



INCREASING ORTHODONTIC REFERRALS FROM SCHOOL DENTAL SERVICE AND PROVIDING TIMELY ACCESS TO CARE FOR PATIENTS

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Introduction

Arising from the Management Meeting in December 2015, there was a declining trend in the total number of referrals to the National Dental Centre of Singapore (NDCS) and reduced productivity from the data provided by SingHealth statistics department. The greatest reduction in the referral rate came from the department of Orthodontics, of which the referrals from School Dental Service saw the greatest decline. There were 200 less referrals in CY2015, as compared to CY2014. In addition, the orthodontic waiting list at NDCS has shortened drastically and more clinical slots could be allocated to patients to receive timely access to care. A team was formed to address the issues.

Objective



To increase the median number of Orthodontics' referrals from SDS by 15% in 10 months time so as to improve the clinical productivity of Orthodontics Department and ensure that patient receives timely access to care.

Root Cause Analysis

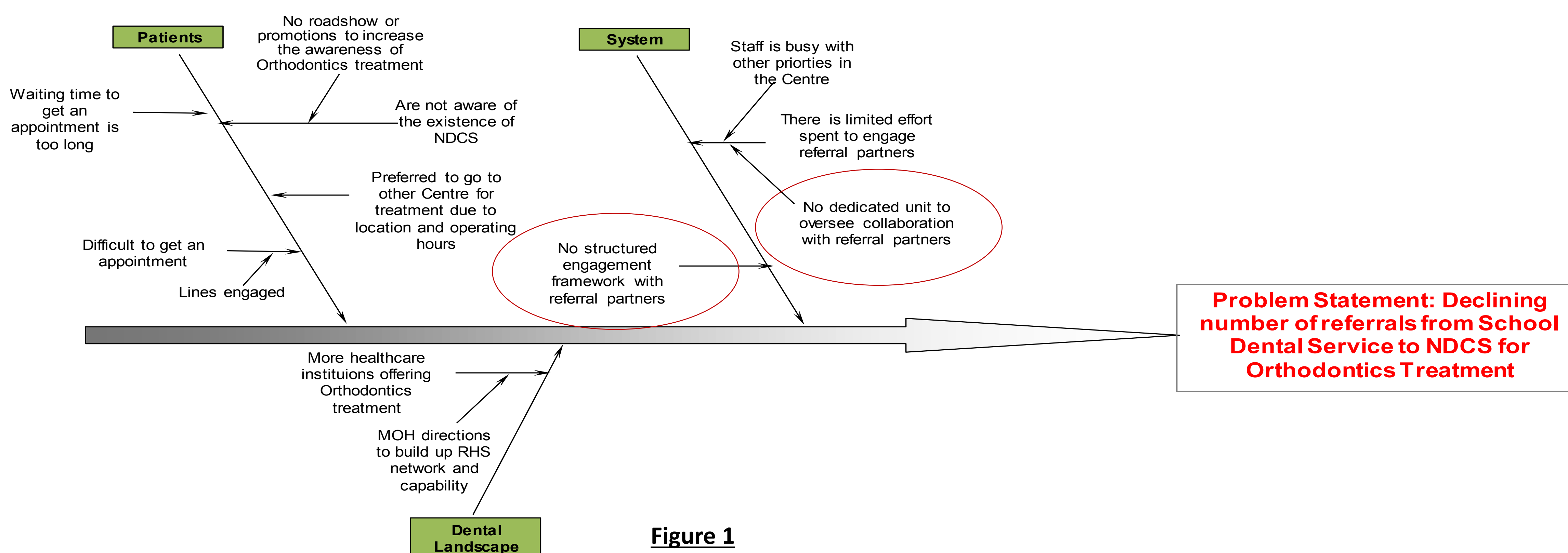


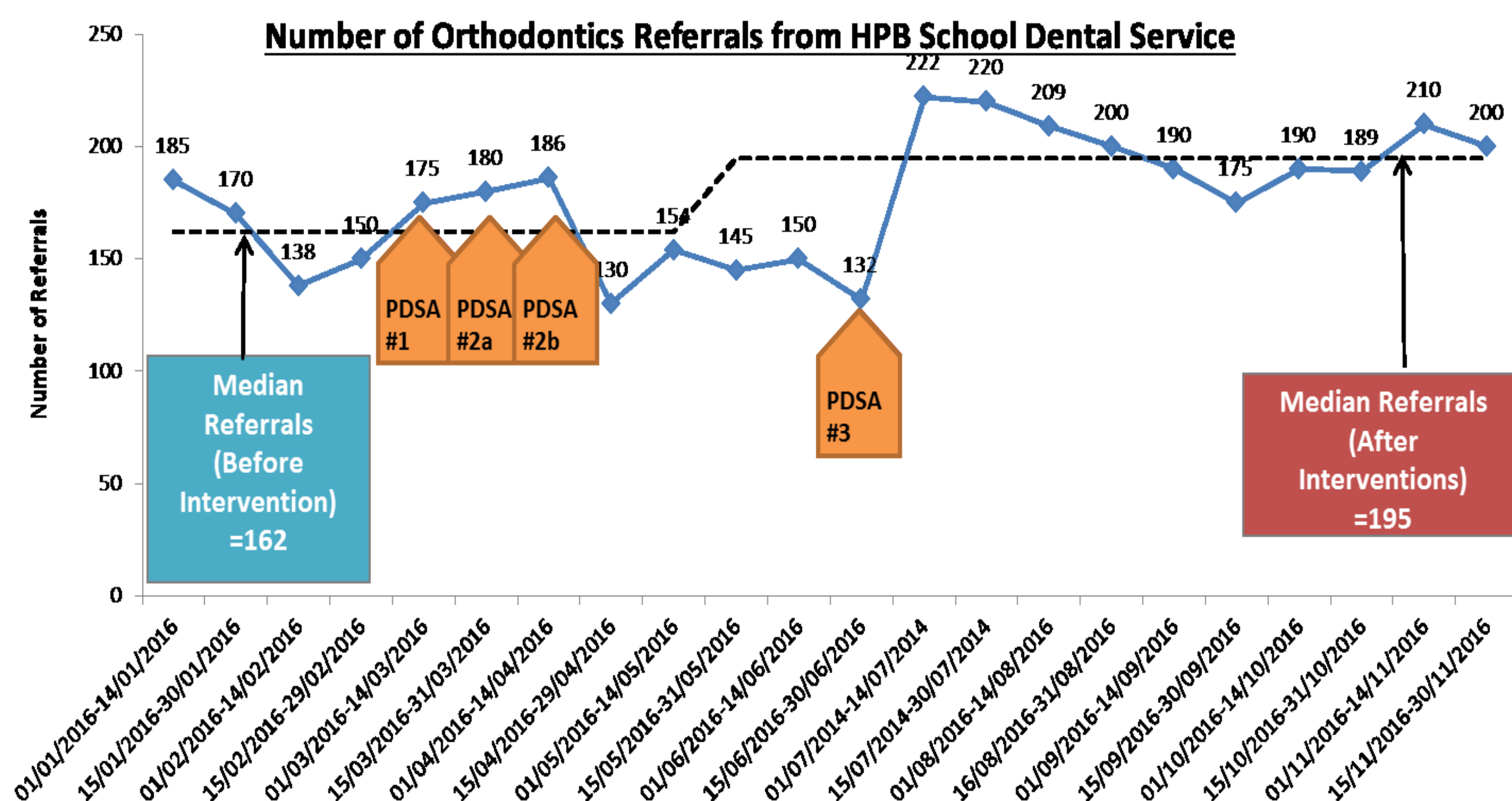
Figure 1

The team employed Ishikawa diagram to analyse the root causes and decided to tackle the two root causes circled in red, as shown in Figure 1.

Interventions

PDSA #	Intervention	Period of interventions
