Effective Assessment of the Enhanced Structured Physiotherapy Out-patient Triage System in patients with Neck and Back conditions in Kowloon Hospital

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- Long waiting time has been the universal challenge in most healthcare services
- **HA Annual Plan 2018-19** – Optimize demand management by improving access of target population
- **Structured Triage System** has been implemented in the KCC Physiotherapy (PT) out-patient (OPD) i.e. QEH, KH and HKBH (pre-cluster boundary re-delineation) since 2015 in order to provide reasonable practically timely services to meet the growing patient’s demands
- Back & neck conditions constituted the major clientele in PT OPD (~30-35% of PT OPD Attendances in KCCPT)
The initial PT OPD triage was conducted by a trained clerical staff equipped with specific guideline on triage of patients into three categories according to patient’s conditions & in compliance to PTCOC guidelines: i) Priority 1 (P1) - urgent; ii) Priority 2 (P2) semi-urgent and iii) Routine (R) stable categories

- These appointments will be further audited by a senior physiotherapist within 7 working days after patient registration in PT OPD

Objective

The aim of this project is to investigate the effectiveness of this KCC PT-OPD Triage System in stratifying patients with neck and/or back conditions into different time match PT OPD services
Methodology & Results

• Longitudinal survey to collect structured data from patients who were discharged from KCC PT-OPD between 1.9.2016 to 31.12.2018

• Descriptive data analysis for demographic & clinical data and correlation analysis for investigating relationships in subgroup analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total PT Record Audited during Sampling Period</th>
<th>11,882</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Audited Target PT Record - Patients with Diagnose neck and/or back conditions</td>
<td>3,981 (31%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Time Gap between Appointment Booking &amp; 1st PT Appointment</td>
<td>109.8±61.3 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Recovery Percentage</td>
<td>66.1±24.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average PT Treatment Attendances per Episode</td>
<td>11.6±11.6</td>
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Results – Subgroup Analysis

- Comparable demographic data & total PT Treatment Attendances per episode among 3 categories
- P1 group showed slightly greater recovery % than P2 & R groups
- No correlation found in recovery % with total no. of PT attendances per episode or waiting time

- The findings reflected that the triage system implemented in KCC PT-OPD is effective in scheduling patient’s appointment

- The **waiting time** did not impact on the recovery of patients with neck and back conditions while effectively prioritized needy patients (P1&P2) with opportune PT services
Conclusion

- The findings supported that current structured Out-patient PT Triage System was effective in prioritizing patients for opportune PT services with cautious and rational resources utilization in matching service capacity to meeting patient’s demand, yet, without compromising patient’s recovery.

- The waiting time of KCC PT has been maintained favorably in benchmark with HA average.

- The patient profile data also provided important information for opportunity for services enhancement with subsequent service planning, resources allocation and development of PT services in KCC.

Thank You!