

Translating NICHE (Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders) into local Singapore Hospital: Changi General Hospital development and experience

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Environment

Changi General Hospital has been a member of Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE) since 2014. The NICHE team is led by two Geriatric Advanced Practice Nurses and one trained Geriatric Nurse Clinician. Singapore's population is ageing; the number of seniors is expected to triple by 2030. NICHE membership came with the completion of the Changi General Hospital (CGH) Integrated Building (IB). IB is the first medical facility of its kind in Singapore dedicated to provide acute and rehabilitation beds in an age-friendly and conducive healing environment to optimize function and facilitate independent living.

Implementation

We led and facilitated the setup of the nursing steering committee which includes multidisciplinary members with our chief nurse as sponsor. A NICHE workgroup was formed to examine and contextualize the current NICHE online training materials. We introduced three levels of training for various wards in IB, building 3 tiers: induction program, basic program, and advanced program (geriatric trained supervisors). Our GRN hybrid training package consists of six modules, including e-learning with pre-test, classroom teaching with post-test and clinical attachment to IB geriatric wards for nurses in our main building. Clinical geriatric bedside teaching rounds led by and APN began in our main building. We used these rounds to identify cases with geriatric syndromes especially individuals who required delirium related care. As NICHE coordinators we were involved in multiple hospital wide initiatives.

Results

As NICHE coordinators we were involved in multiple hospital wide initiatives:

1. Lead the CGH pressure injury (PI) taskforce and implementing hospital wide improvement measures to increase awareness and competency in assessing, preventing and managing PI. We held the first Singapore Pressure Injury awareness day in 2016 and received hospital-wide acclaim which included responses by the public to this initiative.
2. Lead and developed community nursing and aligned with the Ministry of Health goals to move beyond the hospital to the community. CGH proposed a population based community nursing model that is endorsed by MOH and CGH is identified as test site for the pilot and initial development.
3. Lead caregiver workgroup and developed caregiver training program standardizing all required caregiver training materials to one resource package. Hospital-wide training was conducted for all nurses using the materials.
4. Within the Geriatric nursing department, we also expand outreach to the Nursing Home (EAGLE care project) to enhance their care of older adult populations.
5. Advocated for advanced care planning and joined as ACP facilitators.

Progress

Within IB building many improvement projects were developed including:

- Group dining, activities and increasing mobility
- Medication reconciliation
- Art therapy
- Befrienders program

We co-hosted Dr. Elizabeth Capezuti (formerly from the Hartford Institute of Geriatric Nursing and NICHE) as a HMDP speaker and introduced NICHE to our constituency. In 2016, we hosted and invited community an HMDP expert to CGH to begin a series of teaching and sharing sessions. We were involved in Eastern Health Alliance CGH Annual scientific meeting committee, where the NICHE coordinators chaired two sessions pertaining to skin health pressure injury and dementia.

It has been an exciting and tireless journey, but we are still pushing on to lead CGH to be the center of excellence in geriatric nursing care.