

**Project Title**

A Strategic Career Redesign – From Supporting to Partnering in Value Add Care

**Organisation(s) Involved**

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

**Project Period**

Start date: Nov 2011

**Project Category**

Workforce Redesign

**Keywords**

Workforce Transformation, Job Redesign, Ground Up Initiative, Professional Development, Career Development, Career Progression, Staff Upskilling, Talent Development, Staff Engagement, Professional Identity Building, Job Satisfaction, Financial Counselling, Medication Supply Verification, Patient Ambassador and Specialist Assistant, Team-based Care, Multi-Skilled Staff, Holistic Career Framework, Staff Empowerment, Structured Training, Competency-based Assessment, Patient Experience, Uniform Transformation, Professional Image, Annual Tribune, Propel Ceremony, Recognition & Reward, Cost Saving, Leadership Training Programme, Patient Service Associate, Improve Retention Rate, Tan Tock Seng Hospital

**Name and Email of Project Contact Person(s)**

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**HOSPITAL  
MANAGEMENT  
ASIA 2014**  
THE PREMIER LEARNING CONFERENCE  
FOR HEALTHCARE MANAGERS



## ENTRY FORM FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT CATEGORY

A series of activities or a project undertaken by the hospital that was aimed at developing a large percentage of its people as knowledge-based workers. Is it a sustainable activity and did it achieve its goals? How innovative was the project and program. Did it have a lasting improvement in the skills of its employees? How meaningful was the program to the employees? How useful is it in their work? Special weight is given to the percent of employees covered, how well it motivates employees to provide better service and how the training improves service.

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Please fill out all the sections below and abide strictly by the word count. Words exceeding the maximum word count will be cut off automatically/truncated.
- IMPORTANT:** It is necessary that the CEO certifies that all information you provide is true and correct by signing the form indicated in the last page.
- By submitting an entry, you agree that HMA will share relevant aspects of the Entry submitted on the HMA or related Resource Center website.

### Background Information

Project Title                      A Strategic Career Redesign – From Supporting to Partnering in  
Value Add Care

Date Project Started          November 2011

Enhancements made (for projects that did not start operations between January 2013 to May 2014)

May 2013

### Key staff involved in the project

- |     |                             |  |
|-----|-----------------------------|--|
| 1.  | Name<br>Department/Function | Joe Hau<br>Director, Operations (Surgery & PEARL)                  |
| 2.  | Name<br>Department/Function | Patricia Ong<br>Deputy Director, Human Resource Management         |
| 3.  | Name<br>Department/Function | Chris Heng<br>Assistant Director, Operations (Surgery)             |
| 4.  | Name<br>Department/Function | Neo Chee Hoon<br>Senior Clinic Manager, Outpatient Management Unit |
| 5.  | Name<br>Department/Function | Reandy Yang<br>Consultant, Human Resource Development              |
| 6.  | Name<br>Department/Function | Lee Ying Teng<br>Manager, Human Resource Management                |
| 7.  | Name<br>Department/Function | Jane Chong<br>Manager, Operations (Surgery)                        |
| 8.  | Name<br>Department/Function | Nurediana Binte Kamsani<br>Executive, Operations (Surgery)         |
| 9.  | Name<br>Department/Function | Estee Soh<br>Patient Service Executive, Clinic 3B                  |
| 10. | Name<br>Department/Function | Malarvele D/O Periasamy<br>Patient Service Executive, Clinic 2B    |
| 11. | Name<br>Department/Function | Diana Lim<br>Supervisor, Clinic 4A                                 |
| 12. | Name<br>Department/Function | Leela D/O Kannan<br>Assistant Supervisor, Lab Administration       |
| 13. | Name<br>Department/Function | Nur Iffah Binte Razalee<br>Senior Patient Associate, Clinic 2A     |
| 14. | Name<br>Department/Function | Rajasoluchana D/O Rasayam<br>Senior Patient Associate, Clinic 3B   |
| 15. | Name<br>Department/Function | Nelly Sia<br>Patient Service Associate, Clinic 4A                  |
| 16. | Name<br>Department/Function | Rio Iloro Dingcong<br>Patient Service Associate, Clinic B2B        |
| 17. | Name<br>Department/Function | Adeline Tang<br>Senior Patient Service Associate, Inpatient        |
| 18. | Name<br>Department/Function | Rahimah Rahim<br>Patient Service Associate, Clinic 2A              |

**PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS USING THE MAXIMUM WORD ALLOCATIONS INDICATED**

1. Please give some background to the project or program including how it originated such as if a needs analysis was done? Give details of how the project related quality of care to improving skills and knowledge of service staff. Outline any specific goals or targets you had in mind prior to the project or program being put together. **MAX 350 WORDS.**

Our Patient Service Associates (PSAs) are responsible for routine administration in wards, clinics and Emergency Department. They are the first faces to greet patients.

A PSA's role entails greeting, paper & IT admin work, making appointments, telephone calls and collecting payment. These general skills repeatedly employed in an environment that sees more than 3,000 sick patients a day, creates a workplace that is constantly stressed. Not surprisingly, the PSAs do not stay long.

This meant constant recruitment, training and retraining of PSAs, and low job satisfaction. There are negative implications for patient experience.

In 2011, a taskforce comprising mainly the PSAs stepped forward. The result? A holistic PSA framework that enables the development of confident, skilled, and engaged PSAs who will grow and develop professionally with the Hospital.

The redesigned framework contains three elements – Engagement, Identity Building and Job Design & Career Development. It saw the strategic development and addition of value-added services to the routine administration support role of PSAs. Our more capable PSAs will be given opportunities to become specialists in Financial Counselling, Medication Supply Verification, Patient Ambassador and Specialist Assistant, working alongside the healthcare medical professionals to facilitate the better delivery of care.

Ultimately, the holistic framework aims to enable a better patient experience through the development of a sizeable team of multi-skilled and specialist PSAs. The PSA retention rate has also improved by 10% in 2013 as compared to 2011, redeployment manpower savings (\$381,800) and for the second year running, our clinics are ranked amongst the top in terms of patient satisfaction and service.

Key factors to success include i) active leadership and participation from the PSAs in the development of the PSA framework, ii) strong endorsement from management to grow and develop the PSA profession and iii) recognition and support from other family groups on the potentially significant role that PSAs can play in healthcare. This is an excellent example of a ground up initiative, co-designed with PSAs to allow greater clarity and contribution on what satisfaction and career progression would mean to them.

2. Please describe how the project was beneficial for the staff as well as benefits from the patient's perspective and experience. Was any attempt made to correlate this program with better service? Preferably please present quantifiable information such as "before and after" measurements if any. **MAX 200 WORDS.**

The framework enables better patient experience through the development of multi-skilled and specialist PSAs. It focuses on career development, up-skilling, empowerment, productivity and retention. Today, the PSA retention rate has improved by 10% in 2013 as compared to 2011, redeployment manpower savings (\$381,800) and for the second year running, our clinics are ranked amongst the top in terms of patient satisfaction and service in Singapore.

PSAs up-skill through new roles such as financial counselling, performing a specialist assistant role and medication supply verification. They gain a sense of confidence and empowerment by undergoing comprehensive curriculum and assessment to conduct simple procedures such as Uroflow, a screening test traditionally conducted by nurses.

The introduction of an executive level offers career progression. Two Supervisors have been promoted to Patient Service Executives. They assume leadership roles and manage teams and projects to improve workflow processes. Both expressed a higher level of self-confidence and added pride in their work.

Our PSAs are part of team-based care for patients. Having them practise at the top of their vocation results in a positive "chain-effect", where they gain job satisfaction and nursing resources are freed to deliver other value-added work.

Word count: 193 / 200

3. Please explain the effect of the program on employee morale and how well it was received. What other benefits were derived BY THE STAFF or by the Hospital? **MAX 200 WORDS.**

PSAs achieve a sense of confidence and empowerment when they successfully complete the structured trainings and learning modules specifically designed for up-skilling. They are required to pass a competency based assessment by in-house coaches. They take pride in being able to do more and conduct simple specialist procedures.

