

The Little Girl with No Cry Doing Rehabilitation

Yeh Tsai-Hsin, RN, 6A Pediatric Ward, Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital

To me, the daily nursing activity in the Pediatric ward is plain and regular. But in the summer of 2018, I had a deep impression of a little girl who was well-behaved, considerate and inseparable personality with her family and friends. It's another touching story connected to my nursing career.

One day in June of 2018, Xuan-Xuan suddenly felt weak on her left shoulder and was wobbling while walking to school. Her family took her to a nearby clinic, but couldn't find anything wrong so she was transferred to our hospital emergency room. After a visual inspection, she was checked into our Pediatric ward. Later, she started to have sudden convulsions and became unconscious. She was taken to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (ICU) where a Computed Tomography (CT) scan and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) were performed. The results indicated infarction combined with bleeding in the brain causing coma. After treatment at the Medical Center, she woke up and needed rehabilitation, and transferred back to our Pediatric ward over a month later. Xuan-Xuan is an excellent child and her parents are proud of her. Because of the sudden impermanence, the whole family started a long road to her rehabilitation.

Since Xuan-Xuan could not express herself, and her limb muscle strength had not recovered. The team established some methods of communication with her. We thought of using eye- blinking but then we worried if it was regular eye blinking, Xuan-Xuan sometimes would be misunderstood. Finally, we thought of a way to practice her strength training in the ward by using hand grip.



On Xuan-Xuan's day of discharge, the medical team prepared a party to celebrate her rebirth.

Besides morning and night time rehabilitation therapy, I would go in and interact with Xuan-Xuan during my leisure time by asking what she did during the day. Xuan-Xuan's mom said, "She stacked cups and pushed wooden blocks." After finding out Xuan-Xuan's rehabilitation progress, I would also take cups in the ward and let her practice, my way to test her recovery. We found out Xuan-Xuan like hot bath but had few opportunities so we planned such an event. One day the nursing unit director and I changed to shorts and sandals to help Xuan Xuan take a bath. Looking at her smiling like an angel, her happy face impacts me greatly. A nurse isn't just about doing daily clinical routine work. In fact, we can do more for the patients and their families, and in the meantime feeling touched.

Xuan-Xuan's condition continued to improve and also accepted the skull replacement surgery on August 9. After surgery, she was in the Pediatric ICU and be observed for a day. When Xuan-Xuan went into the ICU, we were there to cheer her up. We agreed and made a pinky promise that she would be transferred back to the regular ward the next day. Although she was transferred to other surgical wards before returning to the Pediatric ward, but seeing Xuan-Xuan joyful mood, we couldn't help but smile too.



The recovery process was bitter for Xuan-Xuan, but she never complained. We knew she didn't want her family to worry and let everyone down. August 24 was the day of her discharge from the hospital. Our team prepared a rebirth party to celebrate. Xuan-Xuan's parents were emotional and she expressed gratitude to us and thanking everyone for treating Xuan-Xuan like their own child, taking care and accompanying her.

After leaving the hospital, we were still seeing Xuan-Xuan's in the rehabilitation department continuing her recovery. Her mom asked her one day, "Do you want go back to 6A ward and visit the sisters and aunties?" She said, "Not right now. I want to walk back on my own feet to see everyone." On Lantern Festival Eve, we invited Xuan-Xuan and her parents to come and have fun together. Even though Xuan-Xuan was in a wheelchair, it's obvious her limb muscle strength has improved significantly. She now can also verbally express herself when she gets a lantern and balloon. Everyone looks forward to the day when she walks in to visit.

The road to nursing is hard, but these kinds of stories keep happening in the ward: Treating the patients like a family and taking care of them. What we get in return is joy and emotion. This helps me being steadfast on the road of nursing.