1	Orthodontics department proposed a structured framework to engage SDS to conduct periodic screening at their side.	March 2016
2a	Orthodontics had first engagement session with Senior Deputy Director (SDS) to discuss potential plans for collaboration.	16 March 2016
2b	Orthodontics had second engagement meeting with Senior Deputy Director (SDS) to discuss details of screening to be done at School Dental Centre (SDC)	08 April 2016
3	Started screening by Orthodontics' Registrars at HPB.	June 2016 (1 week)

Result



After interventions, the number of Orthodontics Referrals from HPB (SDS) has increased from 162 to 195 (20% increment), which surpassed our target!

Benefits

- For Referral Partners (HPB-SDS)
 - Through collaborative partnership, the wait list for SDS has greatly reduced from 1 year to 3 months since the intervention.
- For Patients:
 - More patients can be seen earlier so that clinical interventions can be administered in a timely fashion.
- For NDCS:
 - Better utilization of the clinical sessions for Orthodontics department, which improved clinical productivity.

Next Step

- ✓The interventions have been proven effective and the team is continuing to monitor the sustainability.
- ✓The collaboration is a 'win-win' model for both SDS and NDCS.
- ✓Due to the successful collaboration, the Orthodontics department will be working SDS to conduct the 2nd screening session in December 2016 at SDC.