



# MYSTERY AUDIT PROGRAM FOR FRONTLINE OPERATIONS – PORCH OFFICERS

Singapore Healthcare Management 2017

Isabel Yong, Jessica Soo, Chua Sin Lee, Shirley Chan (SGH Service Quality)  
Leonard Poon (SingHealth Group Service Quality)  
Ong Jie Yi, Tay Hui Erh, Bridget Cheu Su Thin, Norhayati Binte Awang Ali (SGH Operations)



Singapore General Hospital  
SingHealth

## INTRODUCTION

As the flagship institution in the Outram Campus, there are multiple entry points to the Singapore General Hospital. As such, the Customer Service Officer at one of the many porches is usually the first and last service point for patients and visitors, especially for those who are travelling via private transport or the shuttle bus.

Despite being a non-clinical role, porch officers contribute positively to the patient journey by delivering positive first and last impressions of SGH. That said, there is no current mechanism to actively collect patient and visitor feedback for this group of staff given the limitation of their physical location.

## OBJECTIVES

The mystery audit of porch officers is conceptualised and conducted to understand the baseline of current service standards and identify any gaps for improvement to further enhance patient experience.



## METHODOLOGY

To ensure a good representation, the mystery audits were conducted at the SGH porches of Block 3,4,5,7 and Diabetes and Metabolism Centre (DMC). A regular work week was chosen and the audits were conducted from 6 to 8 March 2017.

A mystery auditing team observed the porch officers at work and noted observations against a checklist of service standards. These include the SGH service standards as well as expected behaviours defined in their job description.

At the end of the 3 days, a total of 40 audits for 18 officers were completed.

The audit was conducted at 3 different time-slots for each day to obtain a balanced assessment of the service level throughout the whole day:

- Morning: 10am - 1pm
- Afternoon: 1pm - 3pm
- Late afternoon: 3pm - 6pm

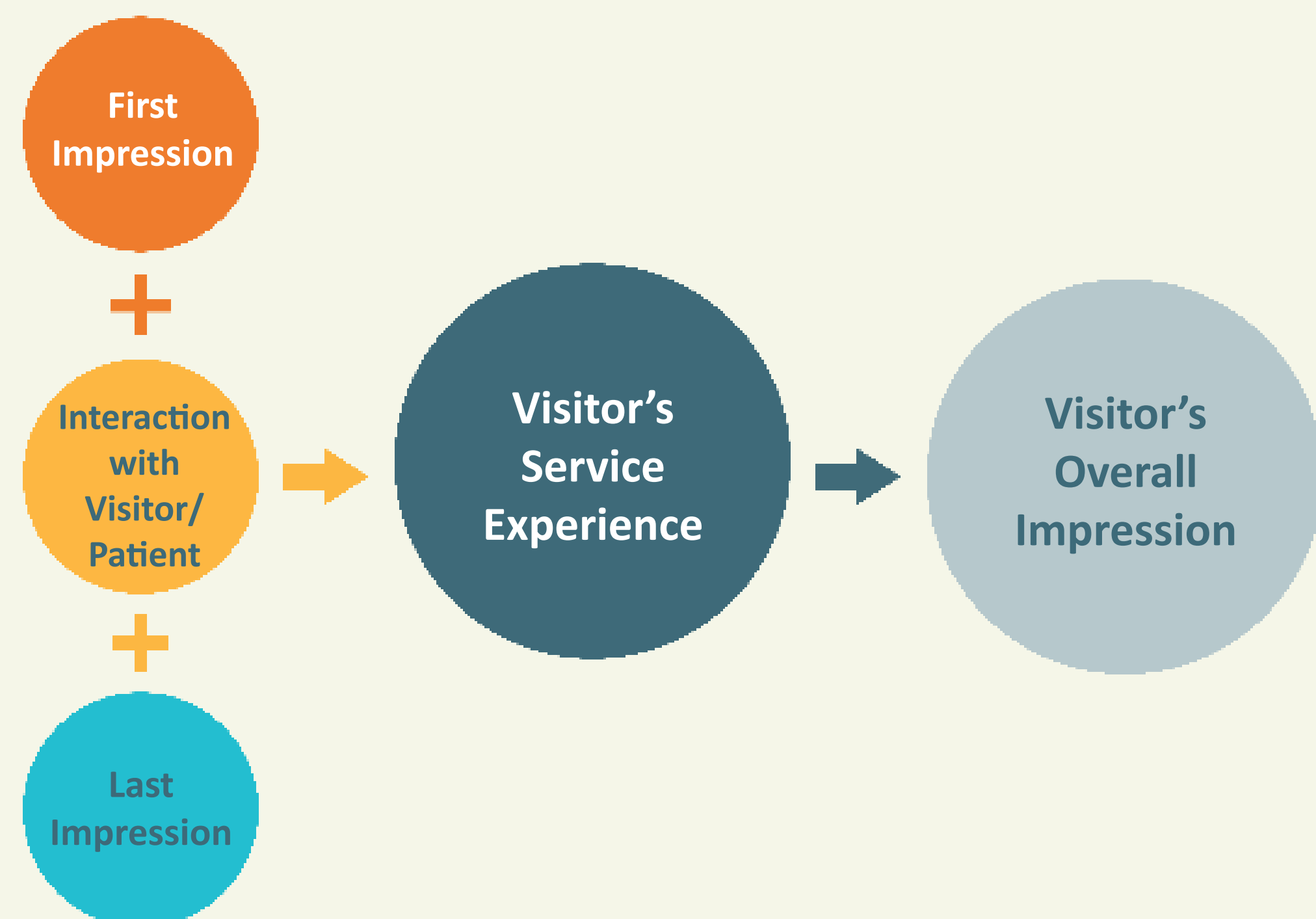
Breakdown of Observation by Date & Time and Location

