

5S Best Workplace Award at the Manorom Hospital in Chainat Province, Thailand

By

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This project was aimed at improving the working environment in a hospital for safety and cleanness in order to reduce accidents at work. The protection from work-related diseases among health care workers was taken into account. The health care workers were trained concerning health promotion behaviour. The training was undertaken as part of the systematic quality management system in the hospital. The 5S activities were used as a means for this purpose. They were implemented from 28 December 2005 until 23 February 2006, for 58 days. The operation steps included the goal setting, 5S policy issuing, 5S training, implementation of a cleaning day, a study tour to a successful hospital, auditing by experts, and serving as the learning hospital for 5S activities. The exchanges of experiences among the visited organizations and the participating workers took place in a dramatic manner. The 5S Best Workplace Award was gained as a result. The whole process demonstrated a sustainable development and good practices for health care services. The patients could achieve good and safe access for all provided services. The stepwise progress gained through the participatory 5S activities proved to promote continual improvement as a clean, safe and convenient health care service center.

キーワード：病院労働環境；5S活動；労働者参加；労働災害；外部監査

Key words: Hospital working environment; 5S activity; Worker participation; Occupational accidents; External audit

I. Introduction

It is well recognized that comprehensive health promotion is essential to increase the quality of working life. There are many factors related to health and living conditions including physical, psychosocial, ergonomic and work organization factors¹⁾. The Manorom Hospital has issued the policy to promote good health and

working environment since 1997. The objective has been to gain the status of being a healthy service center for health care workers and patients. The methodology used focuses on the multifaceted improvement of the working areas in terms of cleanness, safety and good environment. This aim is in accordance with the principle of work improvement in the workplace. It may finally lead to enhanced working life and

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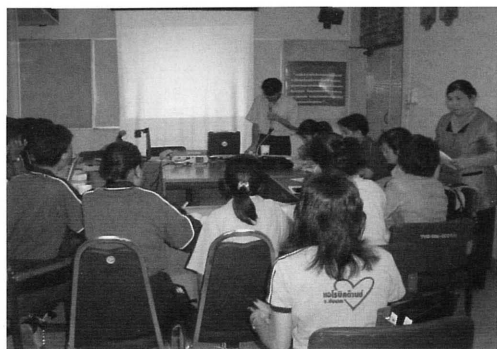


Fig. 1 5S Policy development meeting in the Manorom Hospital

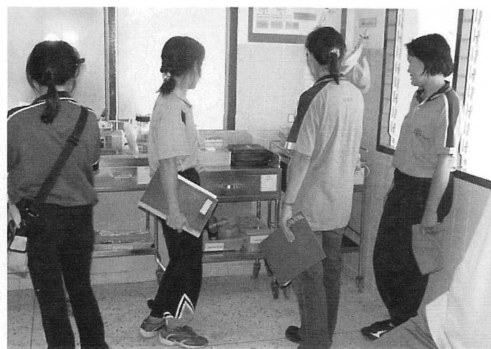


Fig. 2 The 5S experiences exchanges program other hospitals

productivity²⁾.

The Manorom Hospital implemented 5S activities to improve physical work environment. The 5S activities were undertaken as a means of achieving clean and safe work environment. They included the activities of clearing up (Seiri), organizing (Seiton), cleaning (Seiso), standardizing (Seiketsu) and discipline (Shitsuke). There was no active participation at the beginning of the activities. Since fiscal year 2006, the working committee and all level of health care workers committed to re-implement the 5S activities under the expert supervision and active worker participation.

The 5S activity golden award project started in the Manorom Hospital from 28 December 2005 and continued until 23 February 2006, for 58 days. The aims of the project was to construct safe, convenient and clean working areas to increase the efficiency of health care workers and to improve patient satisfaction. It was a part of the quality improvement of this hospital.

II. Methods

The process of implementing 5S activities was followed by setting goals together, issuing 5S policy, training 5S to all levels of health care workers, providing the big cleaning day activity and hospital visit (Fig. 1). The working committee was established to monitor and evaluate the process; meanwhile the discussion



Fig. 3 SEISO: 5S activities jointly with workers

and process review was done in parallel. The expert advice was needed to the process of 5S activities. Finally, the Manorom Hospital could welcome health care workers from outside for the exchanges of experiences (Fig. 2).

