

Enhancement Program on Workplace Safety of Manual Handling Operations in the Accident & Emergency Department of Tuen Mun Hospital in Hong Kong

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Introduction

Manual handling operations (MHO) are common daily working duties in health care settings. The related Injury-On-Duty (IOD) incidents remained high (Number of IOD cases per 100 full-time equivalents (FTE) were 8 and 7.3 in 2012 and 2013 respectively) in Accident and Emergency Department (AED) of Tuen Mun Hospital (TMH). The problem not only resulted in loss of manpower, but also affected staff morale inevitably. As a result, in order to reduce IOD rate, a multidisciplinary team including AED, hospital administration and physiotherapy department implemented a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) program to tackle the problem.

Objectives

- To decrease the rate of IOD on MHO by 10% by the end of 2014
- To increase the awareness of workplace safety on MHO in AED of TMH

Methods

The team identified the problems and solutions by adopting the Plan, Do, Check and Act (PDCA) cycle.

Results

Interventions:

1. Invited different ranks of staffs such as nurse and supporting staff to be the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) ambassadors to promote the awareness of workplace safety and to develop the safety culture e.g. monitoring staff's skill on MHO, performing skill demonstration and return demonstration on patient transfer
2. Performed MHO training and quiz every 18 months to refresh staff knowledge and skill on MHO
3. Developed an in house assessment checklist on MHO to evaluate staff's performance and skill on MHO with individual coaching afterward
4. Individual coaching and counseling to the staff with high IOD rate.
5. Organized OSH slogan competition in February 2014 to raise staff's awareness on workplace safety involved over 200 different levels of staff
6. Designed posters to remind staff on proper gesture of manual handling and the necessity of utilization the corresponding tools during lifting heavy objects
7. Performed environmental safety patrol to monitor and eliminate the hazards associated with MHO yearly

The actual number of IOD cases on MHO in 2013 and 2014 was 13 and 13 respectively. The number of IOD cases related to MHO and environment-related injuries per 100 FTE was 7.3 and 6.3 in 2013 and 2014 respectively. The overall IOD reduction rate on MHO and environment-related injuries was 14% in 2014 compared with 2013.

Conclusion

The CQI program was succeeded in terms of decreased IOD rates and safety culture in workplace was promoted. Alertness on how to perform MHO safely and how to prevent environment-related injuries were enhanced. In the long run, the safety culture should be further promoted