



# Triaging of Polyclinic Referrals to Paediatric Medicine



KK Women's and  
Children's Hospital  
SingHealth

Singapore Healthcare  
Management **2013**

Selena Ng / Loke Chui Yee

A/Prof Thaschawee Arkachaisri / Dr Justin Tan  
Dr Lena Das / Dr Barathi Rajendra / Dr Raveen Shahdadpuri  
A/Prof Ng Kee Chong / Dr Christopher Ho  
Nooraini Jaffar / Lau Gek Muay / Wong Mee Leng / May Tan

## INTRODUCTION

To reduce the number of inappropriate referrals and to improve the appointment waiting time to General Referral Clinic, our Medical team started to triage referrals for Paediatric Medicine appointments received from all Polyclinics in April 2011. The triaging reduces wrong referrals and fast tracks those patients that need early medical attention.

## OBJECTIVES

**RIGHT CARE. RIGHT TIME. RIGHT PLACE.**

- Right-siting of care
- Improved appropriateness of referrals
- Timely specialist attention for patients requiring urgent care
- Better management of appointment waiting time

## METHOD

Polyclinic staff fax referrals for Paediatric Medicine to KKH Central Appointments

### KKH Central Appt staff

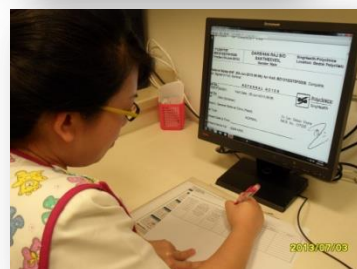
- Organise data into a spreadsheet
- Fax spreadsheet to respective polyclinics at the end of the day
- Scan referral letters into common drive

### Medical & Nursing Team

- Vet referral letters
- Document decision onto the spreadsheet
- Fax the spread sheet to Central Appointments
- Any inappropriate referral will be highlighted to the SHP / NHGP Clinician Lead

### Central Appt staff

- Schedule patients' appointment according to recommendation
- Document the date and time of appt onto the spread sheet
- Inform caregiver on the scheduled appointment
- Fax the finalized spreadsheet to the respective Polyclinics



## FEEDBACK

### POSITIVE APPROACH:

- ✓ All cases are accepted
  - No cases turned away
- ✓ "Inappropriate" referrals discussed and reviewed via
  - Ad-hoc email communication
  - Review feedback session with KKH, SHP and NHGP
- ✓ Simple referral workflow
  - One fax number for all referrals
  - KKH staff contacts patient/ parent directly for appointment details

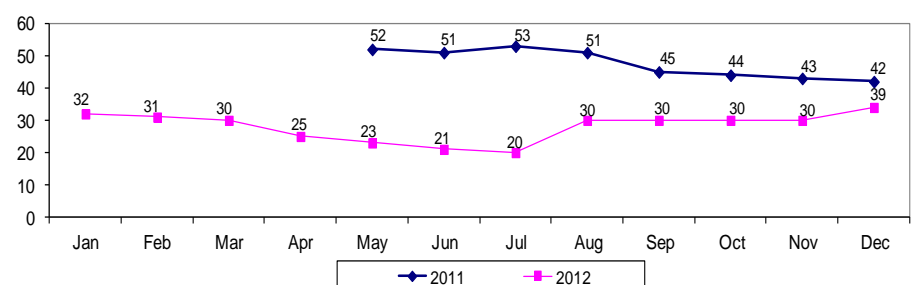


## RESULTS

Inappropriate referrals reduced from **16.5% to 2%**

The waiting time for General Paediatric Medicine have also improved from **52 days (April 2011) to 39 days (Dec 2012)**

Waiting Time for Subsidized Paediatric Medicine Appointment at 95th Percentile (days)



## CONCLUSION

This initiative helps to reduce the number of inappropriate polyclinic referrals as well as improve the appointment waiting time. Importantly, patients who require medical attention could be seen by a specialist at the appropriate time frame. Patient satisfaction has also increased as appointment is given appropriately hence reduces unnecessary trips to the hospital.