The content of 5S activities included SEIRI, SEISO, SEITON, SEIKETSU and SHITSUKE. SEIRI covers the category making of all work-related items, for example, official stationary, medical and official instruments, documentation, tools, electricity system, gardening and garbage. The unused article should be moved and the reuse concept needs to be implemented. SEISO means cleanness (Fig. 3). Washing, repairing and painting are performed. SEITON means being convenient to work. Labeling, well organized conditions and management should be done in this process. The training for making labeling to have the same format that is



Fig. 4 SEITON: multilevel racks with clear labels (left; in cleaning room, right; in nurse station)



Fig. 5 Seiketu: proper wasting rules for infectious substances



Fig. 6 The Manorom Provincial Hospital received the 5S best workplace award in Thailand

clear, correct and cheap should be constructed. SEIKETSU means integrated standards to the hospital policy. SHITSUKE involves the inspection, follow-up process, monitoring and clear job descriptions.

III. Results

The benefits of 5S activities for the improvement of hospitals were found useful as the following. It was advantageous for the users. Firstly, the customers obtained health care service in the safe and clean health care service center. Second, the services were satisfied, convenient and fast. Health care workers, themselves, gained advantages from this activity as well. They worked in the safe, clean and neat

workplace. It was considered to lead to the reduction of risks from accident or occupational diseases. Workers were able to initiate the job task development, which was useful to the institution. Thirdly, the hospital could serve as the success story for other institutions to learn and share experiences. In addition, the outcome of the activities could increase the productivity of the hospital such as increasing in the working areas. The hospital could obtain the Golden Award at the 5-star levels from the Developing Quality Basic Institute and the award of excellent service place in 2006 from the evaluation project for the working satisfaction from Chain-at Province. Figs. 4-6 show the features of 5S activities in the Manorom Hospital.

IV. Discussion

The achievement of the 5S activities in the

Manorom Hospital was due to many supportive factors³⁻⁷⁾. Worker participation played a very important role for making the policy. It facilitated a working atmosphere for the workplace cooperation and created the sense of organization ownership and active worker participation was instrumental as the tools for the sustainable development for improving the occupational health and safety conditions⁸⁾. All health care workers realized that this project belonged to all of them, not merely to any particular group in the hospital. Issuing of 5S policy was the key factor of success. It indicated a clear direction of work to achieve the goal. It is noticed that all levels of the health care workers participated in this project. Training on 5S implementation was established in the process. Participants gained proper knowledge and understanding. The workers' acceptance and worker support was dramatically achieved. It is well known that social support can reduce job stress in the workplace. It may lead to the increase in the work productivity. There was no conflict when the project was implemented. Hospital visits helped the experience sharing from the successful hospital and provided guidance for the practical improvement.

In addition, the 5S committee of the hospital acted as a powerful tool to operate the process. Their functions were organizing the facility visits for the progress, cooperation with many unit and presentation of the project progress to the management. The committee performed project analysis, review, monitoring and improvement throughout the process. The sub-committees were established to assist the committee and to secure the project flexibility. The meetings between the project committee and sub-committees were held regularly. The agreement and satisfaction of all the workers were the results achieved from these meetings.

The most important key of success was the leadership. The working participation, both

moral and physical, from the management motivated all health care workers. The 5S activity needs effort and is time consuming process. Supportive factors including welfare facilities, food and drinks made workers more cooperatively and effectively.

V. Conclusion

Using 5S activities as the tool to improve physical environment of the hospital proved effective as shown by many good outcomes and rapid changes achieved in short time under resource management with limited budget. The accomplishment of the hospital was clear from the rewards from the private institute and the official institute. The most important achievement was the satisfied, convenient, safe and clean workplace. It was considered to lead to the reduction of risks from accidents or work-related diseases with the concomitant increase in working efficiency. Moreover, the 5S activities led to good worker relationships.

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