

A novel approach to combat disease related malnutrition

Multi strategic approach to ameliorate nutrition care process by strengthening human resources and institutional capacity in Sri Lanka



Project team (Renuka Jayatissa; Nadeesha Wijenayaka; Piyumanga Karunaratne; Malika Udagedara)

Contact (Dr. Renuka Jayatissa, President, Sri Lanka Medical Nutrition Association, Medical Research Institute, Sir Danister De Silva Mawatha, Colombo 08, Sri Lanka)

Description of the initiative

Background / context

One fourth of adult patients admitted to tertiary health care settings in Sri Lanka had Disease Related Malnutrition (DRM) and one out of ten were severely malnourished, yet many remain undetected due to ad-hoc nutrition services in hospitals.

Rationale for the initiative

The field of clinical nutrition as a sub specialty has been recently established as per the national nutrition policy of Sri Lanka. This new field is successfully expanding over the country through medical nutrition clinics in hospitals. This initiative will recognize deficiencies and gaps in knowledge among health professionals involving in nutrition care process. Our goal is to provide patient satisfaction, proper clinical outcome, standard nutrition care process and overall improvement of nutrition indicators of the country.

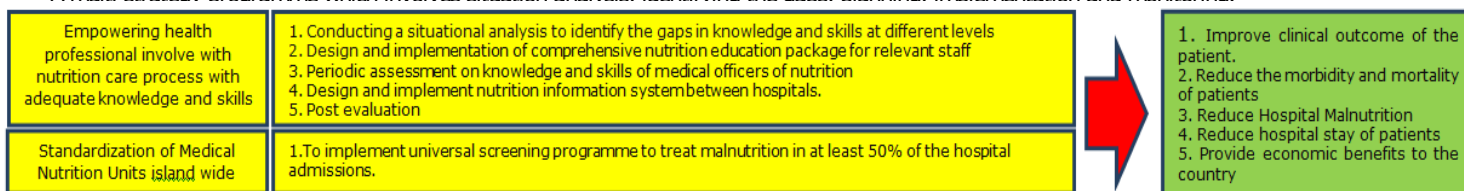
Objectives and scope

- To improve knowledge and skills of health professionals and empower them to deliver effective nutrition care process.
- To improve screening, assessment and treatment of malnutrition.
- To educate hospital kitchen staff to achieve quality catering services

Planned activities & deliverables

Outline the steps to be taken

A multi strategic programme which involves situation analysis, identifying the gaps, planning, implementation and monitoring.



What are the concrete deliverables of the project?

1. Identified gaps in knowledge and skills of health professionals conducting situation analysis.
2. Developed comprehensive education and care package.
3. Tailor made nutrition information system.
4. Post-evaluation data of the initiative.

What achievements are possible in the next 12 and 24 months?

- 0 – 6 months** - Situation analysis to identify gaps in knowledge and skills among health professionals.
- 6 – 12 months** - Development of comprehensive education package to cater knowledge gap and adaptation of malnutrition screening tool. Designing and development of software for nutrition education system.
- 12 – 15 months** - Piloting of the multi strategy initiative in 3 teaching hospitals of the country.
- 16 – 21 months** - Implementation of this Multi Strategy initiative throughout the country and continuous monitoring of the progress
- 21 – 24 months** - Evaluation of the process

Resources & enablers

Describe personnel, financial needs

- Employed nutrition experts and nutrition education specialists (international), project manager, data analyst, and enumerators for situation analysis.
- Specify how the grant will be spent**
- Deployed nutrition education professionals to facilitate situation analysis and to develop comprehensive education and care package (€ 15000)
- Data analyst, enumerators for situation analysis for post evaluation – (€ 5000)
- Printing of educational packages, training programmes in administrative support ((€ 10000)

What factors will make it successful?

- Ministry of Health has identified clinical nutrition as a key priority and currently established Medical Officers of Nutrition and Medical Nutrition Units throughout the country will facilitate for this initiative
- The importance of nutrition in managing hospitalised patients have been identified as a priority by other medical subspecialties, administrative staff and other stakeholders in health care team
- Knowledge seeking behaviour of health care professionals and related staff will facilitate the process

Results/outcomes & expected impact

How will the findings be implemented?

The initial situation analysis will provide insight into the prevailing knowledge and skills among medical officers in nutrition, nursing staff and the hospital kitchen staff, who collaboratively play important roles in the delivery of nutritional care to the patients. Development and execution of knowledge & skill development packages for the above three categories of the nutritional care workforce will be done accordingly.

How will this project advance patient care / contribute to optimal nutritional care?

By paving the path to link the knowledge and skills of the medical officers, nurses and the kitchen staff will eventually contribute to optimal nutritional care delivery to the patients via a holistic approach.

What makes the project innovative?

Approaching different stakeholders in the nutritional management of hospitalized patients and fulfilling the existing gaps in prompt delivery of nutritional therapy using novel methods and technical expertise makes this project innovative as well as realistic in achieving its ultimate goal.

Will the project be likely to influence national nutrition policy?

Expected better outcome of the patients in the curative sector of the country with this initiative and the resulting cost effectiveness will be a solid evidence to convince policy makers to identify and encourage organizing and funding continuous knowledge and skill development programmes for the healthcare workforce.

Is the project transferable to other settings / countries?

Certainly this model can be transferable to other similar settings with necessary modifications, especially to the countries in the Asian subcontinent.