

“Come and Take a Walk with Me” Education Tool

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Issue

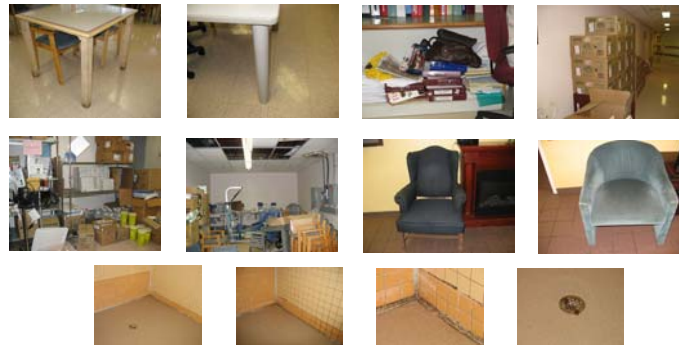
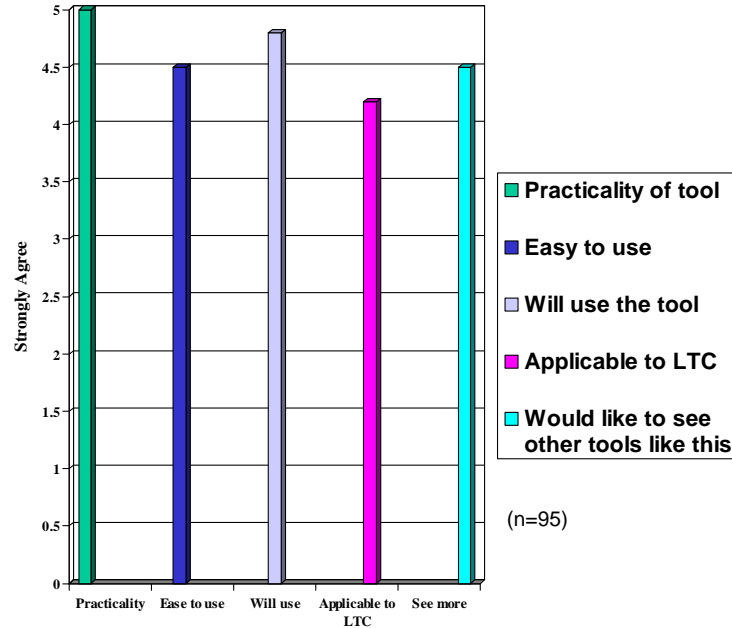
1. Infection Prevention and Control Professionals (ICPs) in Long Term Care (LTC) wear many hats and have competing professional responsibilities. Due to time constraints, regular infection prevention and control (IPAC) unit rounds are rarely performed.
2. In an effort to familiarize new LTC ICPs with their role, the Central East Infection Control Network (CEICN) created a LTC, network mentored, orientation program. In addition to the on-site, network facilitated orientation program, the network consultant accompanies the ICP on a tour of the LTC home to demonstrate that a routine “walk about” is a vital part of an IPAC program.

Project

A PowerPoint™ presentation was created to visually identify common infection risks that would otherwise go unnoticed or may be considered trivial or unimportant. The presentation serves two purposes:

1. Provides the LTC ICP a tool to engage other staff in infection risk identification in the LTC home
2. Facilitates reaching a larger audience of LTC ICPs

The presentation was piloted to an audience of 30 Nursing Home Directors of Care in October 2008 and to more than 100 LTC ICPs in November 2008.



Results

LTC ICPs reported increased:

- Awareness of infection risk
- Understanding of the scope of practice within the IPAC role
- Engagement of
 - Staff, residents and visitors in formal and informal IPAC education
 - Staff in infection risk identification and prevention
 - Staff in unit surveillance activities
 - ICPs to foster positive relationships with staff
- Awareness of resident and staff safety agenda
- Opportunity to identify infection risk since performance of a walk about can be done regardless which hat is worn while present on a unit

As a result of overwhelmingly positive feedback on this tool and to promote consistency, the CEICN added a voiceover PowerPoint™ version. This version has been distributed to all Regional Infection Control Networks in Ontario and LTC homes in the Central East Local Health Integration Network.

The next step is to make this version available for download from the Regional Infection Control Network (RICN) website at www.ricn.on.ca.

Lessons Learned

1. Advantages of making IPAC rounds in LTC greatly benefit the program and organization by raising the profile of the IPAC program and demonstrating IPAC commitment in the LTC home.
2. Visual identification of infection risk validated that adult learners learn best when they see one and do one.
3. Demonstrating a “walk about” and providing the “walk about” tool to LTC ICPs facilitates implementation and engagement of an infection risk identification program for staff
4. Providing the content along with the tool (voiceover PowerPoint™) increases the opportunity for consistent messaging and knowledge transfer of IPAC best practice.
5. Regular IPAC unit rounds are an integral part of an effective and efficient IPAC program in LTC.