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To implement a communication tool to enhance customer experience through the provision of a set of comprehensive information related to the intensive care unit

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Intensive Care Units

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Background

Intensive Care Unit (ICU) is a fast paced and stressful environment. The patients are critically ill and often require the use of life support devices such as mechanical ventilator and cardiac monitor. Upon admission to the ICU, patients and their family members often experience a high level of anxiety due to unfamiliar environment and emotional stress. Therefore, they experience difficulties retaining information provided verbally by health care professionals. As a result, nurses have received repeated requests from patients' family members and visitors to explain and re-orientate them about ICU environment, medical devices and so on. Such repeated explanation and orientation are time consuming, which takes away a lot of precious time that can be used to provide quality nursing care to our critically ill patients.

Aim(s)

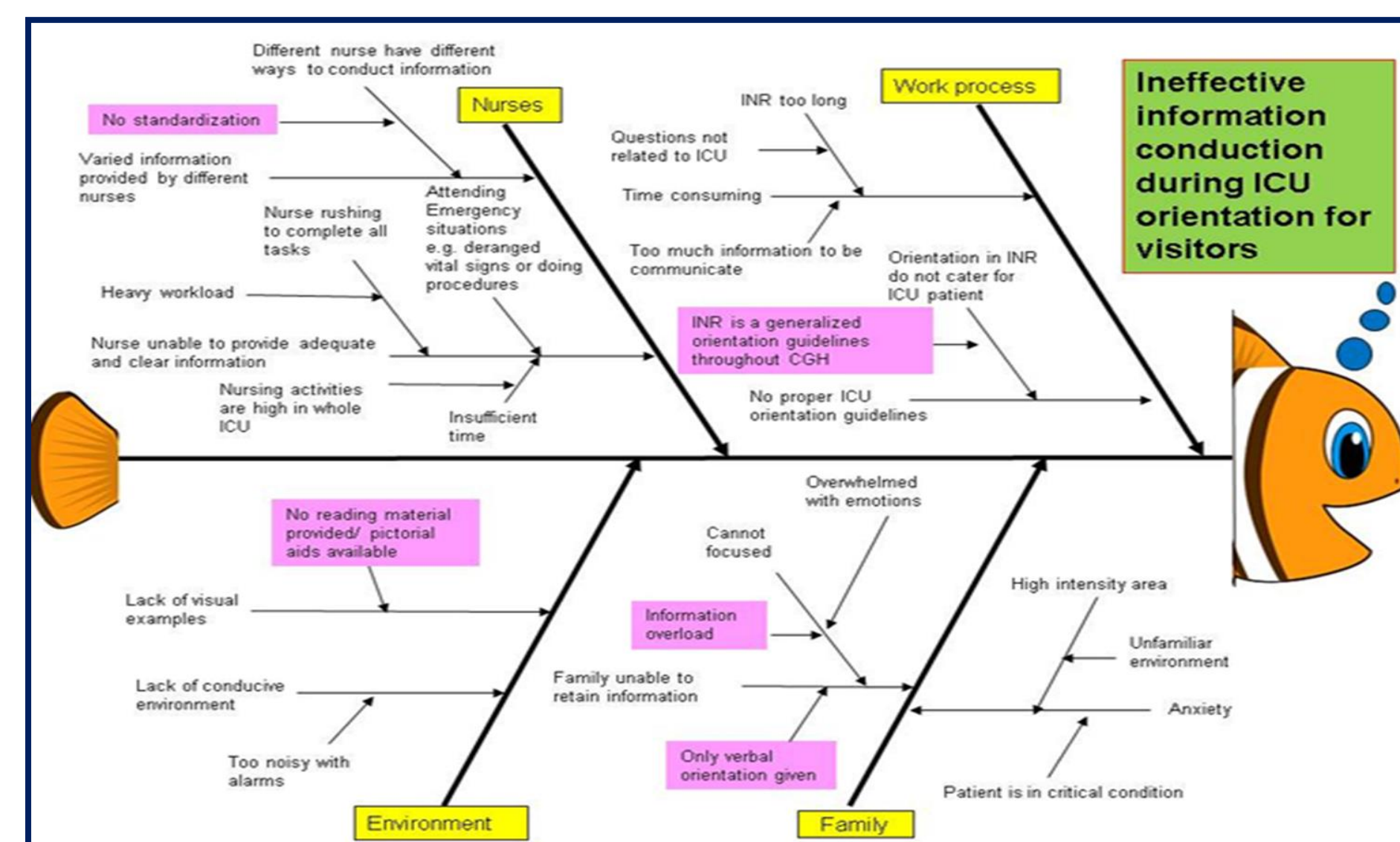
The aim of the project is to enhance customers' ICU experience, improve customer's satisfaction and allay anxiety of patient and family to new environment and stressful situation in ICUs.

Methodology

Opinions were obtained by informal interviews from patients and family members to inquire about the satisfaction and feedback on the current practice of ICU orientation. Data has been collected over a period of two weeks from 29 ICU visitors.

