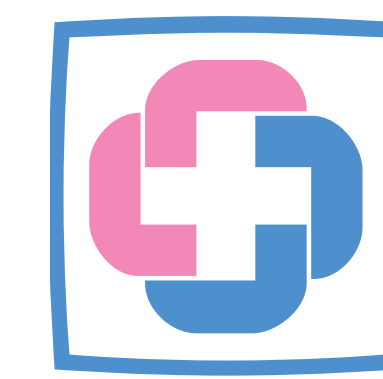




An evaluation of the effectiveness of post discharge call enhancements adopted by nurses in a paediatric ward



Introduction

Discharge from hospital can be considered as a confusing process for many caregivers. They are required to be informed of several essential information on the care of the child, from familiarising with the discharge instructions, to the ability to recognising deteriorating symptoms and knowing when to return to seek further treatment. Having the possibility to be overwhelmed with the information, post discharge calls are provided to assist the caregivers on the care of the child at home.

Current practice in the ward

1. There is no guideline on how the nurses should perform post discharge calls.
2. Practice varies in every ward.
3. No monitoring system for the post discharge calls.

Aims

The aim of the study is to explore the caregivers' and nurses' perspectives on post discharge calls. With their feedback, the post discharge calls can be enhanced collectively to what they consider a good practice and look into the caregivers' needs during the call. These will eventually strengthen the practice, to better assist the caregivers on the discharge care, and maintain standard in the service render in the hospital.

Methodology

The study will be conducted in 3 phases [Figure 1].

Phase 1: Caregivers and nurses are invited to share their opinions on current practices on post discharge calls, in the form of individual face-to-face interviews and focus group discussion respectively.

Phase 2: A tentative call guide will be formulated based on the opinions gathered in phase 1. Random selection of nurses to validate the tentative call guide, through 2 focus group discussions. The call guide will be then introduced to the pilot ward.

Phase 3: Nurses in the ward are expected to perform post discharge calls based on the standard set in the call guide. Permission from caregivers is sought to call them within one week after they have received the post discharge calls. Their responses to the calls received are evaluated.

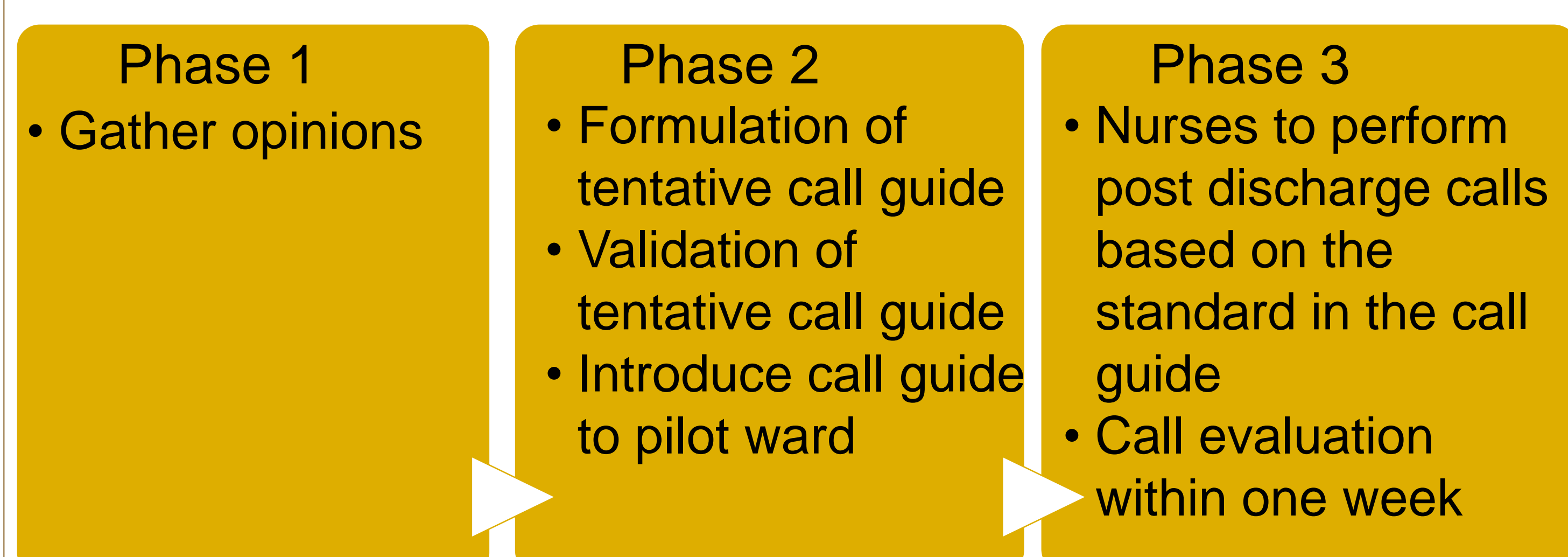


Figure 1 Overview of the Study Process

M1

- Philippines does not have post discharge call, so I was surprised also, the first time I received.
- It is good that the nurses or hospital staffs call us, asking about the patient, how they are.

M2

- They are so nice in calling us to see the patient.
- If you were to call only the day after, of course is still ok. But if let say you know the child deteriorates, at least about two three days then will know if child is really better or not.

M3

- Showing care by calling, and at the same time, as a parent, I also can be assured that whether the child's condition is ok or not ok.
- Because I never expected that a hospital to ask me about my child's condition, post discharge. So I was very surprised, I thought it was like a kind thought on their part.
- Given a few days, provide feedback will be more effective because only then the parents can monitor the situation further

M4

- Good that you all are doing follow-up, at least for the parents side, they know they are not left that means discharged mean discharged, none of the hospital business like that. So is a kind of emotional support.
- A bit surprised because I wasn't expecting the hospital to call me.
- When I see the number is from the hospital, I don't know what is happening.

M5

- Discharge mean discharge, then you are on your own already. Suddenly somebody calls you, asking how he is then you can clarify your questions, of course you will be surprised and happy
- Parents can use the chance to ask and clarify the things they doubt or not clear about

M6

- Better call because this say the hospital is very worried about their patients.
- I know the nurses are also busy, but still want to call us. So this is very good.
- Because I am from Indonesia, Indonesian hospital is not like Singapore. In Indonesia, nobody calls up after the patient is discharged.

Verbatim Quotes from the Mothers

Findings

One significant feedback from the mothers was that they viewed post discharge calls favourably and associated post discharge calls as hospital's way of showing care and concern. Most of them were pleasantly surprised as they did not expect the hospital to extend the concern beyond its wall. While most had no aversions to receiving calls from hospital, one mother alluded to some anxiety about getting call from hospital. Most of them shared positively about the post discharge call experience, and they also provided recommendations to improve the service.

Conclusion

The study is ongoing with the remaining phases. Once completion, findings will be shared with the nursing department, while the post discharge call guide will be introduced as a standard of practice for all nurses to adhere. In-services may be conducted if need is identified to train nurses to perform proper post discharge calls. These measures strengthen the practice, tailoring the service to support the caregivers and ensuring needs are met.