

# IMPROVING THE COMPLETION RATE OF DISCHARGE PLANNING SERVICES FOR PATIENTS WITH HEART FAILURE

Chen-Ling Chou, Yi-Hui Chen, Hui-Hsin Kuo, Hui-Chuan Cheng  
Department of Nursing, Taipei Veterans General Hospital

## Introduction

Patients with heart failure who lack self-care ability are at risk of acute exacerbation and hospital admission. Despite having a standard operating procedure for discharge in our hospital, medical staff often overlook the needs of patients requiring discharge planning. In this single medical center, we have only completed discharge planning and self-care education for 20% and 40% of heart failure patients, respectively. The 14-day re-admission rate stands at 3.19%.

After conducting an audit, several issues were identified: 36.7% of nurses were not familiar with the discharge plan, 30% experienced imprecision when filling in the discharge plan screening file, leading to unenrollment, and 20% faced delays in initiating discharge planning.

Figure 3 Heart failure discharge planning services enrollment guidance and flow chart

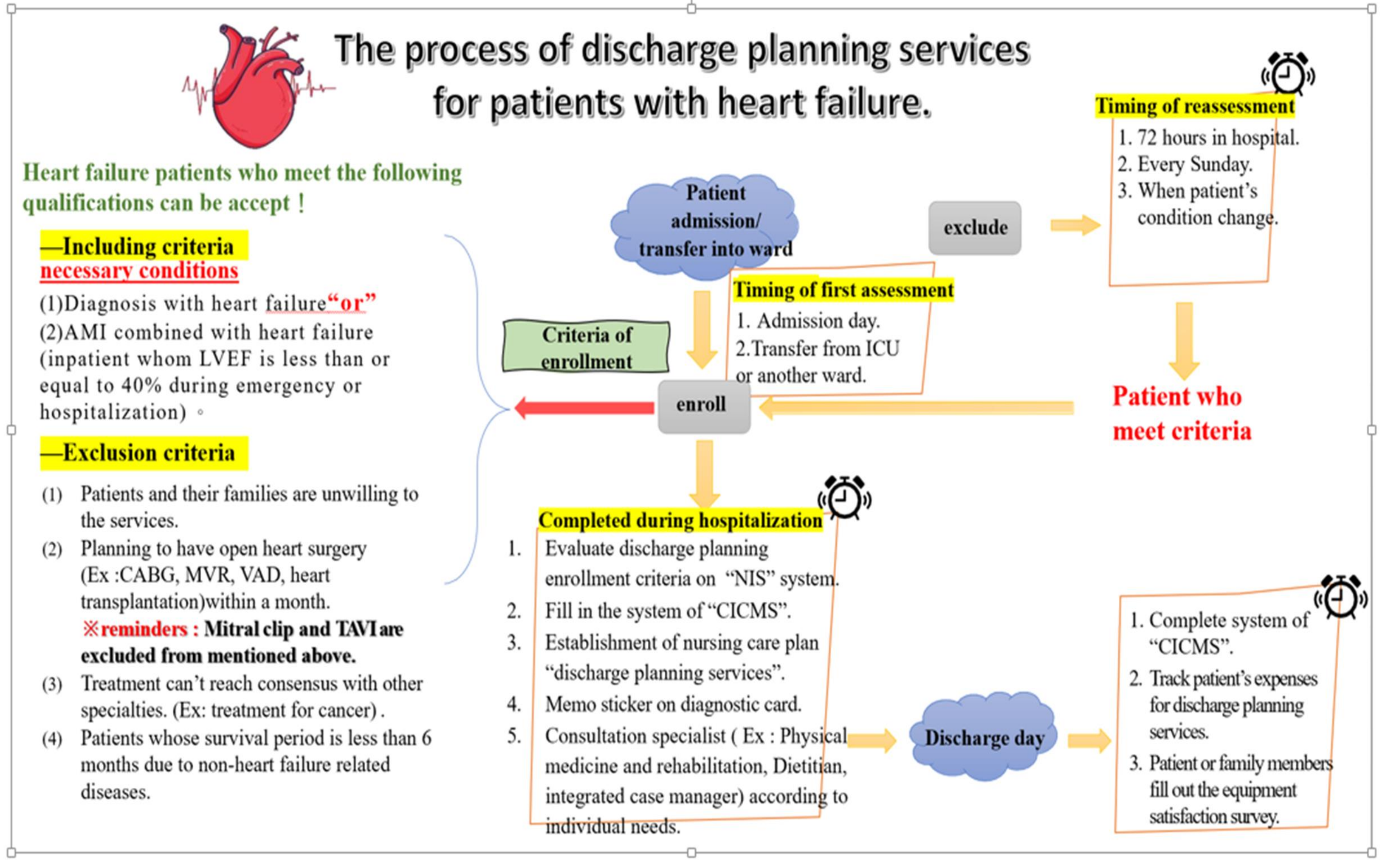


Figure 4 Checklist for discharge planning services for patients with heart failure

| Items Inspection                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1.Provide individual care plans for patients with heart failure.</b>                                                                                                                                        |
| (1) Arrange treatment for heart failure patients according to the cause of disease, and document on medical record.                                                                                            |
| (2) Recording discharge enrollment on “NIS” nursing system, and provide discharge preparation service.                                                                                                         |
| <b>2.Nursing instruction of self-care for patient with heart failure (Educate patient during in the hospital).</b>                                                                                             |
| (1) Suggestion of daily activities (record of blood pressure and pulse) and restrict (drinking/ smoking).                                                                                                      |
| (2) “Salt and sodium reduction” diet.                                                                                                                                                                          |
| (3) Weight management.                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| (4) Be aware of worsen symptoms for heart failure disease, and dealing with the illness.                                                                                                                       |
