Introduction

Each month, controllers are tasked to assign an average of 57,000 central pool cases to the porters accurately and promptly. The average assignment time was 9 minutes. As controller output constitutes a significant predictor of the departmental response time of about 17 minutes, one key challenge is strengthening overall controller competency and decision making.

Aim

The quality project aimed to shorten the process of controllers’ case assignment to porters, reducing the waiting time of the users and patients. The objectives are:

- To reduce average Controller Assignment Time by 20% within the next 6 months.
- To reduce average Departmental Response Time by 20% within the next 6 months.
- To render excellent support to the wards which managed the patients’ care process.

Methodology

The PDCA methodology was utilized for improvement in the controllers’ productivity.

Intervention

The team reviewed the controllers’ activities and introduced three additional measures:

- Enhanced controllers’ performance management by capturing the Controllers’ Assignment Time (CAT). Feedback is given to improve.
- Improved case assignment procedures by stacking new cases on top of porters’ ongoing cases based on the duration of the ongoing case and the average completion time of each task as reflected on the operational dashboard.
- Close monitoring of escalation dashboard which captured the status of delayed cases from the point of job request to job completion for controllers’ expeditious follow-up.

Conclusion

The controllers’ productivity journey ensures consistent and prompt assignment of cases which lead to speedy responses to the requested tasks. With a deepened sense of purpose, the controllers strive to render stronger support in meeting users and patients’ needs.

The project is scalable for the healthcare portering sector. Future research directions include using a robust auto-assignment system to expedite efficient assignment of cases in the context of SGH operating environment which is already in progress. This would allow controllers to focus on providing stronger customer service in addressing user queries.