



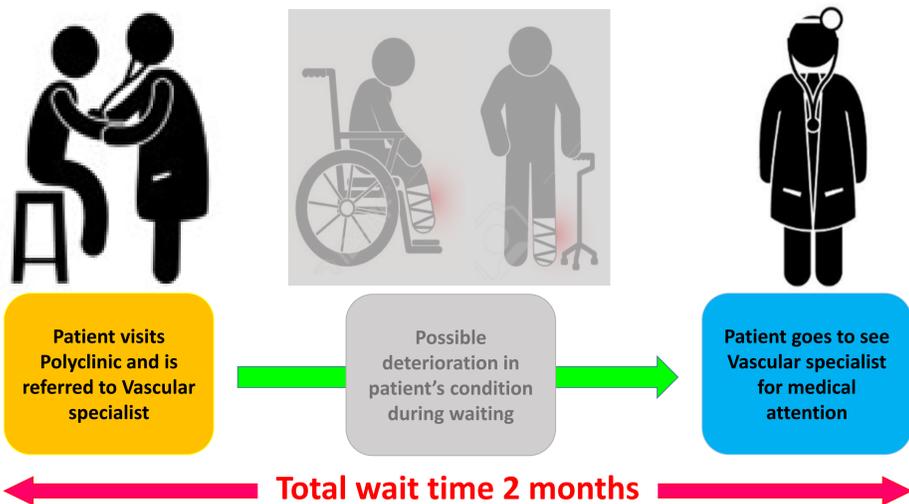
Access to Care – Fast Track Vascular Surgery Appointment

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BACKGROUND

Primary care professionals are the closest and first contact point for patients, providing holistic and personalised care, usually within close proximity to patients' homes. In the event that specialised medical attention is required, polyclinic doctors will refer patients to the specialists at tertiary institutions for further intervention.

Waiting time to first appointment for patients referred to see the vascular specialist is around 2 months. Of all the patients referred, 68.6% are age 62 and above, where timely intervention is crucial due to the higher risk of possible infection.



Problems and Issues

- ✗ Long waiting time for vascular surgery appointment of 2 months
- ✗ Delay in intervention
- ✗ Possible deterioration in patient's conditions, especially for elderly patients with infections

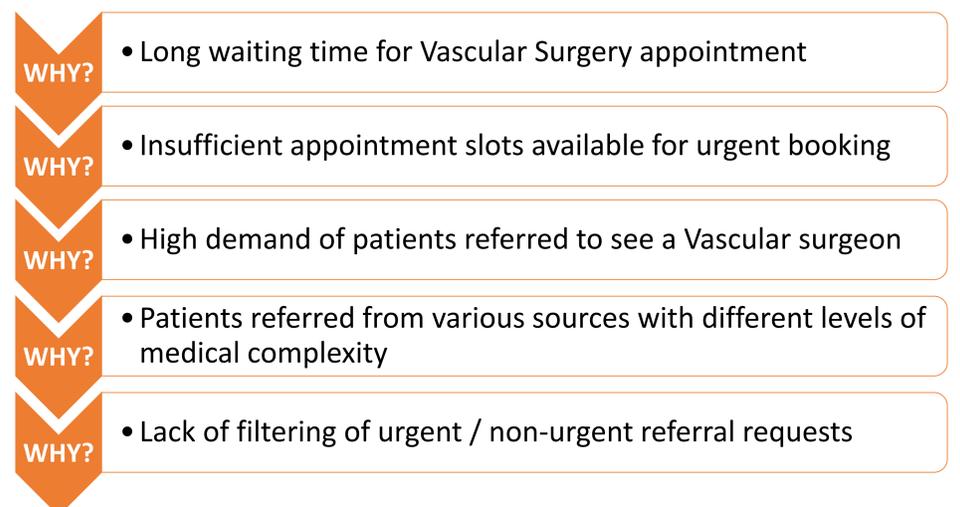
AIM

To enable patients from Singhealth Polyclinic (SHP) requiring urgent attention to have faster access to Vascular Surgery appointments at the Specialist Outpatient Clinic (SOC).

METHODOLOGY

The cross-functional team, comprising clinicians and operations staff from both SGH and Singhealth Polyclinic, engaged different stakeholders to review the various vascular conditions requiring referral to specialists, as well as the current referral workflow.

The 5 Whys helped derive the root cause which pointed to a lack of referral criteria.



Change Process

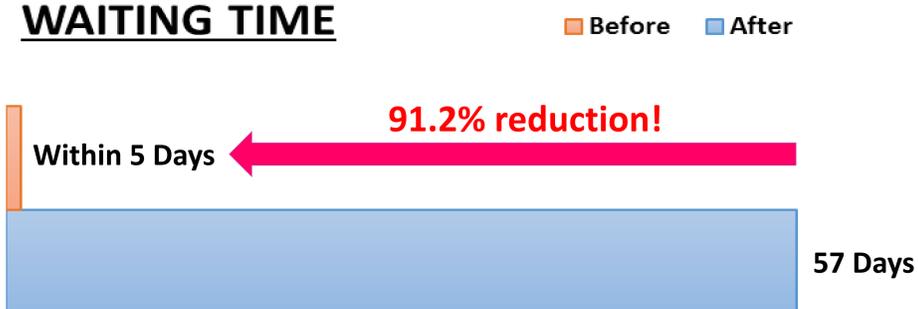
- Vascular specialist reviewed and listed the various types of conditions that warranted urgent referrals:
 - Diabetic foot wound / ulcer with toe pressure < 60mm Hg and no presence of infection
 - Abdominal / thoracic aneurysm
 - Dialysis access problems
- Communicate with SHP clinicians on the conditions for urgent referrals
- Set up Vascular fast-track resource
- Train SHP colleagues on direct booking of urgent appointments to expedite the referral process

RESULTS

Tangible Results

- ✓ Reduced waiting time for Vascular Surgery appointment from 57 days to within 5 days (91.2% reduction in waiting days)
- ✓ 8% of the fast-track patients are able to see the Vascular specialist within 3 working days

WAITING TIME



Intangible Results

- ✓ Timely intervention for patients, alleviating patients' and caregivers' anxiety on their conditions
- ✓ Treatment can commence immediately after review, urgent admission / listing can be attended straight after appointment

CONCLUSION

With the introduction of fast-track Vascular Surgery resource and a comprehensive referral protocol, patients who require urgent medical attention are able to receive prompt medical care by the Vascular specialist.

Through this initiative, patient care and patient experience are greatly enhanced, which is in line with SingHealth's shift towards **patient-centric and coordinated care**, which organizes services and service providers around the needs of patients