| <b>3. Interprofessional collaborative practice.</b>                                                                                                                                                            |
| Provide interprofessional care resources and nursing care (home care/wound care/palliative care/post-acute care/case management) According to guidelines of heart failure care.                                |
| <b>4. Follow up home care and technical guidance (Nursing staff provide guidance to patients and caregivers during hospitalization, to make sure that patients are able to perform them selfcare at home).</b> |
| (1)self-monitoring blood pressure and blood pulse; (2)weight monitoring; (3)water/sodium-restricted Diet; (4)aware of worsen heart failure symptoms; (5)quit smoking/drinking.                                 |
| <b>5. Learned to prevent and deal with the complications (if necessary).</b>                                                                                                                                   |
| Educate including: control of blood pressure/blood sugar/blood lipid; catheter/wound home care; medication instruction of special dosage form medicine; prevent from infection.                                |
| <b>6. Follow up and evaluation regular.</b>                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Phone tracking within one week after patient discharged from hospital.                                                                                                                                         |

## Methods

We proposed improvements for discharge planning services based on the ranking by a group of well-trained nurses (Figure 2). This project aimed to enhance the knowledge of nurses in discharge plan preparations for heart failure by establishing enrollment guidance and a flow chart (Figure 3). The details included a checklist for discharge planning for heart failure (Figure 4) and an enrollment quick version, which facilitated nurses in initiating the discharge planning process. The completeness of self-care education for heart failure was also monitored. for patients with heart failure

## Results

The enrollment rate for heart failure patients receiving discharge planning increased from 20% to 52.6% during September to November 2022. The completeness of the discharge plan rose from 40% to 71%, and the 14-day re-admission rate decreased from 3.19% to 1.10%. These interventions significantly improved the knowledge of discharge planning among nurses and the overall quality of care.

## Conclusion

By amending the heart failure discharge plan standard operating procedure, nurses enhanced their evaluation skills, leading to increased completeness rates in discharge planning for heart failure patients.

