

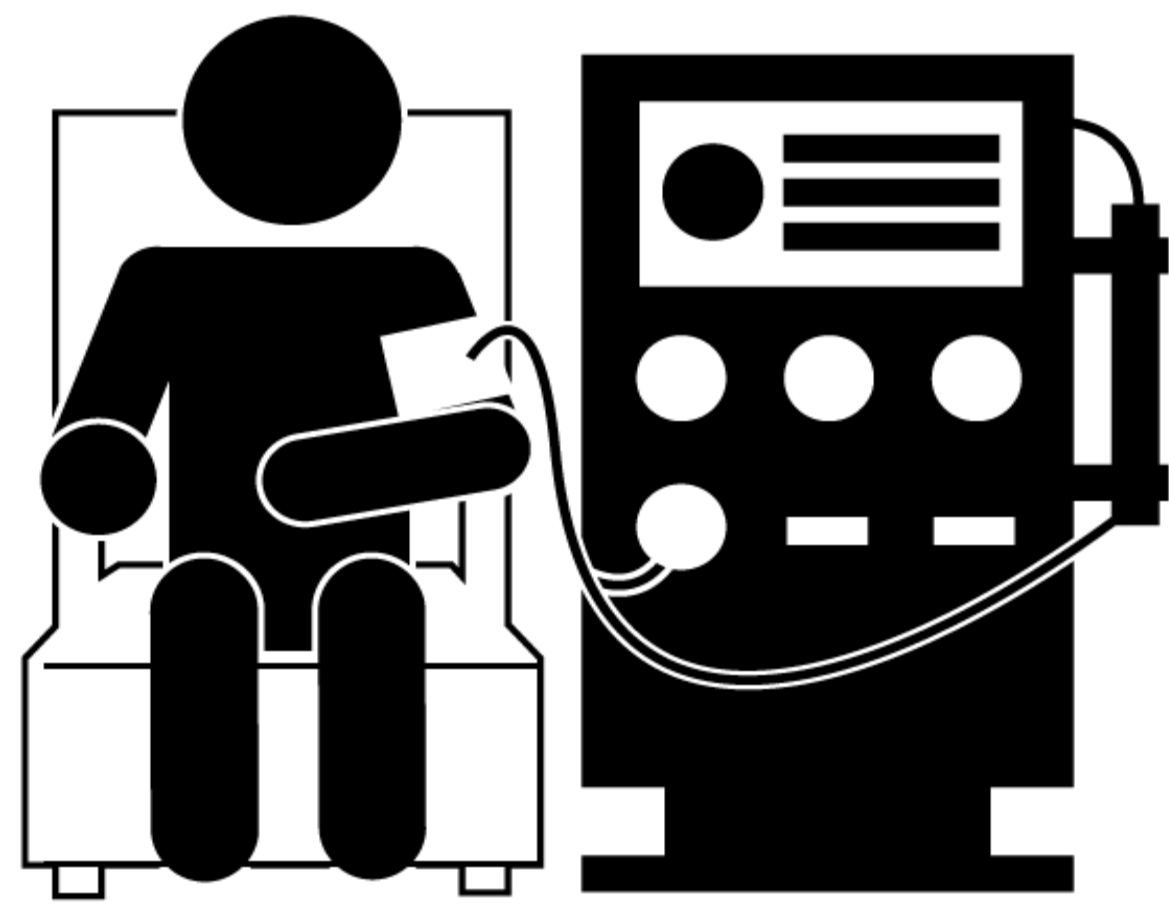


**Singapore Healthcare Management 2017**

# Community Partnership to Improve Patient Care for Renal Dialysis Patients

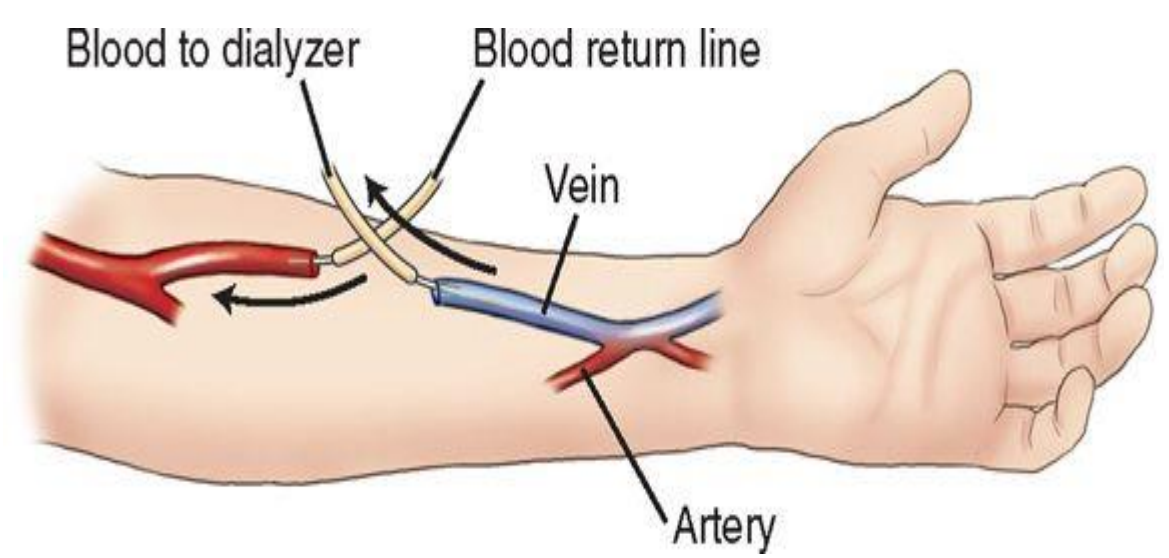
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## BACKGROUND



