

Nursing Care of Epidural Analgesia Training Program

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Background:

Epidural Analgesia (EA) can provide total relief from pain and is viewed as the 'gold standard' in pain management. Complications associated with EA are rare and avoidable with appropriate monitoring and education.^(1, 2) The epidural analgesia service was recently introduced at Hamad General Hospital (HGH) under the care of Anesthesia Department. However, the nurses need education and training to care safely for patients receiving EA and facilitate its use in the surgical wards.

Aims:

To increase the number of competent nurses in the care of patients receiving epidural analgesia from 0% to at least 80% by March 2014.

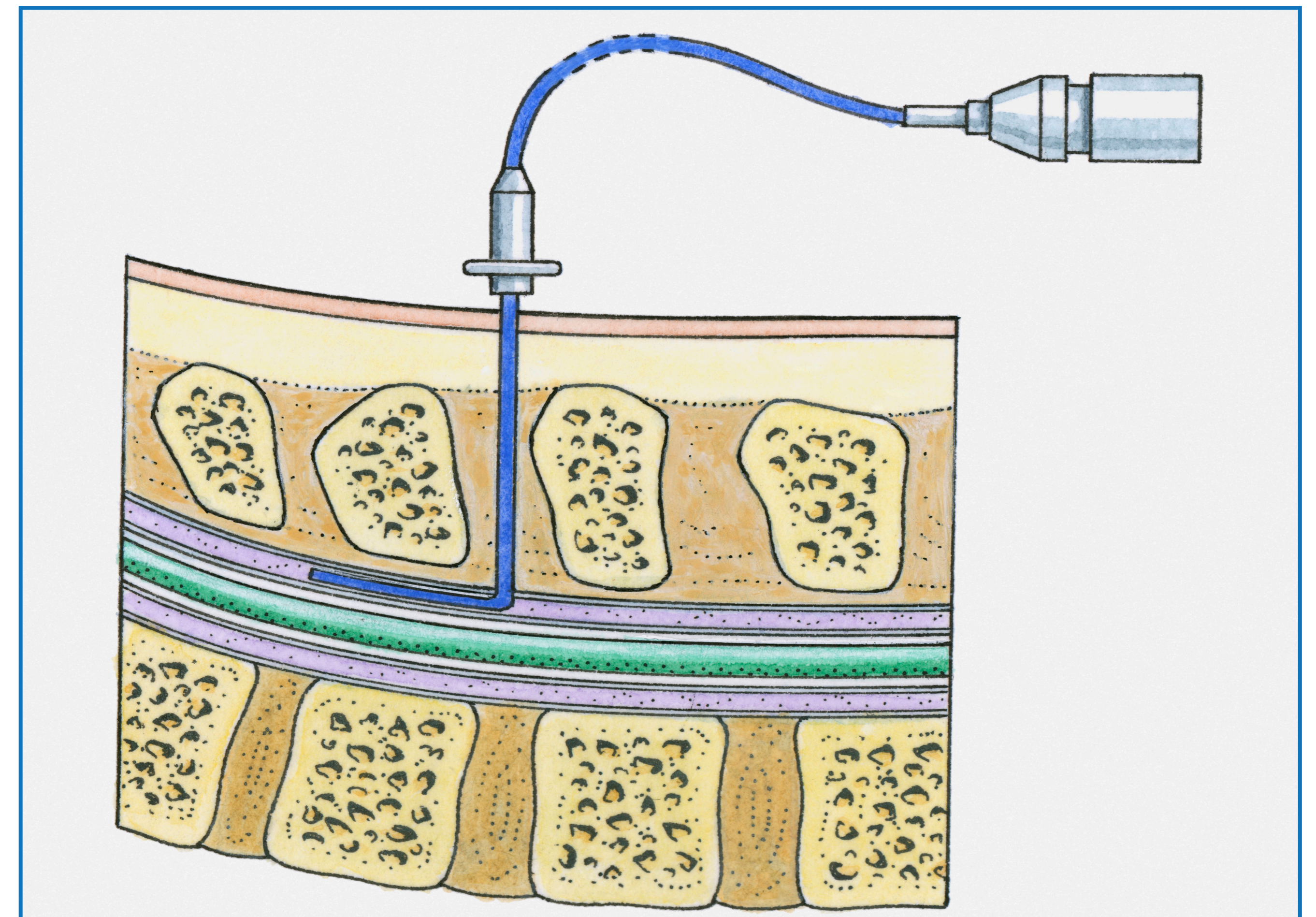
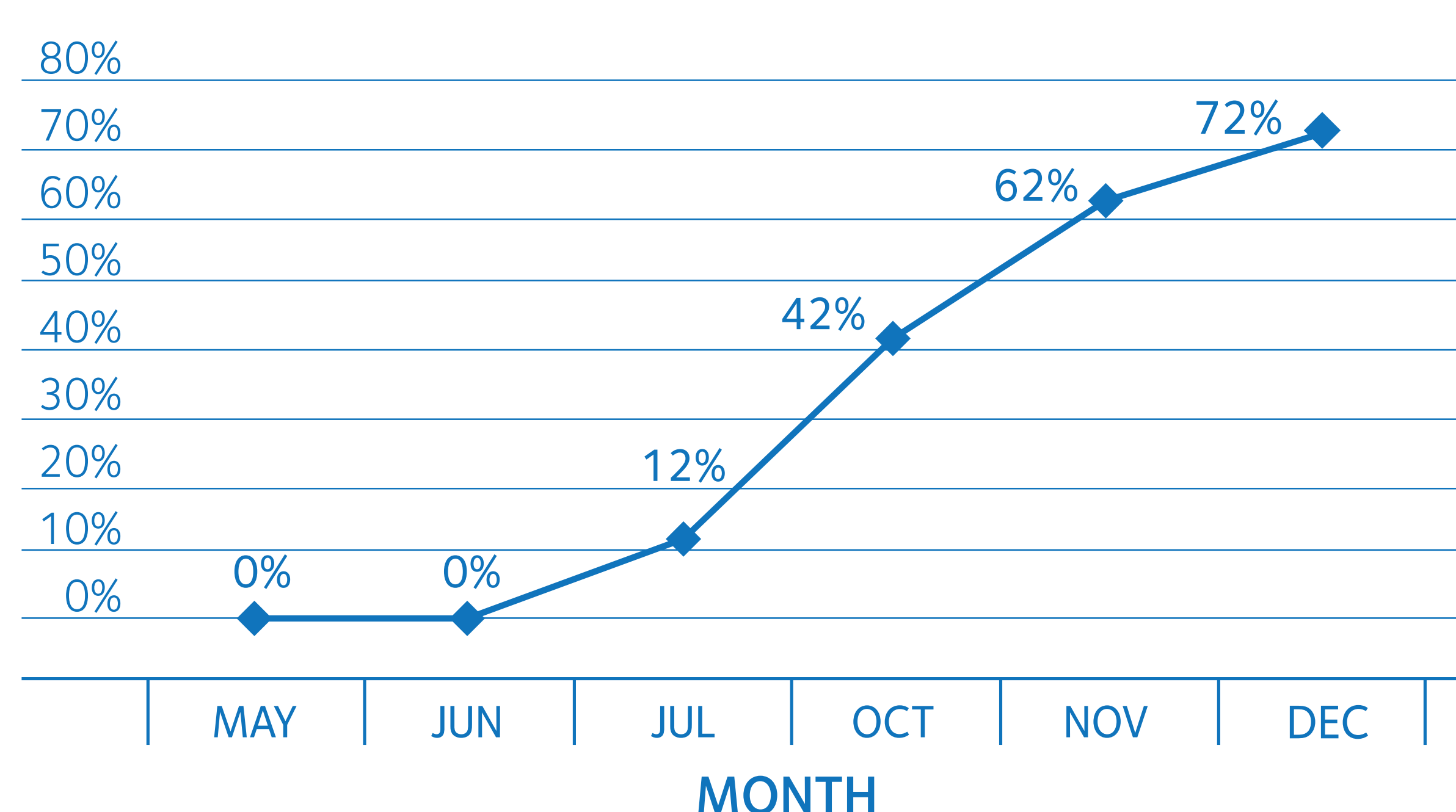
Methods:

Guided by the PDSA cycle, the Clinical Nurse Specialist in pain management designed and delivered the program as a one day course. The program content was approved by the lead clinician of pain management and the Nursing Education and Research Department (NER). The program focuses on safely administering analgesia, achieving optimal pain control, identifying, managing and reporting adverse reactions or complications in a timely manner. The nurses were assessed using a competency assessment tool utilizing Benner's framework stages of clinical competence.⁽³⁾

Results:

A total of 180 (72%) nurses attended the course between July and December 2013. All nurses were able to demonstrate the required competency level at the end of the course.

Percentage of Nurses Attended the Training - 2013



Discussion:

As nurses spend the most time with patients, nurses must be prepared to identify and manage problems in patients receiving EA to enhance the safety of the technique. Nurses gained a greater understanding of the theories, practices and principles that contribute to the need for and the successful implementation of EA services.

Lessons Learned:

The need for a structured educational program is key to support the introduction of new services; the use of blended learning meant that participants were able to identify the real challenges and safety issues that nurses' may face in caring for patients receiving EA.

Next Steps:

- To increase the number of competent nurses in the nursing care of patients receiving epidural analgesia to 100% by June 2014.
- To expand the program to other surgical units at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC).

References:

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