Figure 1 Cause and effect diagrams

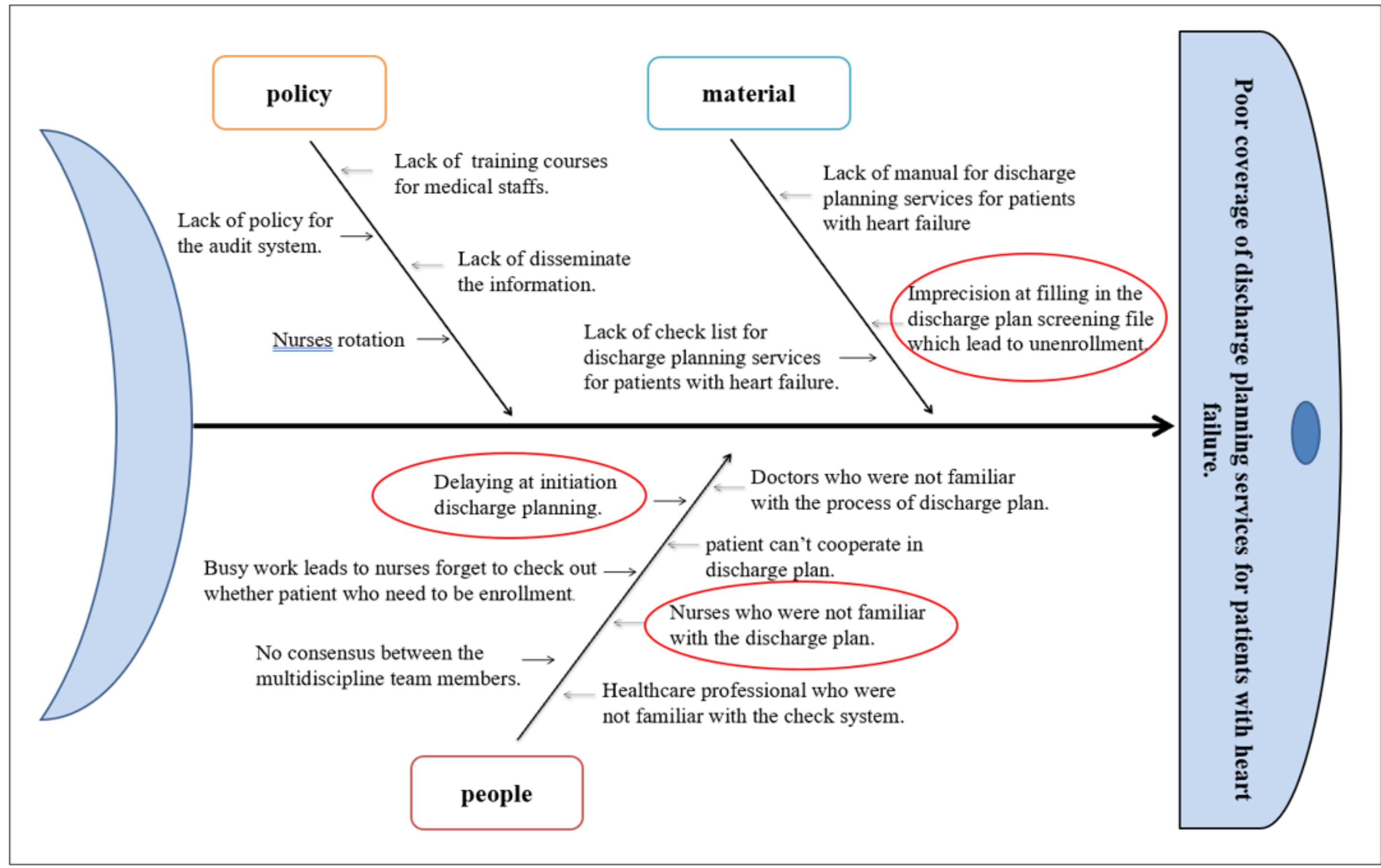


Figure 2 Improving the completion rate of discharge planning services for patients with heart failure

