

<b>Paper Category:</b>	10. Oral Health and Swallowing
<b>Paper Title:</b> (Arial Font; 14 Pt Size)	<b>Implementation of Short Swallowing Screen for Hospitalised Older Adults</b>
<b>Abstract Body:</b> (Arial Font; 12Pt Size)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background</li> <li>• Objectives</li> <li>• Method</li> <li>• Results</li> <li>• Discussions and Conclusions</li> </ul>
<p>(Maximum word limit - 300 words)</p> <p><b>Background:</b> Dysphagia is common among hospitalised older adults and it impacts nutritional status, re-admissions status, length of stay and hospitalisation costs. Nurses can play a key role in early identification via systematic screening.</p> <p><b>Objective:</b> To identify hospitalised older adults at risk of dysphagia and facilitate early referral to speech therapist</p> <p><b>Method:</b> The 4-point questionnaire test was adapted for use in a tertiary hospital as a short swallowing screen (3S) to be carried out by nurses, and implemented as a quality improvement project in medical wards in phases. Phase 1 was a pilot involving one ward in August 2020. Three more wards were included as part of phase 2 from December 2020, with the remainder of the wards included as part of phase 3 from August 2021. Compliance rate in performing the 3S, time taken from admission to speech therapist referral and review, and proportion of patients receiving appropriate diet were recorded and analysed. Follow-up audits were conducted after implementation.</p> <p><b>Results:</b> A total of 1,710 patients were screened and audited, with average compliance rate of &gt;80% across all three phases. Average time taken from patient admission to speech therapist (ST) referral was reduced from 70 to 34 hours (51.4%), 37 hours (47.1%), and 4.5 hours (93.6%) in Phases 1, 2, and 3 respectively. Average time taken from admission to ST attendance decreased from 74 to 56.6 hours (23.5%),</p>	

55 hours (25.7%) and 21 hours (71.6%) at Phases 1, 2, and 3 respectively. More than 97% of patients received appropriate diet after implementation.

**Discussions and Conclusions:**

The 3S was effective in attaining timely speech therapy referral, assessment and intervention. Nurses can be empowered to use 3S in the early identification of hospitalised older adults at risk of dysphagia and administration of appropriate diet. Future studies could examine the impact of 3S on dysphagia associated complications.

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