



# There to Care: Improving Care and Concern at the Rehabilitation Centre

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## Background

Outpatient therapy services are provided at the Rehabilitation Centre. These services include physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy. Feedback from patients is routinely sought at the end of therapy sessions using a feedback form. Patients give written feedback on the professional service in which one of the aspects is the care and concern shown by therapists. They rate it on a 5-point rating scale (i.e., excellent, good, satisfactory, poor and very poor).

## Problems or Opportunities

Over the last year, it was found that the percentage of patients giving an 'excellent' rating for the care and concern shown by therapists was on a declining trend. In April 2015, 82% of the patients gave excellent rating on "Care and Concern" but the percentage decreased by 20% in June 2016.

A survey was conducted to determine patients' perception of "care and concern". From this survey, 5 components were identified: approachable, friendly, listens to my concerns, patient and good rapport.

A second survey (n=27) was carried out to score these areas from very poor (score=1) to excellent (score=5). Out of these items, "listens to my concerns" and "good rapport" scored the lowest.

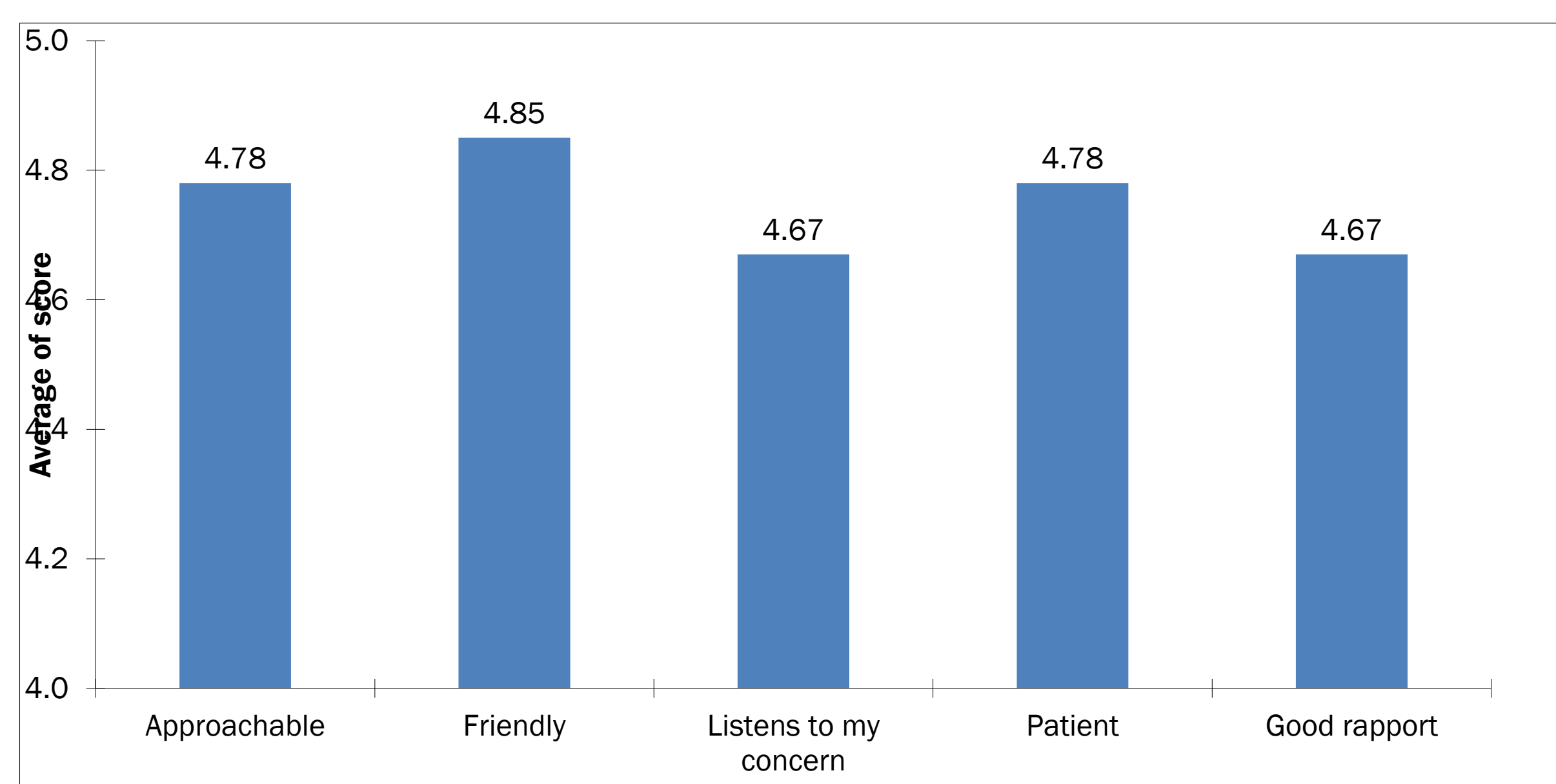


Table 1: Average scores of "Care and Concern" components.