| Item                                                                                       | Step on Problem solving                                                                                                        | evaluate    |          |          | Total | Do | Number of problem solving |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|----------|-------|----|---------------------------|
|                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                | feasibility | economy. | validity |       |    |                           |
| 1. Nurses who were not familiar with the discharge plan                                    | Design enrollment guidance and flow chart.                                                                                     | 44          | 40       | 42       | 126   | O  | 1-1                       |
| 2. Imprecision at filling in the discharge plan screening file which lead to unenrollment. | Making checklist about discharge planning services for patients with heart failure.                                            | 44          | 42       | 46       | 132   | O  | 2-1                       |
|                                                                                            | Design check list that fit for discharge planning services for patients with heart failure.                                    | 44          | 36       | 42       | 122   | O  | 2-2                       |
|                                                                                            | Design heart failure patient's discharge planning services enrollment for dummies. (Including: criteria/flow chart/check list) | 46          | 40       | 42       | 128   | O  | 2-3                       |
| 3. delaying at initiation discharge planning.                                              | Stipulate the timing to enrollment the patient who need the discharge planning services.                                       | 40          | 40       | 40       | 120   | O  | 1-2                       |

Figure 5A

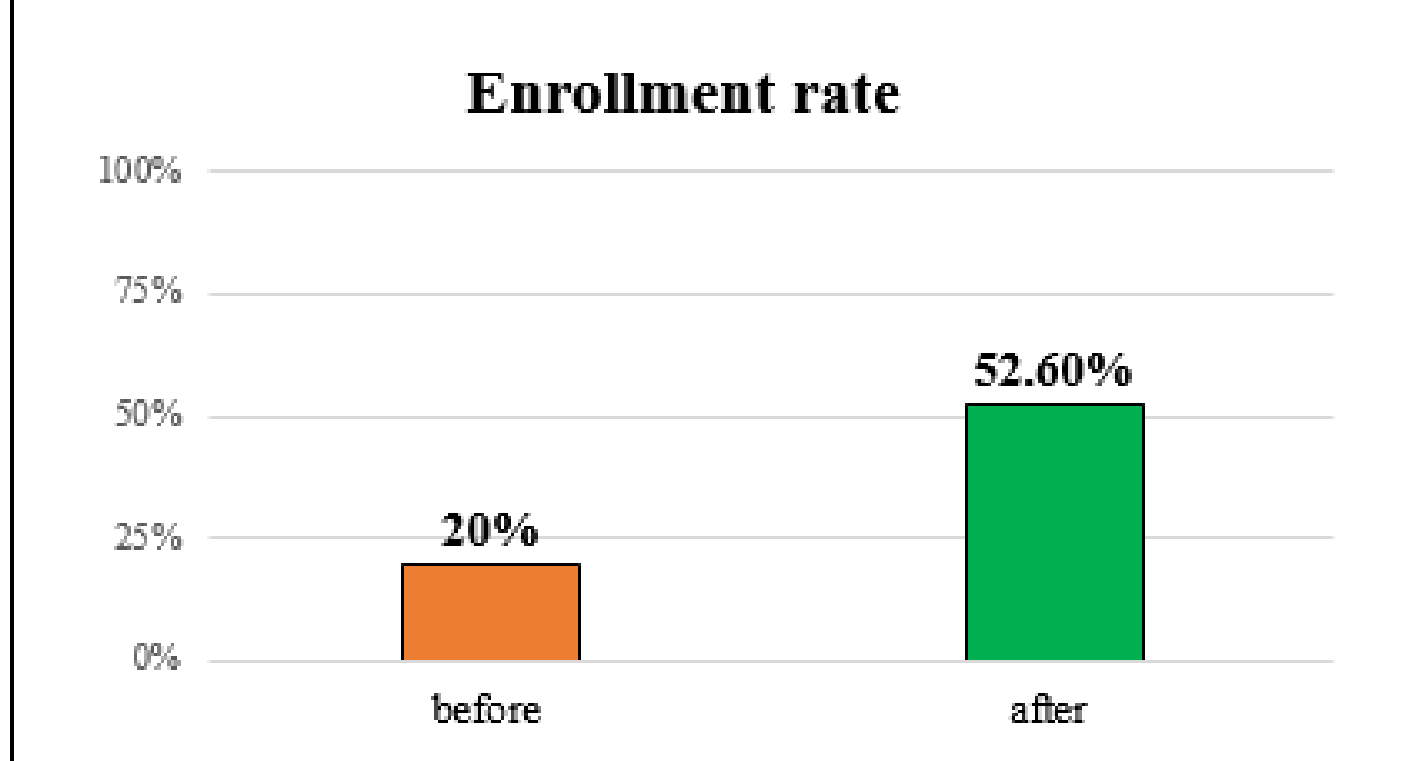


Figure 5B

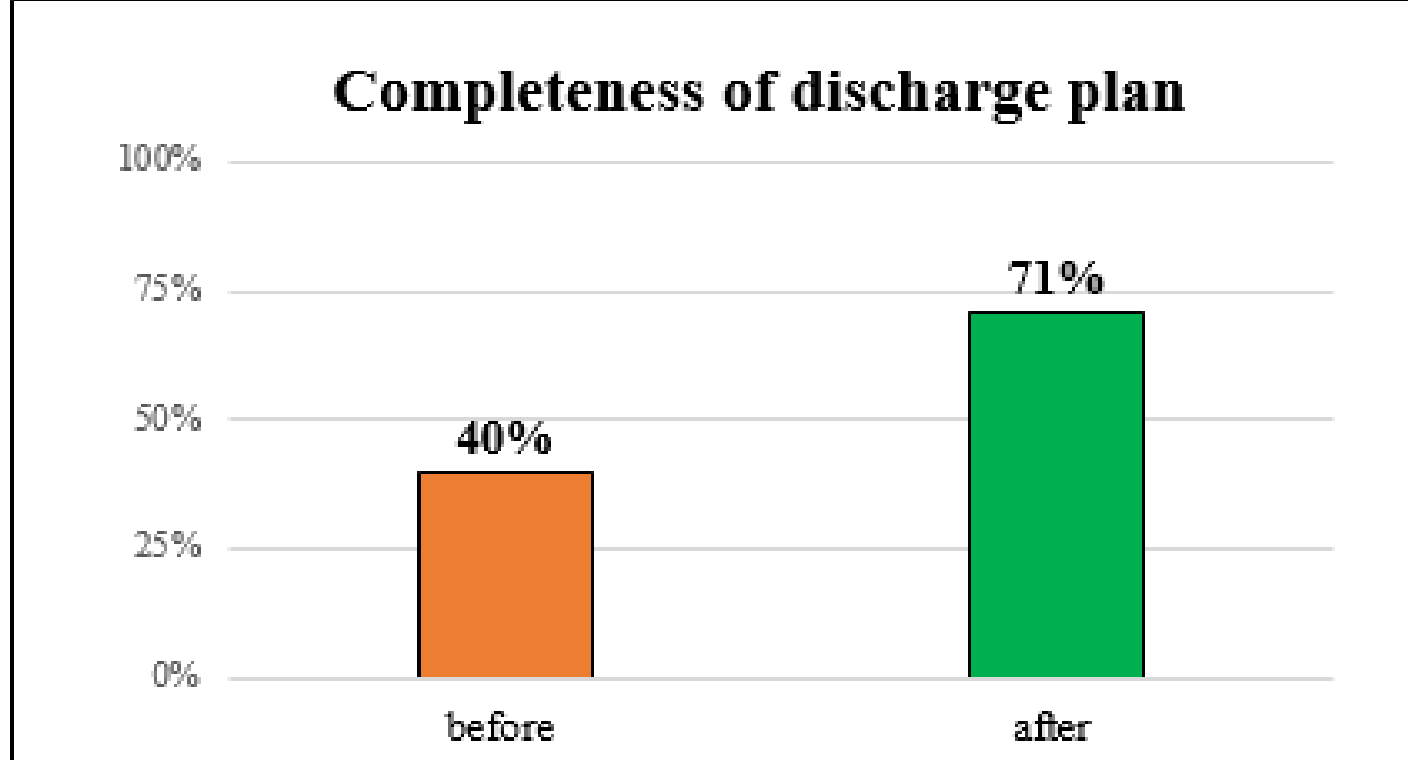


Figure 5C

