







Albert Tan (Author) Cheryl Ong (co-author) Ong Ai Chen (co-author) **Kalaraine Thanapal** (co-author) Daisy Joseph (co-author)



Background

Appointment hotline received 302,827 calls in FY12 which is a 4% increase compared to FY11. The team anticipated that the rising call volume will affect the abandoned call rate if the manpower deployment were to remain unchanged. The team conducted a survey to collect and analyse the type of calls so as to identify possible initiatives to reduce calls.

Aim

- · Improve Patient experience by reducing waiting time for referrals at Polyclinic
- Reduce Appointment Hotline Call Volume
- Appointment Abandon Call Rate





Methodology



Analyse the call source

Managing calls from SHP has greater potential of achieving our objective of reducing calls compared to the other sources.

Solutions





20 mins **Patient Waiting time**

PATIENTS AT SINGHEALTH POLYCLINIC



SNEC staff inform polyclinic staff of **NGHEALTH POLYCLINIC**

Patient at the clinic. Total waiting time 20 min

Workflow Reviewed



5 mins **Patient Waiting time**

PATIENTS AT SINGHEALTH POLYCLINIC

SINGHEALTH POLYCLINIC STAFF Referral Clerk confirms patient details and fax Appointment request to SNEC in 5 mins Referral clerk advise patient that SNEC will contact them for an appointment within 1-2 days

EC CALL CENTRE STAFF SNEC staff picks up faxes, books appointment SNEC staff email to Polyclinic to inform of appointment scheduled for their patients



SNEC CALL CENTRE STAFF SNEC staff contact/sms patient during noniod on their scheduled appointment

Results

Patient Waiting Time at SingHealth Polyclinic



Reduced from average 20 minutes to 5 minutes ■ Poor ■ Satisfactory ■ Good 80% 60% 40% 20% Patient's satisfaction on Appt Patient's satisfaction on Appt confirmed by Phone/SMS



SNEC Appointment hotline call volume % of reduction

FY13	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
% Call Volume reduction	8.7	9.1	9.8	11.4	7.7	8.3



SNEC Appointment Hotline Abandon Call Rates Meet less than 5% target



Conclusion

- This initiative improved patient experience by reducing their waiting time at SingHealth Polyclinics.
- There is an average of 8% Call volume reduction at Appointment
- Overall, it has improved SNEC Call Centre's performance on abandoned call rates.

Future work

The Appointments Access Task Force, SingHealth (AATF) was formalized in September 2013 with the objective to improve access for all stakeholders in obtaining, reviewing and changing appointments in SingHealth Institutions with the aim of creating a seamless experience for patients and a user-friendly system for staff. As a part of AATF, our future works include the following:

- 1. Polyclinic commenced making appointments directly in outpatient appointment system for SNEC and provides appointment dates to patients at Polyclinic with effect from July 2014.
- 2. Enable staff from different SingHealth institutions to directly book appointments in all institutions.
- 3. Develop interactive voice response system (IVR) to better manage incoming calls.
- 4. Review and streamline appointment rules.
- 5. Standardise the referral criteria between SHP and SGH Campus.