With the new executive level job scale, employee morale is raised as PSAs have more opportunities for career progression.

The PSA Framework also strengthens the identity of our PSAs so that they can grow, contribute and feel proud of their distinct profession. We transformed their uniform and gave them a more professional image. In addition, we now have a PSA Day, an annual tribute to our more than 600 PSAs for their contribution and dedication to patient care. There is also the PSA Propel Ceremony to recognise our PSA who graduate successfully from the various training modules and move on to the next level.

This journey of transformation and process improvements brought about successful re-deployment of 9 PSAs and a significant cost savings of \$381,800. The PSA retention rate has also improved by 10% in 2013 as compared to 2011.

Word count: 188 / 200

4. Please explain how staff was selected to be included in the training program and what percentage of the staff was included. Did the project produce sustainable results? **MAX 150 WORDS.**

PSAs who currently hold supervisory roles or are earmarked for promotion to a supervisory role (7-10% of the workforce) are selected for a leadership training programme under the PSA Framework. They attend professional training and learning modules designed for their upskilling. Such programmes have also become part of the core courses offered by the Human Resource Development Department.

Equipped with leadership skills, PSAs in supervisory roles will have more confidence in managing work teams. We view such leadership training as a continuous and sustainable effort.

The more capable PSAs will be offered an executive level to further their career. They can be promoted to Patient Service Executives, to assume greater leadership roles, manage teams and projects to improve processes.

The Ministry of Health, healthcare clusters and other healthcare institutions have given much interest in the Framework. It was also presented at the Singapore Healthcare Management Congress in August 2013.

Word count: 149 / 150

5. Please give some background to the project team that originated, studied and developed the project or program. **MAX 200 WORDS.**

The project team is made up of PSAs, facilitators and an Advisor. PSAs who have exhibited a positive attitude with a passionate and innovative mindset for improvements to the current PSA career pathway were nominated to be project team members. They come from all over the hospital such as wards and clinics.

The facilitators consist of Managers and Executives from departments who have close working relationship with PSAs. The Advisor, of senior management level, provides overall direction for the workgroup.

It is important to note that the concept behind the PSA Framework is a ground up initiative, co-designed with PSAs, a meaningful collaboration where ideas and proposals are mainly from the PSAs themselves.

Word count: 113 / 200

6. Please give any other information, including third party testimonial regarding your project which you think would help convince the judges that this project (or program) should win this category. **MAX 200 WORDS.**

Testimonials from our PSAs are the most truthful insight on how the new career re-design framework ensures more opportunities for growth and development.

***"It makes us feel appreciated and respected when the management is so willing to listen to our feedback. It feels good that our efforts are recognised and we are given opportunities to upgrade ourselves and advance in our careers."***

PSA – Ms Rahimah Bte Rahim

***"I'm happy that I was given the chance to be put on this managerial track. It has certainly made me more confident."***

Patient Service Executive – Ms Estee Soh

The PSA Framework has gathered much attention and interest from other local healthcare institutions since its launch and there have been presentations made to our Ministry of Health, cluster board members, other local healthcare institutions and also at the Singapore Healthcare Management Congress in August 2013.

The framework was also featured in local media and Singapore's National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) newsletters, both online and print.

Word count: 161 / 200

## **Media Coverage (From June 2013 to April 2014)**

1) Author: Eveline Gan

Date: 26 June 2013

Title: Adding the Human Touch

Media Medium: TODAY Press

2) Author: Naseema Banu Maideen

Date: 12 July 2013

Title: PSAs Climb Up A 'Progressive Career Model'

Media Medium: NTUC This Weekly

3) Author: Naseema Banu Maideen

Date: 12 July 2013

Title: PSAs Climb Up A 'Progressive Career Model'

Media Medium: NTUC U Portal

4) Author: Christine

Date: 2 April 2014

Title: Paving the Way for an Enhanced Work Experience

Media Medium: NTUC U Portal