

Rehabilitation with a Difference – Overcoming Pain to Inspire Others and to Protect Mother Earth
Buddhist Tzu-Chi Dialysis Centre, Malaysia

GGHH Agenda Goals saved

- Leadership
- Waste

Organization Goal

- Reduce carbon dioxide emissions through conscientious utilization of resources, recycling and educating the community
- Increase the amount of waste diverted from ending in landfills and incinerator through reusing and repurposing non-recyclable packages
- Motivate employees and patients to participate in waste reduction programs and activities to safeguard Mother Earth
- Inclusion of handy craft making as part of patients' rehabilitation program



Progress Achieved

One of the core missions of Tzu Chi Foundation is environmental protection and the center adamant in upholding this mission. Furthering this endeavor, the Buddhist Tzu Chi Dialysis Center integrated this mission in their patients' rehabilitation program. This is greatly and actively supported by Patient's Support Group who believes in the importance of this cause.

Involving the Community

A group of volunteers supported by the nurses regularly holds activities and programs. The activities and programs conducted passes on knowledge on recycling and importance of protecting the environment for everyone and most especially the patients.

Recycling is not only done at the centers. Employees and patients are encouraged to practice them at home. To further cultivate this habit, the whole community (including the volunteers, employees and patients) are invited to participate in the institution's monthly "recycling day". The participants segregate, collect recyclables and bring them to Tzu Chi Recycling Stations. This practice was recognized in the 2016 Penang Environmental Sustainability Award.



Empowering the Patients

Contributing to the society, particularly in protecting the environment is a fulfilling task for patients undergoing dialysis in the Buddhist Tzu Chi Dialysis Center. Being able to contribute and useful to the society enable them to lead a meaningful life.

Buddhist Tzu-Chi Dialysis center not only demonstrates its responsibility in providing high quality care and dialysis treatment but in the rehabilitation of patients and family members while reducing waste.

Since mid-last year the center had started to use the non- recyclable wrappers to make baskets to reduce the waste in the land fill. The baskets made from the non- recyclable wrappers are not only usable but may also be given out as gifts of love. These baskets were made from the 4 interlocking pieces representing our Tzu Chi 4 main Missions (Charity, Medicine, Education and Humanistic culture) supporting this program.

Another activity is using the balance discarded cloth to make handy craft into cloth reusable bags and other items.

These activities not only divert waste but indirectly involve volunteers and patients in recycling and reuse programs. The activities implement addresses the goal of the center to reduce pollution, safe guard our Mother Earth while building good relationship between patients and volunteers.

The Issue

Solid Waste is one of the major environmental problems experienced in Malaysia. Currently over 23,000 tons of wastes are produced each day in the country. It continues to increase with the growing population and development. Only 5% of the generated waste is recycled. This phenomenon leads to environmental pollution due to excessive waste production.



Food wrappers are non-recyclable and will end up in land fill if not reused. In this modern day, numerous food varieties are packed in these non-recyclable materials.

Sustainability Strategy Implemented

Rehabilitation has been defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as "the use of all means aimed at reducing the impact of disabling and handicapping conditions and at enabling people with disabilities to achieve optimal social integration". This definition incorporates clinical rehabilitation, but more importantly it endorses the concept of societal integration.

Our dialysis patients actively involved in the community services as part of their rehabilitation which include social environment and attends to the needs of other people.

The rehabilitative process implemented by the center is unique in treating their patients. They primarily work according to a holistic approach principle. They aim to support a person's social skills and create opportunities for them to reach ultimate potential and make positive differences in their lives.

Through this rehabilitation program they also inspire trust, care and kindness in a supportive environment for healing the body and mind. In addition, carried out activities as part of the rehabilitation program, the center hopes to inspire our dialysis patients to love themselves and others through volunteerism and to care for the environment and mankind.

Implementation Process

Environmental protection had been part of Tzu Chi missions and by promoting activities on repurposing non-recyclable wrappers helps to reduce the waste going into the landfill. This is also part of rehabilitation where a patient, patient’s family members, volunteers and employees work together, creating a harmonious environment.

The center looked into generation, made aware and had identified the amount of food wrappers being thrown away and ending up the land fill. The volunteers, patient support group and employees are actively conducting activities to reduce generated waste from food wrappers. They continuously do education program to all patients, employees and volunteers to create awareness and instill green habits to ensure sustainability.

The volunteers, Patient Support Group and staff are regularly holding sessions to promote this campaign. Many classes were arranged at different locations to get the public to involve. This activity gets people understand and learn how to make these baskets.

Tracking Progress

The center do not have any specific tracking system but are continuously encouraging and educating all staff, volunteers and patients regarding the waste reduction and the effect of carbon emission. These activities are being conducted in varied locations making it difficult to track the progress. They are further informed of the importance recycling and to reusing items to prevent waste from ending in landfills.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Reducing waste and frugality practices requires behavioral change and it has always been a challenge. Not all agreed to this campaign and activities. Individual or personal habits were proven difficult to transform.

The waste reduction plan had been implemented through cooperation from different stakeholder and support from the management. Continuous communication, education and training were carried out persistently for the success of this project.

Awareness campaign and support from the management helps in sustaining and maintaining this project. The main support comes from our committed volunteers who unselfishly supporting and guiding the team.

Next Steps

This project is in line with the recycling projects that had been carried out as part of rehabilitation and to support environmental protection. These activities are captures interest and much more acceptable to many people as it is workable and feasible to carry out.

There are always people who are opposed to the implementation of the new activity. However, with hard work and perseverance, we gained experiences on how to smartly use the data to communicate and encourage change. Although tools or modern technology can be very helpful, we human still are the backbone of energy solution and driver of change.



We will continue this activity and find other craft where other non-recyclable maybe used to reduce carbon emission and lower the volume of waste sent to the land fill.

Demographic Information

Buddhist Tzu Chi Dialysis Centres are providing free dialysis treatment, EPO injection, Blood tests and regular specialist checkup for all patients irrespective of race, religion or creed. Presently we have three Tzu-Chi Dialysis centers in Malaysia, Penang (PGDC), and Butterworth (BWDC) and in Alor Star (KDC).

As of June 2017,

- PGDC has --- Hemodialysis machines, a total of 130 patients and 34 nursing staff
- BWDC has --- Hemodialysis machines, a total of 97 patients and 21 nursing staff
- KDC has --- Hemodialysis machines, a total 73 patients and 21 nursing staff

Buddhist Tzu Chi Dialysis Centre also provides free basic screening under the CKD awareness and prevention program

Links

CS 3 - Waste: Reduce, Re-use, and Recycle For Our Future Generations

<https://gghhconnect.cisconetspace.com/group/waste/case-studies>

<http://tzuchi.org.my>

Quotes:

The first step toward change is to create awareness and education even though it is easier to throw things out than to fix them. We will take a step at a time to practice the 7 Rs – Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Restore/Repair, Recycle, Rethink, and Respect

Keywords / Topics:

Waste reduction, Reusing of non-recyclable, and reduction of carbon emission.

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