Date & Time	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5	Block 7	DMC
6 <sup>th</sup> March (10am - 6pm)	7	2	2	2	2
7 <sup>th</sup> March (3pm - 6pm)	2	1	2	1	2
8 <sup>th</sup> March (10am - 6pm)	8	3	2	2	2

## RESULTS

Observations from the audits were analysed by the different stages of interaction.

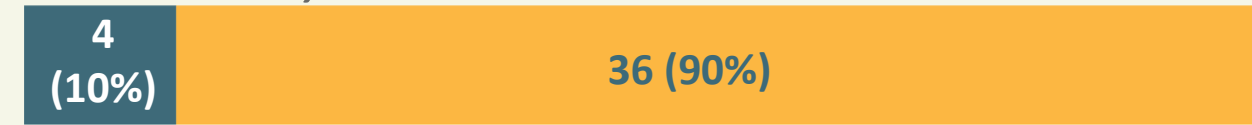
Visitor's Service Experience



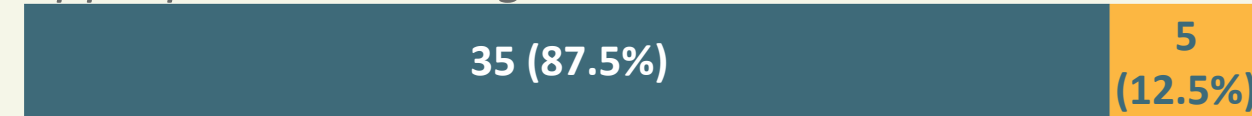
### Porch Officers are able to Project a Positive First Impression

Audit findings indicated that porch officers project a positive first impression for visitors in terms of maintaining eye contact (90%) and displaying enthusiasm in offering help (87.5%) amongst some attributes.

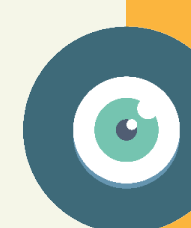
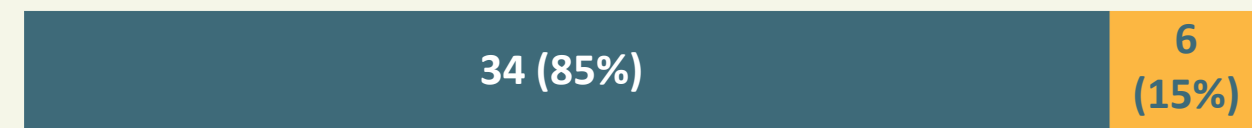
Maintains eye contact



Appropriate Greeting



Smile



Majority **maintained eye contact**; only 4 instances where POs looked elsewhere when attending to visitors.  
Resulting in:  
• Struggle by patient to get on wheelchair not detected  
• Visitor looked offended - lack of respect



**Smile & Appropriate Greeting** were not present in majority of observations.  
Resulting in:  
• Awkward moments during interactions  
• Visitors just looked at PO and walk away  
• Visitors unsure/shy to approach PO

### There can be Better Visitor Engagement during the Interaction

That said, they can further improve in their actions to communicate and engage visitors in their interactions such as having a proper closing (67.5%).

Respect & Courtesy



Enthusiasm



Warmth



Empathy



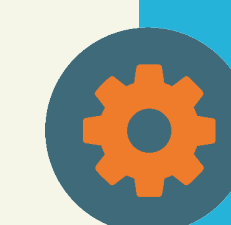
Extend Help to Those in Need



No Yes Not Observable



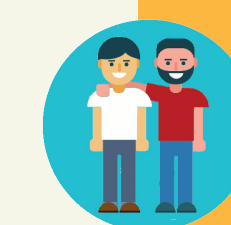
Generally POs were not rude. 50% of the interactions showed **Respect & Courtesy** by using a polite tone when answering queries, while the other half were speaking in a normal/neutral tone.



