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Introduction: In a transdisciplinary model of CE, its principles are employed as a common philosophy shared by all staff disciplines. In order to obtain a full picture of our clients' progress, a CE-based curriculum emphasizes an integrated effort of different disciplines to document each client's profile and progress in one single folder was implemented. In such model, meetings and detailed documentation are indispensable. Trade-off between "back-office work" and "client-contact" becomes a primary concern. Bottle-necks occur mostly in file circulation and in time matching for meetings. Moreover, processing of the quantified data is tedious. A web-based curriculum management system was launched in 2004 to facilitate team work. It provides a 24-hr communication platform that minimizes the time spent in meetings and paper circulation with instant data searching and processing.

Aim: This study investigated the change in back-office hours before and after the launching of the system.

Methodology: A monthly clinical output was developed for documenting 3 parameters: the number of sessions of individual training (IT); group training (GT); and daily routine training (DRT) conducted. The average time spent for 1 session of IT/DRT was 0.5-hr while that of GT was 1-hr. The monthly back-office hours were calculated as: [(monthly working hrs of all therapists in a service unit) – (IT + DRT sessions) × 0.5 – GT sessions]. The output was reported by the therapy department of 6 sheltered workshops and 6 hostels for 36 months.

Results and Discussion: The 3 parameters were averaged for every 6-consecutive-month. Before the system launching, the % of the back-office work across was 52-57% for workshops and 33-55% for hostels. During the first 6 months of launching, the average % reached 59% (workshop) and 53% (hostels). Thereafter, it declined to 48% and 46-48% respectively. The initial increase can be attributed to the learning period in using the system. By removing the data in the first 6 months of launching, a steady decrease in back-office hours at -8.7 (workshops) ($r^2 = 0.87$, Linear Regression) and at -1.05 (hostels) ($r^2 = 0.02$) was obtained. This finding confirmed an improved client-contact hours with the system.



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