To explain the system-based approach to providing hospital diets

4

To identify the sources of diet errors within the system

5

To describe the recommendations for preventing diet errors

METHODOLOGY

1. History & Frequency of Errors

From April 2013 – March 2014, diet errors from the following sources were reviewed :

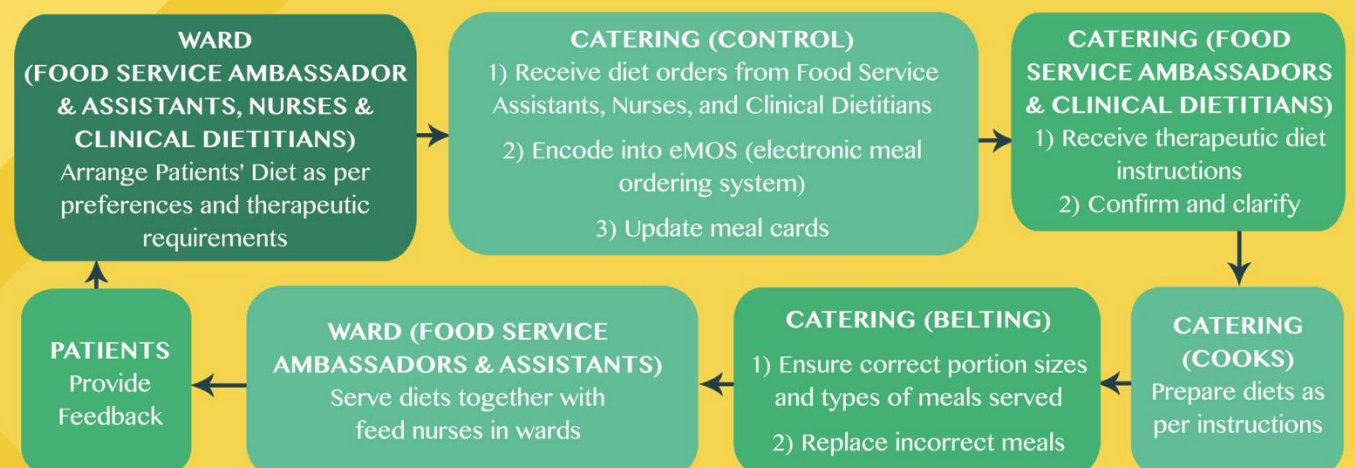
- ◆ Reports from Clinical Dietitians and Nurses
- ◆ Wrong meal reports
- ◆ Near misses
- ◆ Therapeutic Error log sheets
- ◆ Daily Feedbacks from Food servers

2. Nature of Errors

Diet errors were categorized as follows :

- ◆ 28% order entry errors
- ◆ 26% illegible handwritings
- ◆ 19% unrecognized abbreviations
- ◆ 14% writing orders & translations
- ◆ 9% not complying with organization policies & procedures
- ◆ 4% others

3. SYSTEM-BASED APPROACH



RESULTS: DESIGNING ACTIVITIES

CONTINUOUS MONITORING OF DIET ERRORS AND IDENTIFICATION OF AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENTS BASED ON

- daily feedback from Food Service Ambassadors & Assistants
- monthly therapeutic diet error log sheets from Clinical Dietitians
- ad-hoc feedback from nurses

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENTS FOR INNOVATIVE & EFFICIENT PROCESSES

- Refresher trainings on new and existing therapeutic diets
- inservice trainings on therapeutic diets for catering staff and food service ambassadors & assistants
- provide informative, educational and communicative materials that raises awareness

OPEN COMMUNICATION ON DIET ORDERS

- For prevention of diet errors, open communication between Clinical Dietitians, Nurses and Catering staff is crucial. This includes
- legible handwritten diet orders and avoidance of abbreviations
- fixed timings for clarification of orders
- feedback from catering staff on therapeutic diet portions (photos exchanged via Whatsapp)

REVIEW ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES, PROCEDURES & RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- Continuous audits are in place to track and ensure that
- patients' information is keyed in correctly
- the right food is served at the right time and temperature
- protocols, procedures and policies are standardized
- food sanitization and hygiene is maintained
- safety measures for food preparation are in place
- compliance to internationally recognized standards and best practices
- identification of areas for improvement

CONCLUSION

Preventing meal errors is the top priority for ensuring Total Patient Safety in the Catering Department. In view of the nature of the errors occurring in the past 12 months, the recommendations for preventing these errors are :

- ◆ Continuous Monitoring System for Errors through Committees that coordinate and oversee specific action plans
- ◆ A System-Based Approach to diets to identify and prioritize issues and challenges, and maintain collaborations with the different working units involved in providing Diets (i.e. Nurses, Clinical Dietitians, Catering)
- ◆ Regular trainings for staff to enhance skills and promote awareness.