

To Reduce the Waiting Time for Chemotherapy Patient Receiving Blood Transfusion

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Introduction

KK Women's and Children's Hospital is a member institution within the SingHealth (SHS) Cluster, the largest healthcare group in Singapore. The SHS tagline "Patients at the heart of all we do." shows the commitment by the institutions in providing quality care. With the vision of becoming the healthcare leader for women and children, the hospital is driven by SingHealth's values (Compassion, Integrity and Collaboration) to constantly improve patient service, patient care and internal processes.

Background

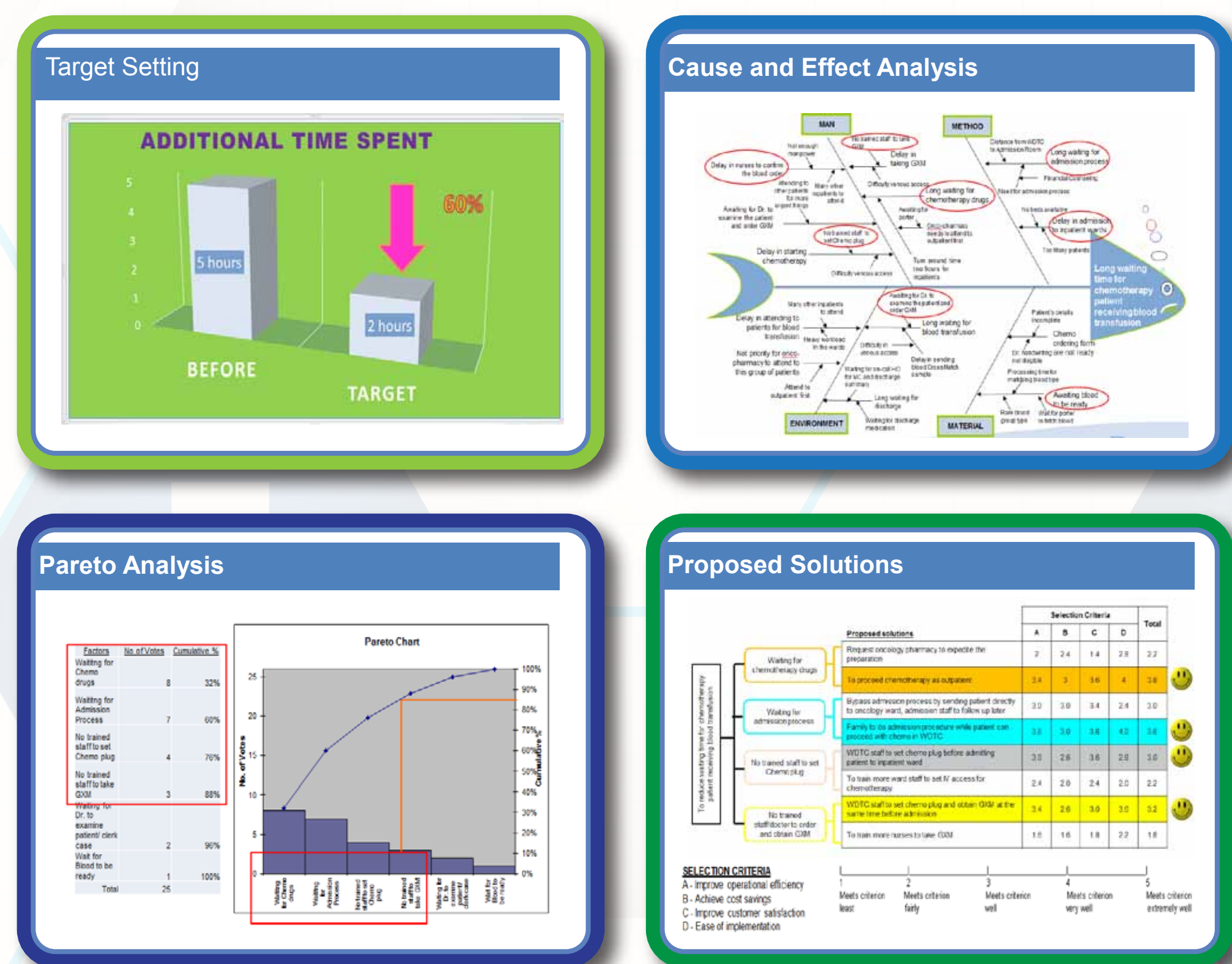
Blood transfusion is a relatively common procedure among patients undergoing chemotherapy treatments at the Women's Day Therapy Centre (WDTC). Currently when patients require blood transfusion, they will be directed for admission to the inpatient ward for chemotherapy followed by blood transfusion. This has resulted in patient's inability to receive treatment timely according to their scheduled appointment time and in addition incurred an extra day of stay in the ward thereby increasing duration and cost of hospital stay.

