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Hospital-based Health Promotion through Nutrition Education for Inpatients

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Background

HEALTH PROMOTION ACTIVITIES can be successful when coordinated and sustained efforts are made, as illustrated by the increased intake of wholegrains in the 2010 National Nutrition Survey compared to 2004. Moreover, adults are likely to have increased readiness to learn during life-changing events, such as pregnancy/child birth or their child's hospitalization. Hence, hospital-based nutrition education can be a useful platform to encourage healthy eating. At KKH, nutrition education is available for staff and outpatients through healthier food choices in the retail mall as well as through antenatal talks and infant/toddler feeding workshops. Hence, our inpatient tray mat project would provide another avenue for nutrition education, to inpatients admitted to KKH and their caregivers.

Objectives

OUR PROJECT aimed to increase nutrition knowledge amongst inpatients through providing healthy eating tips on tray mats served with meals. The KPIs set were : (1) programme reach of 30%, measured as the percentage of patients who read the nutrition tips on the tray mat as determined through daily returned quiz cards and (2) programme effectiveness of 30%, measured in 2 ways, namely (i) quarterly surveys in the wards in which the patients were asked 2 questions : (a) "Do you find the nutrition tips on the tray mats provided with your meals useful" and (b) "Will you adopt a healthier diet by trying out the nutrition tips provided on the tray mats", and (ii) the percentage of returned quiz cards which are answered correctly.

Methodology

TRAYMATS and their corresponding quiz cards on wholegrains, fruit and vegetables, and water were jointly developed, by the Marketing Communications and Nutrition and Dietetics Departments of KKH and Sodexo for use from 4-17 May 2015 (2-week pilot in 2 wards) and from 1 June 2015 – 28 February 2016 (9-month rollout to all wards). During meal service, the Food Service Assistants (FSA) and nurses would encourage the patients to read the tray mats and to complete the quiz cards. After the meal, the FSA will collect the completed quiz card at the same time as the meal trays, and the Catering Dietitian will collate the responses and track the response rate. To encourage participation, weekly prizes of Healthier Choice food baskets were awarded to two correct entries selected through a lucky dip conducted by the Catering and Food Services Committee. A random survey of 30% of patients in the wards was also conducted on a quarterly basis by the dietitians.

TO OVERCOME issues of space availability on the tray mat for nutrition information, a QR code providing a link to the Health Promotion Board's website was included on the tray mats for patients to obtain more information on healthy eating

TRAYMATS



QUIZ CARDS



HEALTHIER CHOICE FOOD HAMPER



Results

Overall, our project exceeded the target of 30% for programme reach and effectiveness :

PROGRAMME REACH = 33%

Time period	Method of computing	Results (%)
2 week pilot in 2 wards (4-17 May 2015)	Number of quiz cards returned as a percentage of the number of meals served	17
1 Jun – 30 Aug 2015	Number of quiz cards returned as a percentage of the number of meals served	4
1 Jun – 30 Aug 2015 (recomputed)	Number of quiz cards returned as a percentage of newly admitted patients	19
31 Aug – 29 Nov 2015	Number of quiz cards returned as a percentage of newly admitted patients	46
30 Nov 2015 – 28 Feb 2016	Number of quiz cards returned as a percentage of newly admitted patients	35
Entire roll-out period (1 Jun 2015 – 28 Feb 2016)	Number of quiz cards returned as a percentage of newly admitted patients	33

PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS = 40-90%

Time period	Traymat Design	Results (%)		
		% "Yes" to "Do you find the nutrition tips on the tray mats provided with your meals useful"	% "Yes" to "Will you adopt a healthier diet by trying out the nutrition tips provided on the tray mats"	% of quiz cards answered correctly
2 week pilot in 2 wards (4-17 May 2015)	Wholegrains	43	46	67
1 Jun – 30 Aug 2015	Wholegrains	19	15	78
31 Aug – 29 Nov 2015	Fruit and vegetables	52	48	91
30 Nov 2015 – 28 Feb 2016	Water	87	62	98
Entire roll-out period (1 Jun 2015 – 28 Feb 2016)	NA	49	40	90

Conclusion: HEALTHY EATING TIPS on tray mats is an effective way of providing nutrition information to inpatients. As KKH serves around 1450 meals a day, this is an excellent opportunity for nutrition education to be provided to patients and their caregivers, as part of a coordinated and sustained effort to promote healthy eating.