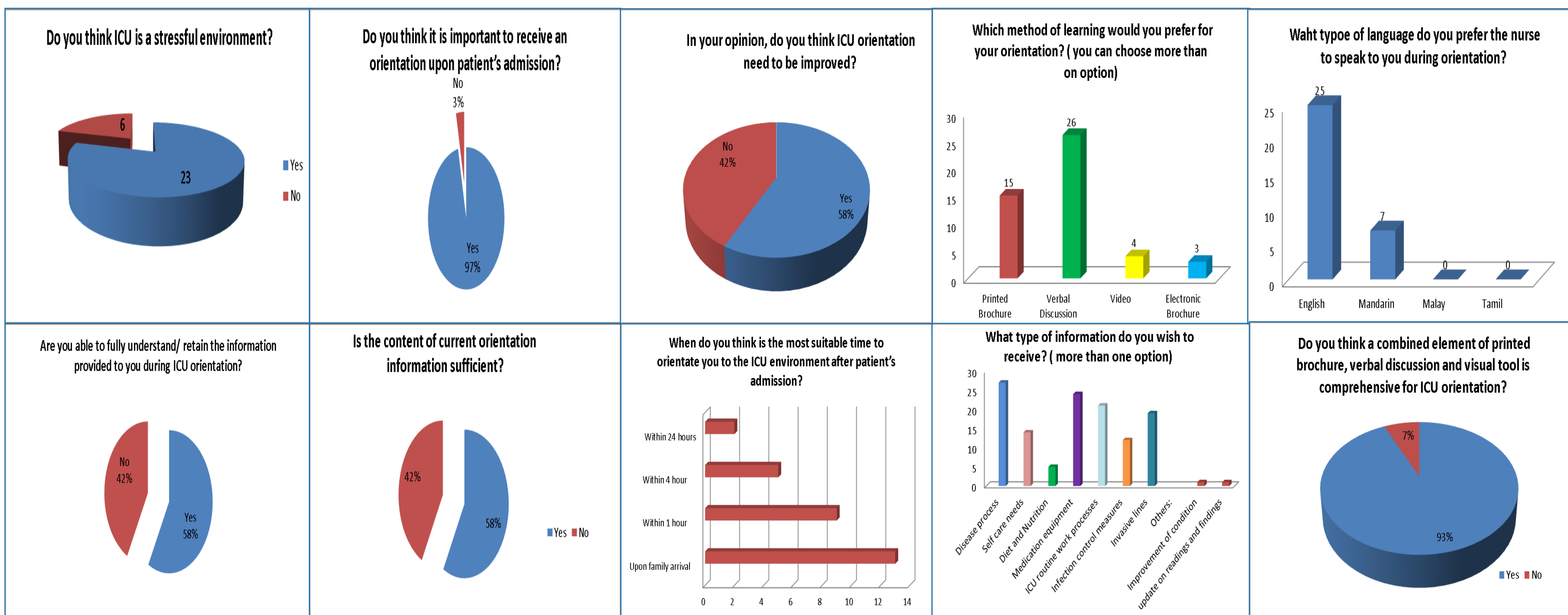
- 97% of participants believed that it was important to receive an orientation upon patient's admission.
- 42% were not able to understand and/or retain the information given to them.
- 58% of the visitors felt that there was a need to improve the existing ICU orientation and information update process.
- 93% of participants expressed that they wanted a combined elements of printed brochure, verbal discussion and visual tool to get more comprehensive information.
- The findings also showed that English was the preferred language by 78% of the respondents.

The team discussed on the contents and created a draft copy of the communication tool in paper. It was sent to the ICU directors as well as the nurses in both ICUs for feedback. Pilot implementation was then carried out in both ICUs with the printed copy.



| | | Improve communication | Effectiveness | Practical | Time Savings | Hospital Image | Total |
|--|---|---|---------------|-----------|--------------|----------------|-------|
| To improve information conducted during ICU orientation for visitors | To standardize the content of ICU orientation | Have fixed elements to introduce during ICU orientation | 5 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 15 |
| | To educate all staffs | To educate all staffs | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 16 |
| | To create specific parts in INR regarding ICU orientation | Insert new specific page in INR regarding ICU orientation | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 17 |
| | Use simplified and non-jargon explanation | Use simplified and non-jargon explanation | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 25 |
| | To develop visual or pictorial aids for ICU orientation | Use color and realistic picture | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 25 |
| | Colour drawings | Colour drawings | 5 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 20 |
| To provide other aids for ICU orientation | ICU orientation slides show | ICU orientation slides show | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 25 |
| | To assign a designated staff on ICU orientation | To assign a designated staff on ICU orientation | 4 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 17 |
| | To prevent information overload during ICU orientation | To choose the right time to deliver the information | 5 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 20 |
| | To allow family members to read the information by themselves at their own pace | To allow family members to read the information by themselves at their own pace | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 25 |

| Actions | Ideas Generated | How ideas were generated | Technique |
|---|-----------------|---|-------------|
| Use simplified and non-jargon explanations | | Communication Signage | Serendipity |
| Use colour and realistic picture | | - Eye catching - picture speaks a thousand words | Serendipity |
| ICU orientation slides show | | Both ICUs have iPad for non-communicative patient | Serendipity |
| To allow family members to read the information by themselves at their own pace | | Visitors in clinics are reading brochures while waiting for doctor's review | Serendipity |



Result

Post implementation survey was conducted and data were analysed. There were a total of 70 feedbacks from staff and 18 feedbacks from family members gathered. 100% of the staff agreed that this tool is very helpful to enhance understanding and information retention during the orientation. 83% of family members agreed on the same point. 59% of time saving was obtained in the work process after implementation. In addition, nurses can now concentrate on providing quality care to the critically ill patients with less interruption. The enhanced customer experience helped to promote a more harmonious relationship between healthcare workers, patients and their family members.

Conclusion

This project has met the objective of 90% and 80% of acceptance with regards to the usefulness of this communications tool from staff and family members respectively. Standardisation and follow up actions were taken to ensure sustainability of the project. The softcopy of the tool developed is uploaded onto the iPad in both ICUs for easy access. In addition, the team plans to display the contents of this communication tool at the visitor's lounge in both ICUs to maximise its effectiveness as well as to reach out to more members of the public.