## Aim

With a revision of the patient's feedback form being done hospital wide from June 2016 onwards, a new baseline for improvement had to be re-established.

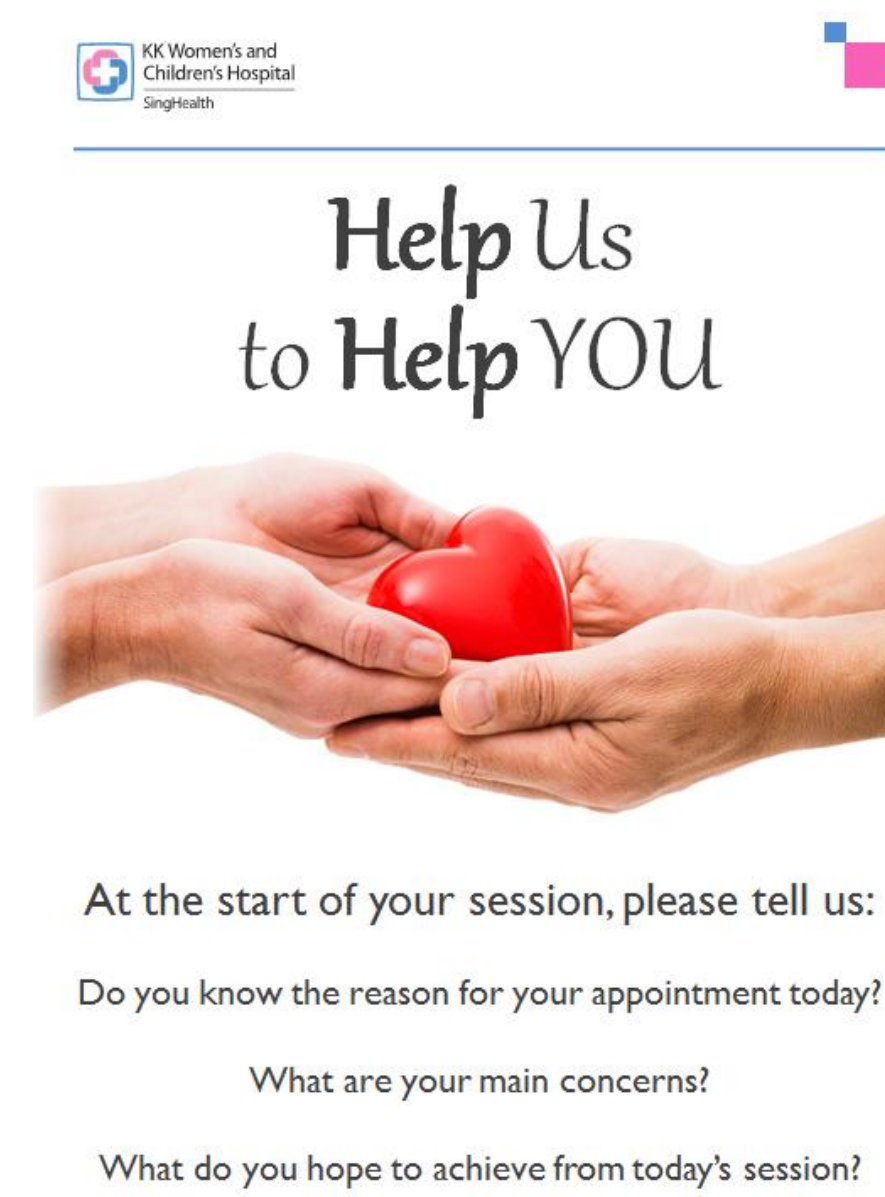
Despite having the same score, the team chose to address "listens to my concern" because addressing this area may in turn help to build rapport with the patient over time

At the end of the surveys, the baseline of measure for the excellent rating of the "Listens to my concern" was found to be 62.5%. The aim was to increase the excellent rating for "Listens to my concern".