Monitoring of vascular access is extremely important for Renal dialysis patient as it plays a crucial role in ensuring the quality of the haemodialysis treatment process.

Blood is pumped out of the body through the vascular access, passing through the dialyser to remove waste product and excess water, before returning into patient's body as purified blood.



During the whole process, any vascular access complications will contribute greatly to morbidity and mortality issues of the patients.

At the dialysis centres, nurses are directly responsible to administer and manage care holistically to the patients undergoing haemodialysis. Nurses have to be competent in looking out for signs and symptoms in patients, reaching for medical attention when the need arises.



### Problems & Issues

- ✗ Community dialysis nurses not familiar with the different types of complications that warrant urgent medical attention by specialists
- ✗ Difficulty of community partners in reaching out to the specialist clinics to request for urgent appointments
- ✗ Long waiting time for Vascular appointment of > 3 months
- ✗ Possible delay in intervention
- ✗ Possible deterioration in patient condition

## AIM

To empower community dialysis centre nurses to better manage patients' condition by giving clear instructions on referring patients back to Vascular Surgery for intervention of blocked vascular access for haemodialysis

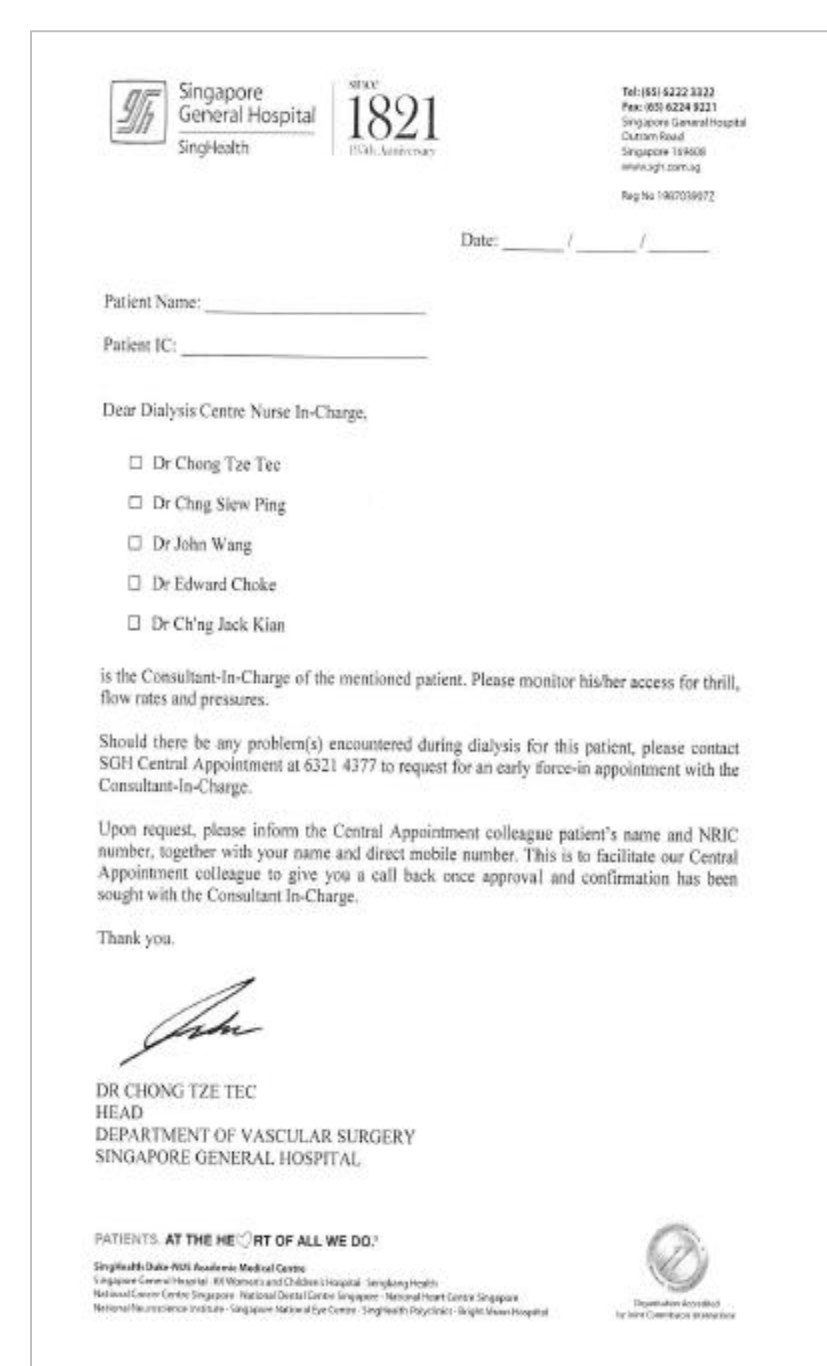
## METHODOLOGY

The cross-functional team engaged the different stakeholders comprising clinicians, clinic staff and community dialysis centre nurses to review the referral workflow.

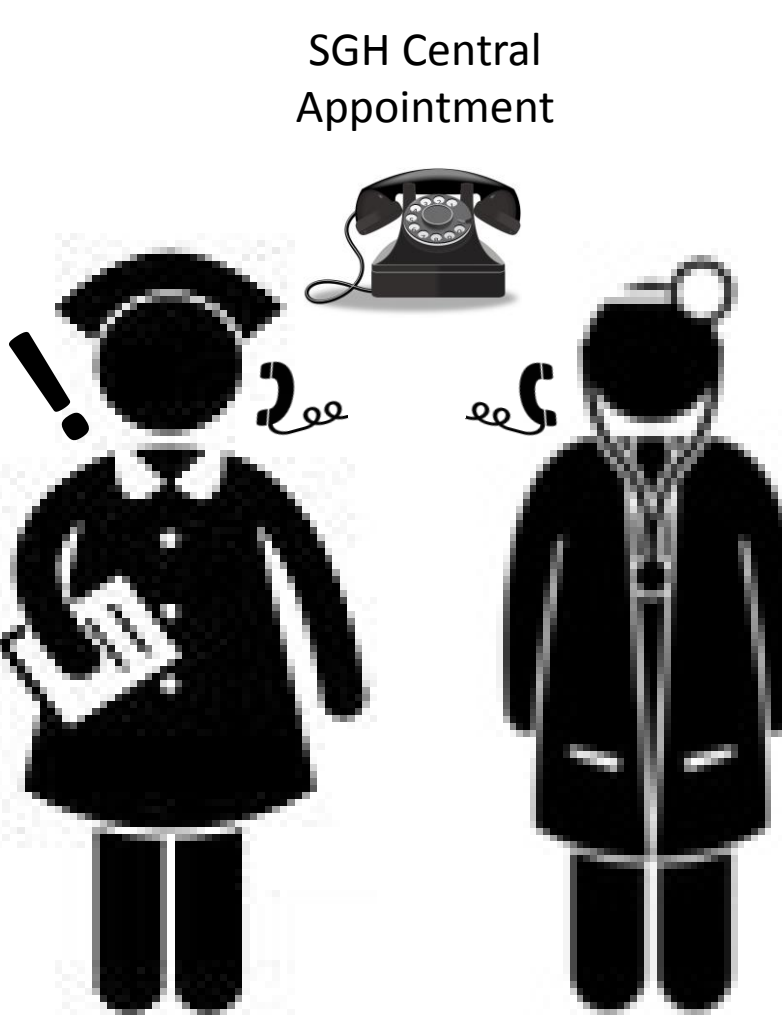
- WHY? • Deterioration in dialysis patients' conditions
- WHY? • Delayed intervention by specialist
- WHY? • Long waiting time for Vascular Surgery appointment
- WHY? • Insufficient appointment slots available for urgent booking
- WHY? • No referral system for adhoc urgent appointment requests

### Change Process

- Prepare a hardcopy memo indicating key information for dialysis centre nurses to note:
  - Common complications during dialysis that warrant urgent referral back to specialist clinic
  - Contact number of SGH Central Appointment
  - Consultant-In-Charge of affected patient
- Memo given out to all vascular dialysis patients, for them to hand to their community dialysis centre nurses



