

Project Title

NTUC Health Nursing Home Return to Continence Programme

Project Lead and Members

Project lead: Pang LingXia

Project members:

- Teo Ai Lian, Nurse Manager
- Devadasson Vasugi Ezhilarasi, Senior Staff Nurse
- Saw Yu, Enrolled Nurse
- Murugan Thilagam, Senior Staff Nurse
- Gurcharan Singh S/O Dalip, Nursing Home Resident
- Tan Soo Siam, Nursing Home Resident

Organisation(s) Involved

NTUC Health – Residential Care (Nursing Home)

Project Period

Start date: Apr 2018

Completed date: On-going

Aims

To reduce the over-reliance of diapers and manage UI by developing a programme that help residents with continence issues to:

- restore and maintain bladder functions and feel more confident
- go without diapers so they are more comfortable and at ease
- regain their dignity and independence
- reduce diaper related complications e.g. Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) and diaper associated dermatitis, pressure sores, etc.
- improve overall wellbeing and quality of life

Background

See attached

Methods

See attached

Results

See attached

Lessons Learnt

1. Importance of “heartware” such as communication, compassion, trust, patience; in addition to the “hardware” such as clinical management. We found it effective to motivate residents through constant encouragement and patience, allowing them to gradually regain the confidence to take a step towards independence.
2. Initiating a programme that requires seniors to change their long time habit, can be difficult and time consuming as seniors often prefer to remain in their comfort zone and continue life with things that are familiar to them.
3. Always have a person-centred care approach to gain trust and confidence; this process made it easier to motivate residents to wean off diapers. It would have also been easier to provide person-centred care if we were to start small (e.g. three residents per ward).

Conclusion

Urinary incontinence should not be a normal process of ageing; and that diapers are not the only solution. With determination, it is possible to wean residents off diapers, empower them, and improve their QoL.

We were able to show residents that UI can be clinically managed by reducing the chances of UTI, diaper dermatitis, and pressure injuries. In addition to improved clinical care, residents were provided dignity of care, and in all, improved QoL.

Project Category

Care Redesign

Keywords

Care Redesign, Quality Improvement, Patient-Centred Care, Urology, Urinary Incontinence, Aged Care, Patient Education, Multi-Disciplinary Team, Nursing Home, NTUC Health Nursing Home, Continence Management, Return to Continence Programme

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Return to Continence:

An NTUC Health nursing home initiative to help residents live with dignity



We identified a problem

87% of residents in NTUC Health nursing home (Jurong West) were on diapers as at April 2018.

Foul odour, diaper leaks, diaper changes
= **Embarrassment**

Being seen with a thick bulk under the pants
= **Loss of Confidence**

"They (nurses) see my 'everything!'"
= **Compromised Human Dignity**

Diaper rashes, dermatitis, pressure sores
= **Compromised Skin Integrity**

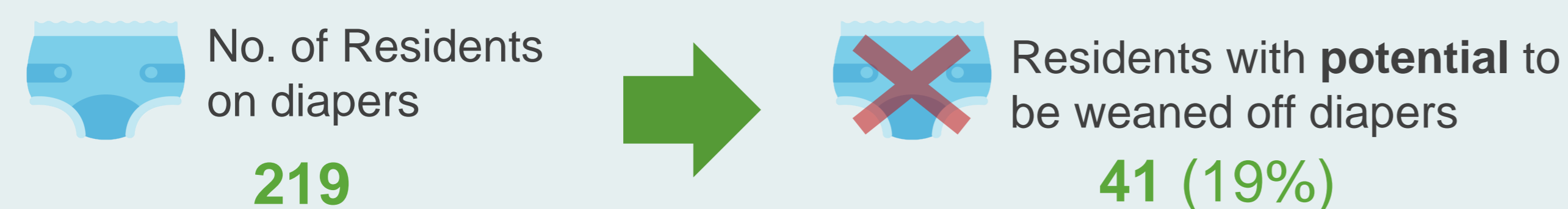
Urinary incontinence is not a normal process of ageing and can be better managed. Diapers should not be the solution.

We developed a 22-week 'NTUC Health Continence Management Programme' to wean residents off diapers

The programme aims to help residents:

- ✓ restore and maintain bladder functions and feel more confident
- ✓ go without diapers so they are more comfortable and at ease
- ✓ regain their dignity and independence
- ✓ reduce diaper related complications e.g. UTI and diaper associated dermatitis, pressure sores, etc.
- ✓ improve overall wellbeing and quality of life

Pilot trial:



We have achieved the set target to wean 90% (37) of 41 residents off diapers by the end of 2019!

How did we do it?

1 Piloted a trial and selected residents with the potential to wean off diapers. Set a reasonable target of 90% to participate in the 22-week programme

Residents are assessed for the programme based on their:

- ✓ Cognitive status
- ✓ Bladder function
- ✓ Functional status

2 Convinced residents to participate despite initial resistance, through a lot of encouragement, motivation and time

Thought bubbles: "I am afraid I will leak!", "I have gotten used to diapers", "I have medical issues so I need to wear them", "It is so convenient!", "I do not want to trouble others"

3 Implemented a structured programme, with the flexibility to tailor it according to resident needs and ongoing learnings

- Multi-disciplinary approach – doctors, nurses, allied health
- Conversations with residents and caregivers/ next-of-kin
- Training & education for staff, residents and caregivers/ next-of-kin
- Ensure adequate bladder scanners, urinals and commodes for use
- Fine-tune workflow to cater time for continence rounds
- Timely and accurate documentation
- Weekly tracking and case reviews to identify challenges and learnings

So what makes this programme successful and also, sustainable?

Care Philosophy

- Strong and clear care philosophy helps to guide staff in their belief and values
- Gives meaning to every day job; projects initiated for the good of residents

Strong leadership

- Support and encouragement from management
- Nurse managers and clinicians are always on ground with the team to encourage and guide them

Open Communication

- Open two-way communication ensure understanding and support
- Weekly case reviews and sharing sessions guide learnings, and help overcome challenges
- Continuous feedback, support and motivation is communicated between management, staff, residents, peers and caregivers/ next-of-kin

Empowerment and Inspiration

- Reward, recognition and support for both staff and residents e.g. Continence ambassadors (residents) feel a sense of pride; share their success and motivate others
- Continence champions (staff) feel empowered
- Graduation ceremonies for residents raise awareness and give residents a sense of achievement while inspiring others to do the same

Helping 71-year old Mr Kwan regain his dignity



"The nurses no longer see my everything! I feel more dignified now"