## Solutions

For the first run, several solutions were implemented. In Solution 1, Posters were placed at the waiting area to remind patients to inform the therapists of their main concerns and goals. In addition, upon registration, patients were given a questionnaire with the same questions as indicated on the posters (Picture 1). This questionnaire had to be filled up and given to the attending therapist at the start of the session.

Weekly SMS quotes were sent to all therapists to encourage them to continue patient care and to address their concerns.

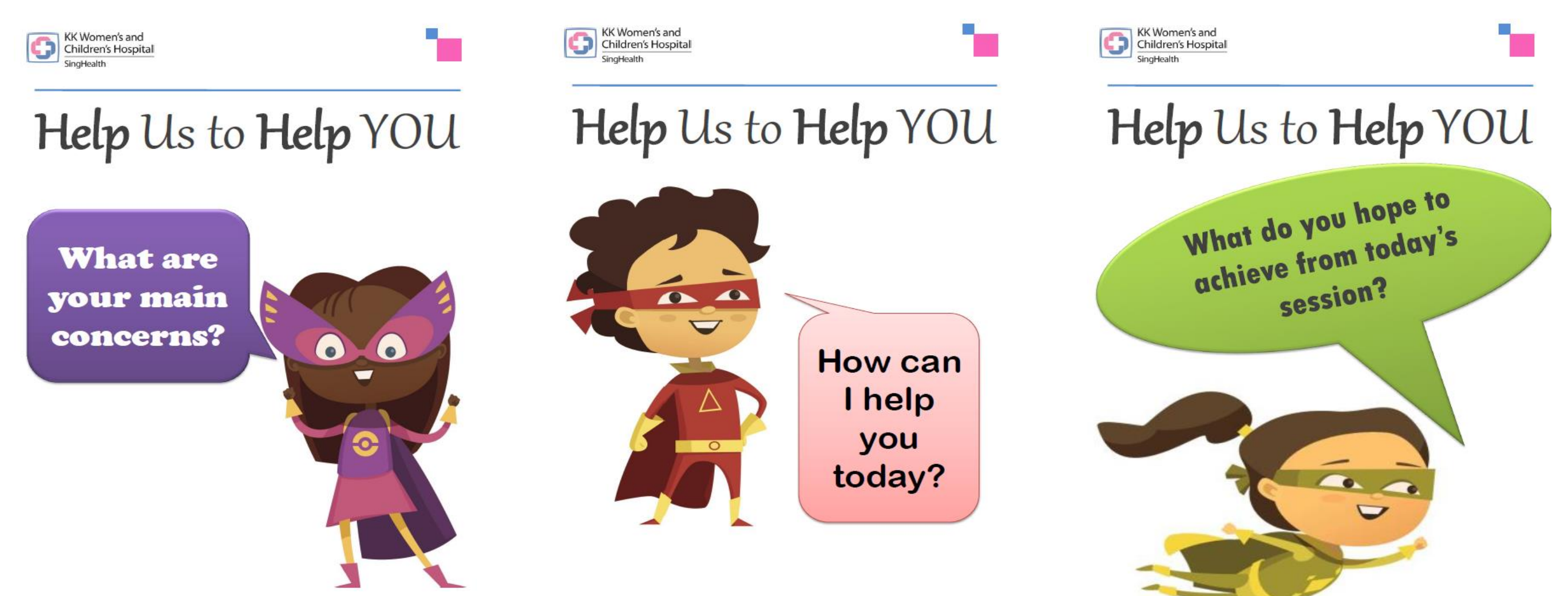


Picture 1: An example of the poster placed at the waiting area. A questionnaire with the same questions were given to patients upon registration.

It is not how much you do, but how much love you put into the doing that matters.
They may forget your name, but they will never forget how you made them feel.
In an emergency, what treatment is given by ear? Words of comfort.
A healthy attitude is contagious, but don't wait to catch it from others. Be a carrier.
You treat a disease: you win or you lose. You treat a person – you win, no matter the outcome.
Compassion is essential to exceptional leadership, extraordinary results, powerful impact and richness of life.
Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing's going to get better!
The missing ingredient in the development of new therapies is the voice of the patient.

Table 2: Examples of weekly SMS quotes that were sent to the therapists.

Results from the third survey appeared to be below baseline. Hence the team re-designed the poster to make it brighter, more colourful and easier to read. In Solution 2, instead of just the waiting area, the posters were placed on the doors of every therapy room.