## RESULTS

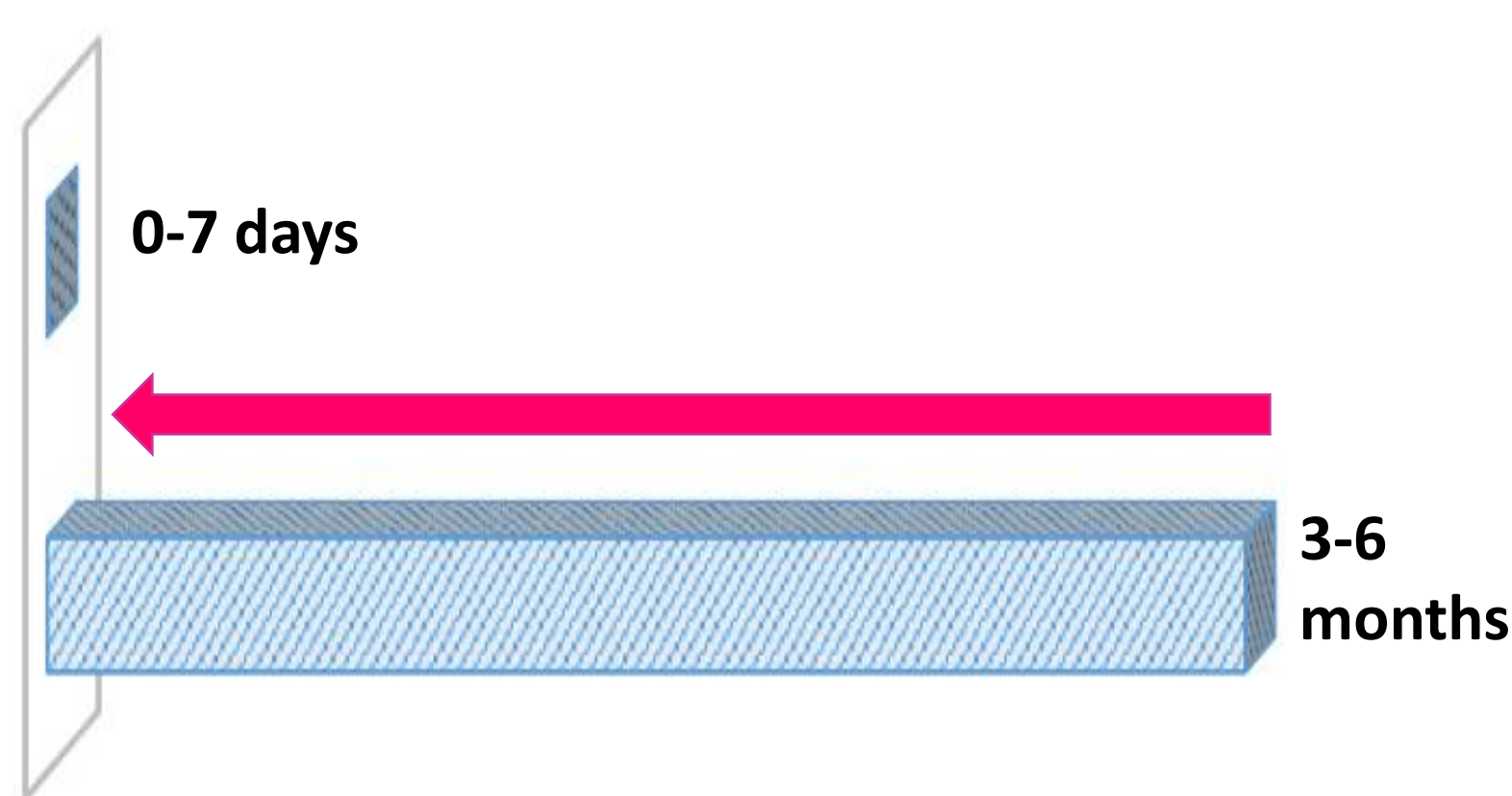


Dialysis centre nurses who encounter difficulties during patients' dialysis are given clear instruction on managing patient's conditions. They feel more assured and confident in caring for patients.

Upon receiving the urgent request, SGH Central Appointment will contact Consultant In-Charge within 1 day. Based on the clinicians' assessments, patients are recalled back for urgent review on the same day or within a week.

### WAITING TIME

Before After



With prompt intervention, patients' vascular access can be maintained for a longer duration, before their vascular access thromboses. This reduced the need for insertion of permcath, which is more prone to infection and future central vein stenosis.

## CONCLUSION

Through effective and transparent communication between the Vascular Surgery specialist and medical support team in the community, patients are able to receive prompt medical attention.

Patients feel assured and safe that the dialysis centre nurses and the Vascular specialist are working hand-in-hand in managing their medical condition.

This collaboration between SGH Vascular Surgery and community dialysis centres is in line with SingHealth's shift towards **patient-centric and coordinated care** for all patients served.