

00182 To Improve the Inpatient Billing Process in National Heart Centre Singapore

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Aims: To improve the billing process for better data integration and standardize billing process.

Methodology: Patient care services are coded; charges are entered by staff in various departments during hospitalization. The current billing process uses hardcopy consumable charge forms that are handwritten and collected by business office staff daily for processing. Our data collection showed that 90% of the rejected charging forms by Business Office were due to wrong or missing information. Hence, the project targets to address the problems with the hard copy charge form. With the stakeholder's involvement and the assistance from the IT Informatics department, a customized electronic system was developed to support multiple and concurrent consumable charging. Consumable items can be charged through the item check-in/check-out function via barcode scanning. Management of inventory is simplified. With the implementation of the online system, searches for charging for cases would be more efficient compared to physically tracing of hardcopy records. The system is accessible 24 hours through the intranet with individual login ID for accountability.

Result: With the new E-consumable charging system, the rejected hardcopy charge forms in Ward 56 reduced from 141 to 26 cases. The improved charging system saved the Nurse Clinicians an average of 60-100 minutes in rectifying every wrongly billed patient. The estimated total manpower cost avoidance of \$78,774.20 per annum. The project supports NHCS' direction towards a paperless culture and reduces the cost of papers. The intangible results include increased stakeholders' satisfaction, improved inter-departmental collaboration; improve accuracy in reports and easily available access for charging process.

Conclusion: Improving the billing workflow and implementing an electronic charging system that allowed better integration of information flow which serves to improve our service to patients and their next-of-kin. This results in better accountability and system efficiency, thus achieving our philosophy of "Patients. At the heart of all we do."