Picture 2: Examples of re-designed posters

## Results

Statistical significance was not found in the results after Solution 1. The survey carried out again after Solution 2 showed statistically significant results in the overall rating change (Fig 1) from 4.63 to 4.8, and the specific change in proportion of "Excellent" ratings in the "Listens to my Concerns" root cause (Fig 2) from 62.5% to 80.3%, as compared to before Solution 2.

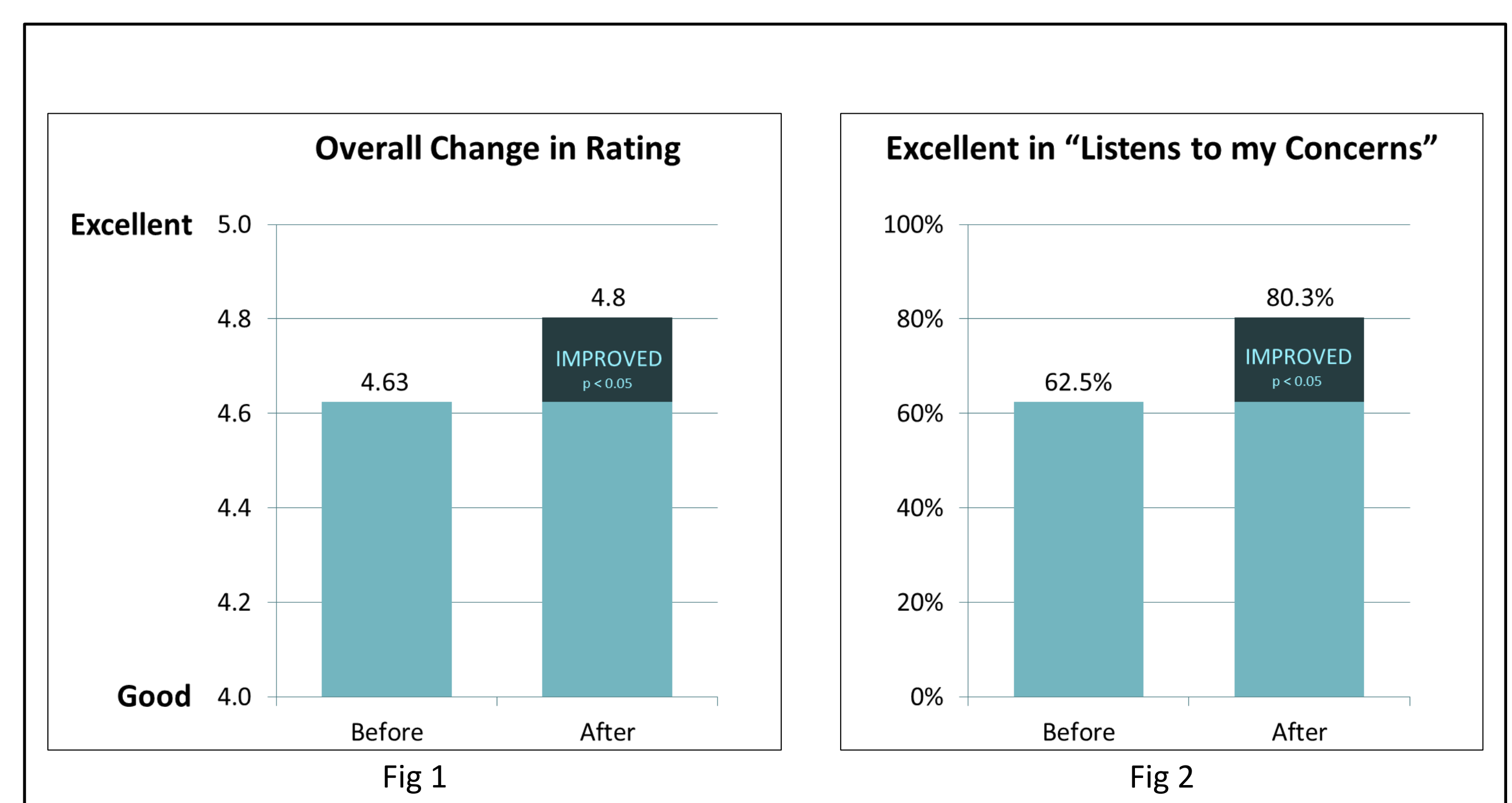


Table 3: Effects of solution 2.

## Conclusion

We conclude that visual and personal reminders (i.e. posters and SMS reminders) were important factors when trying to improve patient experience at the Rehabilitation Centre. In addition, SMS quotes related to care and concern and a variety of colourful posters placed nearer to the therapists proved to be more effective than a single poster placed in general waiting area.