Majority of the interactions displayed **Enthusiasm** in their concierge services  
• Proactive in helping visitors to flag for taxi or offering wheelchair  
• Responsive to visitors asking for directions



There could however be more **Warmth** in majority of interactions with visitors  
• Asked visitors in a brief manner, "Need help?" or "Taxi?"  
• Cold; no smile



47.5% of the interactions could have displayed better **Empathy** during interactions with visitors  
• Not much care and concern or compassion shown when helping visitors with difficulties



47.5% of the interactions showed our POs **extending help to visitors in need**  
• Asked if wheelchair patients required taxi, hailed taxi and pushed patients to taxi, offered wheelchairs to elderly patients with walking sticks  
42.5% of the interactions **did not FULLY extend help to visitors in need**  
• Only helped to open the door but did not offer help patient's NOK to assist patients with walking difficulties to board the vehicle  
- experience could be more complete  
*Note: Ops clarified it is their policy for NOK to take ownership of their own patient. But if PO observes NOK having difficulty managing patient, PO would then step in to help*



Observed Visitor's Impression



Proper Closing



Observed Visitor's Impression

Neutral Positive

Proper Closing

No Yes Not Observable



**Proper Closing**  
68% of interactions did not have proper closing  
• Closed car doors without bidding "Goodbye" or "Have a nice day" to visitors  
• Did not acknowledge visitors who appreciated their service



**Observed Visitor's Impression**  
Despite that almost all PO's did not exhibit all expected service behaviours, 75% of visitors were positively impressed with the service experience provided by the POs, as observed from their acknowledgement with a smile or a "Thank you". This shows visitors expectations are not high

### Stakeholder Partnership to Progress Service Standards from Good to Great

The results are then shared with the Visitor Services team with recommendations for the way forward. The two units are now working together in terms of content development for service training later in the year.

Recruitment & Update Job Description (JD)	Performances Management	Training & Behaviour Modelling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recruit &amp; select candidates with service-oriented mindset and/or aptitude</li><li>- Adopt situational interview to assess how candidates would behave in hypothetical work situations</li><li>• Update JD of PO to incorporate all expected service standards (SGH Care Behaviours) to set and manage expectations of both job-holder and supervisor</li><li>- Current JD only describes minimal service behaviours, i.e. "Smile and greet", "Be proactive", "Polite" and "Uphold the hospital's highest service quality standards at all times"</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Daily supervisory rounding for supervisor to visit POs at porches:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Check on performance</li><li>- Connect on a personal level</li><li>- Understand issues on the ground</li></ul></li><li>• Hold regular meetings as a platform for POs:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Share work difficulties and seek help to overcome challenging issues</li><li>- Recognise POs who received compliments</li><li>- Share learning points from complaints or feedback received</li></ul></li><li>• One-to-one counselling with POs who received complaints</li><li>• Conduct regular service audits:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Assess service level of POs</li><li>- Identify service gaps</li><li>- Implement initiatives for service improvement</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct customer service training for POs to inculcate and reinforce SGH POs' service standards and help them see meaning in their role<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Incorporate experiential training methods (e.g. role-play, behaviour modelling)</li></ul></li><li>• Practice via Behaviour Modelling<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Show and guide POs through imitation of modelled behaviour by observing and learning from:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Video</li><li>- Peer learning from better performing POs</li><li>- Learning trips to hotels reputed for top-notch service to observe their front desk and doorman serving customers</li></ul></li></ul></li><li>• Apply learned behaviour in work environment</li></ul>

In the training session, porch officers will not only learn about how to provide a great positive patient experience, they will also be able to appreciate how their role aligns to that of SPREE, the SingHealth Quality Priorities.

### POs Role in Contributing to Patient Care (SPREE)

Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set up wheelchair for patient and ensured the brake was applied before patient sat on it</li><li>• Pushed wheelchair patients to cars and held the wheelchairs steady while patients were getting into cars</li><li>• Ensure vehicles enter and leave pick-up point in orderly manner</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensured visitor with walking difficulties alight from or board car or bus safely by supporting them</li><li>• Offered wheelchairs to elderly patients with walking difficulty to avoid fall risk</li><li>• Ensured visitors boarding bus do not exceed its capacity</li></ul>
	Professionalism	Respect
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observant of surroundings to lend assistance if required</li><li>• Directed vehicles to designated pick-up point, opened and closed car door</li><li>• Offered wheelchairs for visitors with walking difficulties</li><li>• Initiated to ask if visitors needed a cab</li><li>• Good posture</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicated to visitors politely</li><li>• Acknowledge visitors' appreciation of POs' acts of good service</li></ul>
	Efficiency	

## CONCLUSION

The porch officer mystery audit is the start of a program aimed at understanding current service standards of frontline teams which are non-clinical in nature and yet contribute to a positive overall patient and visitor experience. Some of these teams include Visitor Registration Counters, Housekeeping, and registration & payment counter staff.

Future extension of the mystery audit program will enable the Hospital to use a tried and tested methodology to systemically identify service gaps, plan improvement initiatives and measure results of such interventions.