Project Title

Reference Guide to Overcome Language Barrier

Project Lead and Members

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Organisation(s) Involved

Jurong Community Hospital

Healthcare Family Group Involved in this Project

Healthcare Administration

Applicable Specialty or Discipline

Patient Service Associate, Patient Greeter

Project Period

Start date: Aug-2017

Aims

To improve communication between visitors and staff on duty. As such, waiting time

can be shorten, resulting in increased visitor satisfaction.

Background

See poster appended / below

Methods

See poster appended / below

Results

See poster appended / below

Lessons Learnt

Use of visual diagrams and universal language such as numbers and pictures can help improve communication.

Conclusion

See poster appended / below

Project Category

Care & Process Redesign, Quality Improvement, Job Effectiveness, Access To Care, Waiting Time, Value Based Care, Patient Satisfaction

Keywords

Language Barrier, Visitor Registration, Communication, Translated Reference Guide

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REFERENCE GUIDE TO OVERCOME LANGUAGE BARRIER

SITI JASLINA BINTE MOHAMED SADHI, ZAITON BINTEMOHD SALLEH, NUR AMALINA BINTE HAIFI, LIM CHWEE HAR, ANNA CHEE CHEO TEE, KALIMUTHU VEERASENAN, KASTHURI

☐ SAFETY
☑ PRODUCTIVITY
☑ PATIENT EXPERIENCE
☐ QUALITY
☐ VALUE

Define Problem, Set Aim

Opportunity for Improvement
- Some of the elderly visitors and foreigners are unable to communicate in English.
- Staff on duty (Patient Greeter / JCH PSA) may not speak the same mother tongue as these visitors therefore a communication breakdown occurs.
- These have resulted in longer waiting time for visitors who are in the queue.

The main objective of the project is to improve communication between visitors and staff on duty. As such, waiting time can be shorted, resulting in increased visitor satisfaction.
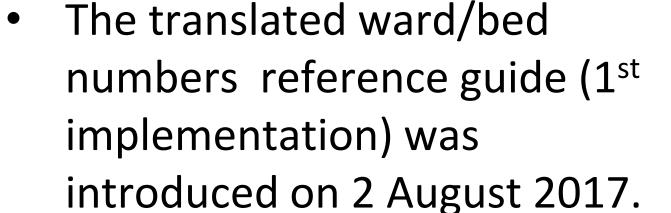
Establish Measures

Registration time per visitor
Approx **10 minutes** to complete registering visitors if there is a delay due to communication problem and language barrier

Staff service competency
Only **2 out of 10 staff** on duty (PG / JCH PSA) are able to speak either Chinese or Malay without a translated reference guide.

Analyse Problem

Determining the Root Cause (5 WHYS)

Unhappiness among visitors at the visitor registration counter

WHY?

Dissatisfied with long waiting time

WHY?

Unable to communicate effectively with staff

WHY?

Language barrier between visitors and staff

WHY?

Limited language capabilities of staff

WHY?

Due to operational requirements and rostering, may not have staff of different language capabilities on duty

Select Changes

What are the probable solutions?
- To address the root cause of staff of different language capability on duty, a solution was implemented - To create a **translated ward/ bed number reference guide** in three different languages (English, Mandarin & Malay).
- The translated ward/bed numbers reference guide (1st implementation) was introduced on 2 August 2017.

1st Implementation

Test & Implement Changes

Translated ward/bed number reference guide with picture and header

2nd Implementation

After 1st implementation, a few feedback were received on the picture used and no translation for the headers. Therefore a 2nd implmentation was introduced.

Post Implementation Issues
- Ward/ Bed number reference guide was useful however patient greeters continued to face communication breakdown
- Hence, patient greeters worked together with JCH PSAs on a translated guide of commonly used questions during visitor registration.

Translated Flash picture cards on common questions asked by visitors

3rd Implementation

- Translation of common questions which staff on duty will ask visitors upon registration
- Pictures are included in the flash cards for visitors

Improved performance after implementation
- Both the translated ward/bed number reference guide and flash picture cards has helped improved communication between staff and visitors.
- Shorter and more seamless registration time - Approx **5 minutes** to complete registration by referring to the guide
- Staff on duty are able to promptly assist visitors and improvement in service standards - **7 out of 10 staff** on duty are able to register successfully on their own referring to the guide

Spread Changes, Learning Points

Spread change
The translated reference guide is used in both Lobby Management areas and JCH outpatient.

Key learnings
- Use of visual diagrams as tool can help improve communication
- Universal language such as numbers and pictures is useful in communication

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital
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Members of the NUHS