Pathway to Excellence® Case Study:
Tan Tock Seng Hospital’s Culture of Empowerment Improves Quality and Motivates Staff

Since 1844, Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) in Singapore has provided pioneering medical care and support to the community. With a strong culture of quality steeped in patient safety, TTSH constantly challenges itself to provide better, safer, and more cost-effective care to those it serves.

TTSH sought out the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Pathway to Excellence® Program to continue advancing its quality improvement efforts. The pursuit of the Pathway credential offered TTSH a sustainable framework for creating a safe and positive workplace for nurses, as well as an opportunity to benchmark itself against international norms to further improve its nursing practice environment.

The hospital staff noticed positive changes from the start. Within a year of embarking on the Pathway journey, nursing had moved from the traditional hierarchical model to a culture of empowerment. Clinical nurses became more involved in decision-making at the point of care. Implementing a Pathway-inspired shared governance structure encouraged nurses at all levels to better problem solve, innovate, and motivate, all of which further advances TTSH’s healthcare mission.

The hospital’s expanded commitment to greater accountability has led to an increase in nurse-driven quality improvement initiatives. These new programs include:

- **Hourly Rounding** – routine and purposeful rounding to assess patients using the four Ps (Pain, Potty, Position, Personal items) and proactively meet their needs. Since its inception, the program has helped reduce fall rates to zero, decrease call bells, and improve patient satisfaction.
- **Self-Administration of Medication (SAM)** – a program to teach patients how to manage their own medications in the hospital and at home. Patients feel more confident, independent, and involved in their own care.
- **“Fabulous Fridays”** – a dedicated block of time at the end of the week to energize nurses at work through play. Each ward comes up with its own activities, such as Zumba classes, aroma therapy, or “movie night”, to boost team building and healthy living.

TTSH was recently ranked second among public hospitals for patient satisfaction and recognized as the most improved hospital in Singapore¹.

“Nurses today want to be partners in decisions that will have an impact on their work environment and the care they provide,” says Yong Keng Kwang, Director, TTSH Nursing. “It’s a simple equation that works for us: positive and safe working environment produces happy nurses. And happy nurses produce great patient outcomes.”

**At a Glance**
Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) is one of Singapore’s largest multi-disciplinary hospitals, serving more than 2,000 patients every day. In recognition of its commitment to excellent patient care, TTSH has been awarded ISO 9001 certification and the prestigious Joint Commission International accreditation. In 2013, it became the first international healthcare organization to receive Pathway to Excellence designation.

Results

- Hourly rounding helped TTSH reduce patient falls by 42% and maintain a zero fall rate for one year
- SAM has helped improve patient satisfaction in the sub-acute ward by 10%
- Fabulous Fridays have improved staff engagement and helped raise nurses’ favorable rating of their environment by 6%, reduce sick leave rates by 14%, and reduce attrition rates by 14%

About the Pathway to Excellence® Program

The ANCC Pathway to Excellence Program recognizes a healthcare organization’s commitment to creating a positive nursing practice environment. The Pathway to Excellence in Long Term Care® Program is the first to recognize this type of supportive work setting specifically in long-term care facilities. Pathway organizations focus on collaboration, career development, and accountable leadership to empower nurses.

For more information, visit www.nursecredentialing.org/pathway.