

Project Title

Stock-Taking of Consumables in the Speech Therapy Department

Project Lead and Member

Project lead: Christine Tan

Project members: Celeste Chew, Sylvia Yeo, Leow Li Pyn

Organisation(s) Involved

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital

Aims

To ensure that consumables are topped up in a timely manner so as to avoid instances when Speech Therapists do not have items required for assessment or therapy sessions.

Background

See poster attached/ below

Methods

See poster attached/ below

Results

See poster attached/ below

Lessons Learnt

It is not only important to standardise stock taking processes, but also to make sure all parties are aware of these processes. Visual notes act as a reminder for Speech Therapists to remind Therapy Assistants when consumables are running low. The current solution is limited and hence further PSDA cycles are needed to improve the stock-taking process.

Conclusion

See poster attached/ below

Project Category

Care & Process Redesign

Keywords

Care & Process Redesign, Quality Improvement, Plan Do Study Act, Inventory Management, Allied Health, Speech Therapy, Ng Teng Fong General Hospital, Consumables

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STOCK-TAKING OF CONSUMABLES IN THE SPEECH THERAPY DEPARTMENT

MEMBERS: CHRISTINE TAN, CELESTE CHEW, SYLVIA YEO, LEOW LI PYN

SPEECH THERAPY, REHABILITATION DEPARTMENT

☐ SAFETY

☒ PRODUCTIVITY

☒ PATIENT EXPERIENCE

☐ QUALITY

☐ VALUE

Define Problem/ Set Aim

Opportunity for Improvement

Between October 2018 and early November 2018, Speech Therapists working in Tower B have given feedback about consumables running low. This may cause a disruption to Speech Therapists’ management of patients as items are not available for assessment or therapy sessions.

Aim

The aim is to ensure that consumables are topped up in a timely manner so as to avoid instances when Speech Therapists do not have items required for assessment or therapy sessions.

Establish Measures

Measure

Number of incidents where consumables run low/out on stock in Speech Therapy Department

Analyse Problem

Current process

Probable root causes

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graph LR
    Start([Start]) --> TA1[Therapy Assistant (TA) stocks up consumables in Tower B]
    TA1 --> ST1[Speech Therapists (ST) take consumables on a needs basis for therapy sessions]
    ST1 --> ST2[Speech Therapists take consumables on a needs basis for therapy sessions]
    ST2 --> D1{Are there anymore consumables left?}
    D1 -- No --> TA1
    D1 -- Yes --> TA2[Therapy Assistant stocks up consumables in Tower B]
    TA2 --> End([End])
    ST1 --> D2{Does ST inform TA?}
    D2 -- No --> D1
    D2 -- Yes --> TA2
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Select Changes

Probable solutions

Root Cause	Potential Solutions
No standardised process	1. Reminder notes on cupboards for Speech Therapists to inform Therapy Assistant when consumables are running low
	2. Establish minimum stock level when consumables need to be topped up
	3. Therapy Assistants to provide in-service to Speech Therapy department on stock-taking processes

Test & Implement Changes

Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle

Plan	Do
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Standardise process for Speech Therapists to inform Therapy Assistants when consumables are running low (includes standardising minimum stock level when consumables need to be topped up)Provide in-service to Speech Therapy department to inform them about the new processPlace reminder notes on cupboards where consumables are kept	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Standardised process agreed and implemented on 23/11/2018 post In-serviceIn-service to Speech Therapy department presented on 23/11/2018Reminder notes were put up on 27/11/2018

KINDLY INFORM TAs IF THICKENER IS LEFT WITH 6 CANS

Study	Act (next possible PDSA cycles)
<p>The initiative resulted in fewer incidences of consumables running out between December 2018 and March 2019, which allowed for more efficient and seamless management of Tower B patients receiving Speech Therapy services.</p> <p>However, the result from the new implementation was not consistent as there were still incidences of consumables running out without the Therapy assistants’ knowledge. Several possible reasons for this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Speech Therapists forgetting to inform Therapy Assistants despite visual reminders implementedConsumables are used up quicker than they can be replenished	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increase the frequency of stock-taking and checks done by Therapy AssistantsIncrease buffer time when ordering consumables by placing more orders each time, especially for items requiring a longer lead time to order (e.g. orders from overseas vendor)Announcements can be made during roll call for all parties in the department to keep track of consumable stock flow and inform Therapy Assistants as early as possibleImprove current visual reminder system

Spread Change/ Learning Points

- Standardising stock-taking processes is important, but it is more important to ensure all parties involved are aware of these processes. This can be done by sharing of information via in-service.
- Visual notes act as a reminder for Speech Therapists to inform Therapy Assistants when consumables are running low.
- The current solution is limited and hence further PDSA cycles are needed to improve the current stock-taking process.