Aims of the Project

The aims of this project are to improve patient-centered processes and services, reduce patient waiting time for both chemotherapy and blood transfusion procedures and improve both patient and staff satisfaction.

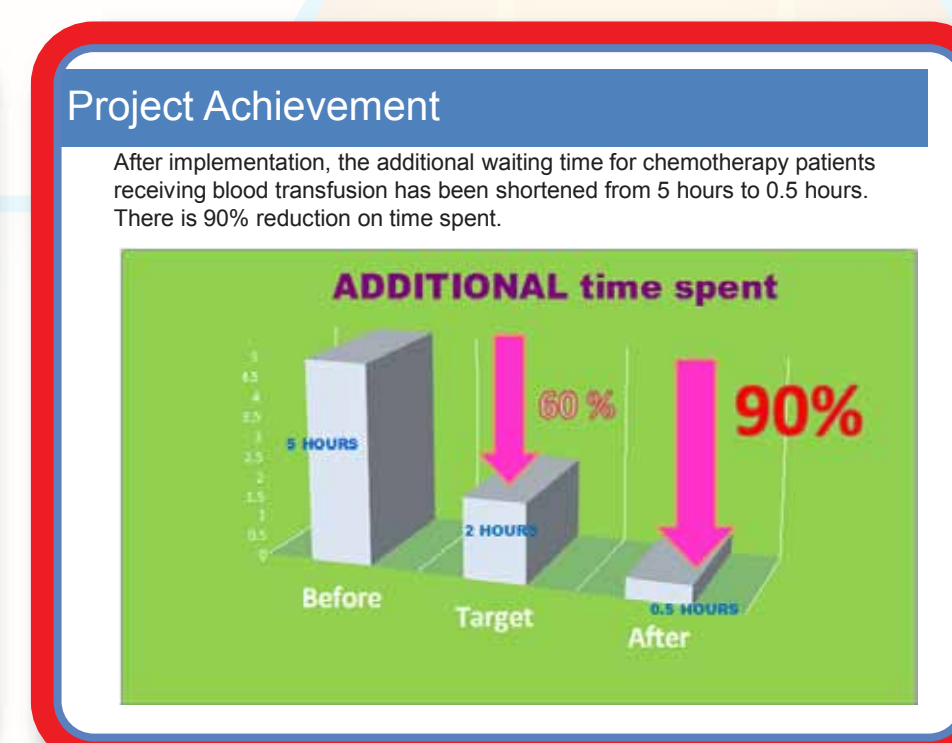
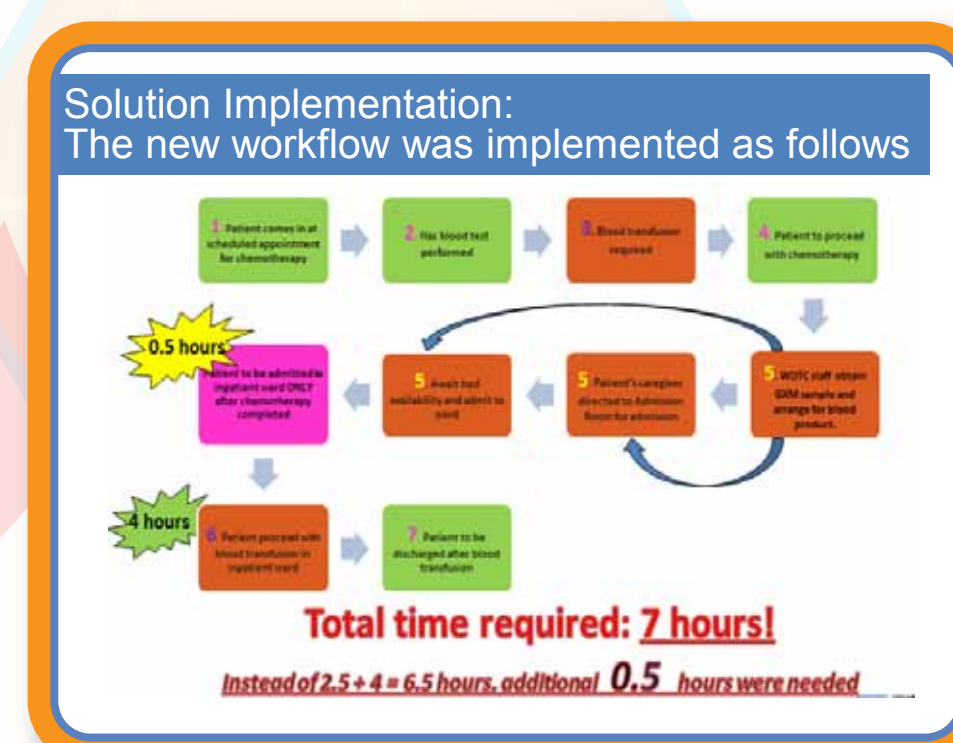
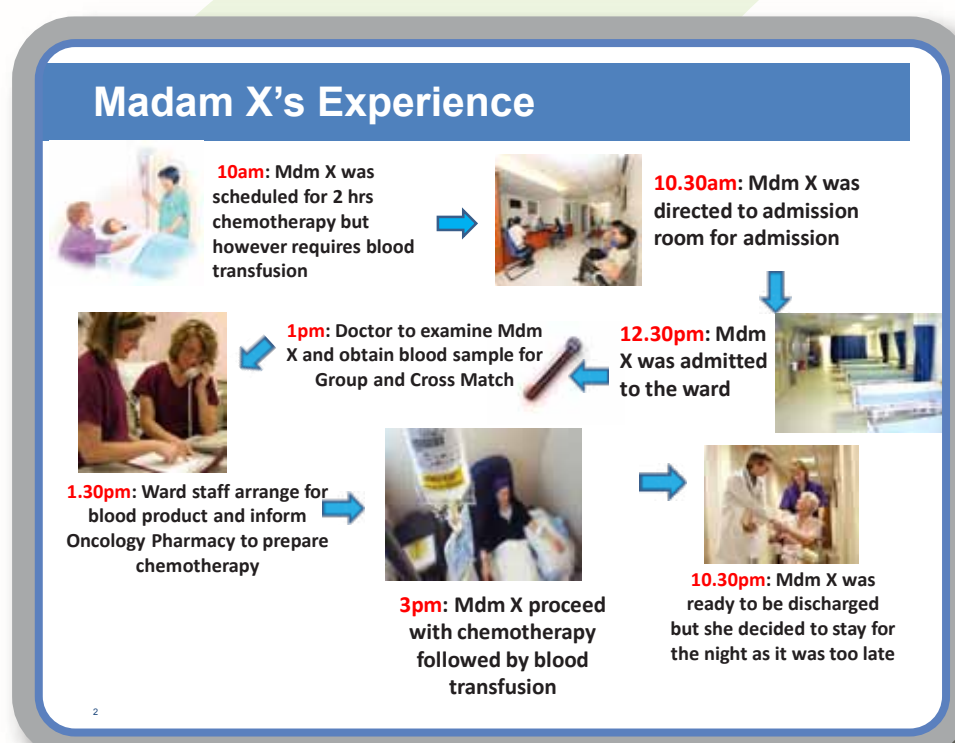
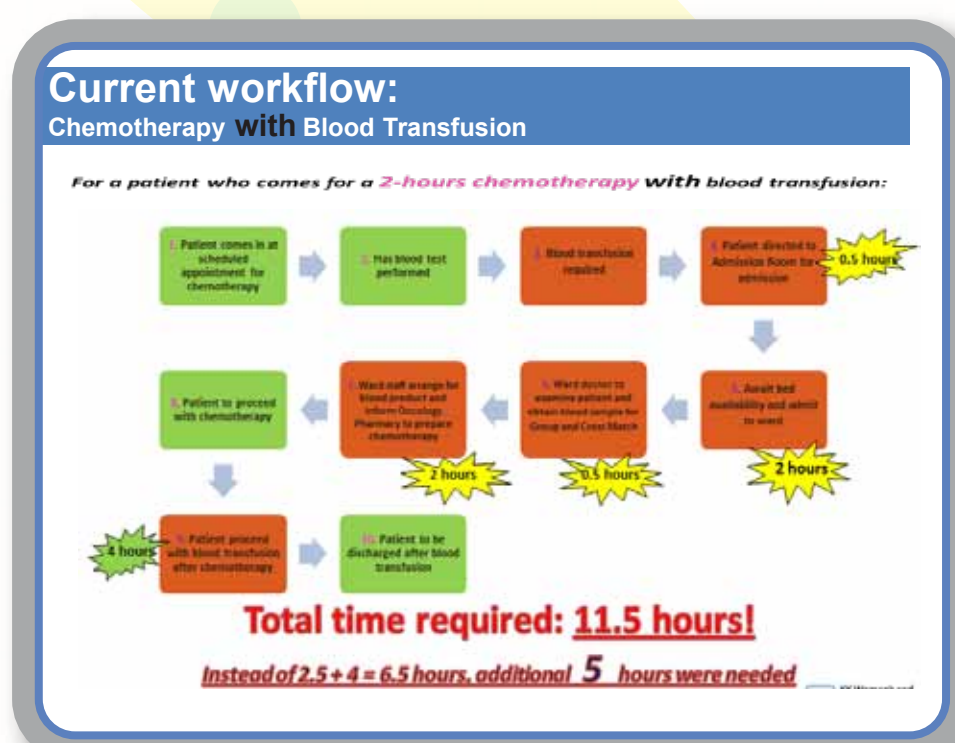
Methodology

A Process Improvement Project (PIP) workgroup involving staffs from WDTC, inpatient oncology wards and finance department was formed. Through effective use of PIP tools such as brainstorming, Gantt chart, Cause and Effect Analysis, Decision Matrix and Flow chart, group members were able to identify the root causes and proposed solution for implementation.



Result

The new workflow has reduced the long waiting time for patients requiring both chemotherapy and blood transfusion from 5 hours to 0.5 hour. By reducing waiting time, patients do not need to incur an extra day stay. There was an estimate of 1,080 inpatient hours saved per year and bed utilization was increased. In addition, both patient and staff satisfaction improved with the new workflow.



Conclusion

The new workflow has reduced the waiting time and improved the process of chemotherapy patients whom required blood transfusion. There was strong collaboration effort and excellent coordination among staffs from the various departments to deliver patient-centered processes and services. Though waiting time has been a long standing issue for decades in the healthcare settings, nevertheless as healthcare providers, we have the responsibility to provide seamless delivery of care and a positive treatment experience for our patients.