



Singapore Healthcare Management 2018

Marked Improvement – Specialist Outpatient Clinic Subsidized New Case Waiting Time to Appointment SGH Haematology Department

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Introduction

- In public healthcare service, specialist outpatient clinic provide essential accessibility to specialist care
- High demand and limited resource often lead to long new case waiting time to appointment (WTA)
- Singapore General Hospital Haematology Department experienced long WTA in 2015/2016. Each month, 71-89% of subsidized patient WTA exceeded 60days with median 98days

Aims

- To reduce the monthly percentage of subsidized new case WTA more than 60days from 80% to 50%
- To reduce median WTA of subsidized new case from 80days to 60days

Methodology

- WTA data from January 2011 to October 2016 was examined. This include both subsidized and private patients, number and sources of referral, no-show rate, discharge rate and doctors clinic resource allocation
- Fish-bone analysis
- Measures were taken in phases from May 2017 to July 2017
- WTA data from July 2017 onwards examined
- **Top problems identified:**
 1. Decrease in doctor resources during 2013/2014
 2. Increase in referral demand
 3. Excessive private new case slot
 4. Under capture of force-in new case
 5. High no-show rate
- **Implementations taken:**
 1. Standardize allocation of subsidized and private new case depending on number of clinic session for all doctors
 2. Clinic operation team modifies new case definition to improve capturing of force-in case

Table 1: Allocation of new case slots per doctor

No. Clinic Session	Sub NC slot	Pte NC slot
3	4	2
2	3	1
1	2	0

Table 2: New case slots increment per month

	Before per week	After per week	Monthly Increment
NC Sub	42	60	72
NC Pte	21	22	4

Results

Figure 1: Monthly percentage of subsidized new case WTA >60days

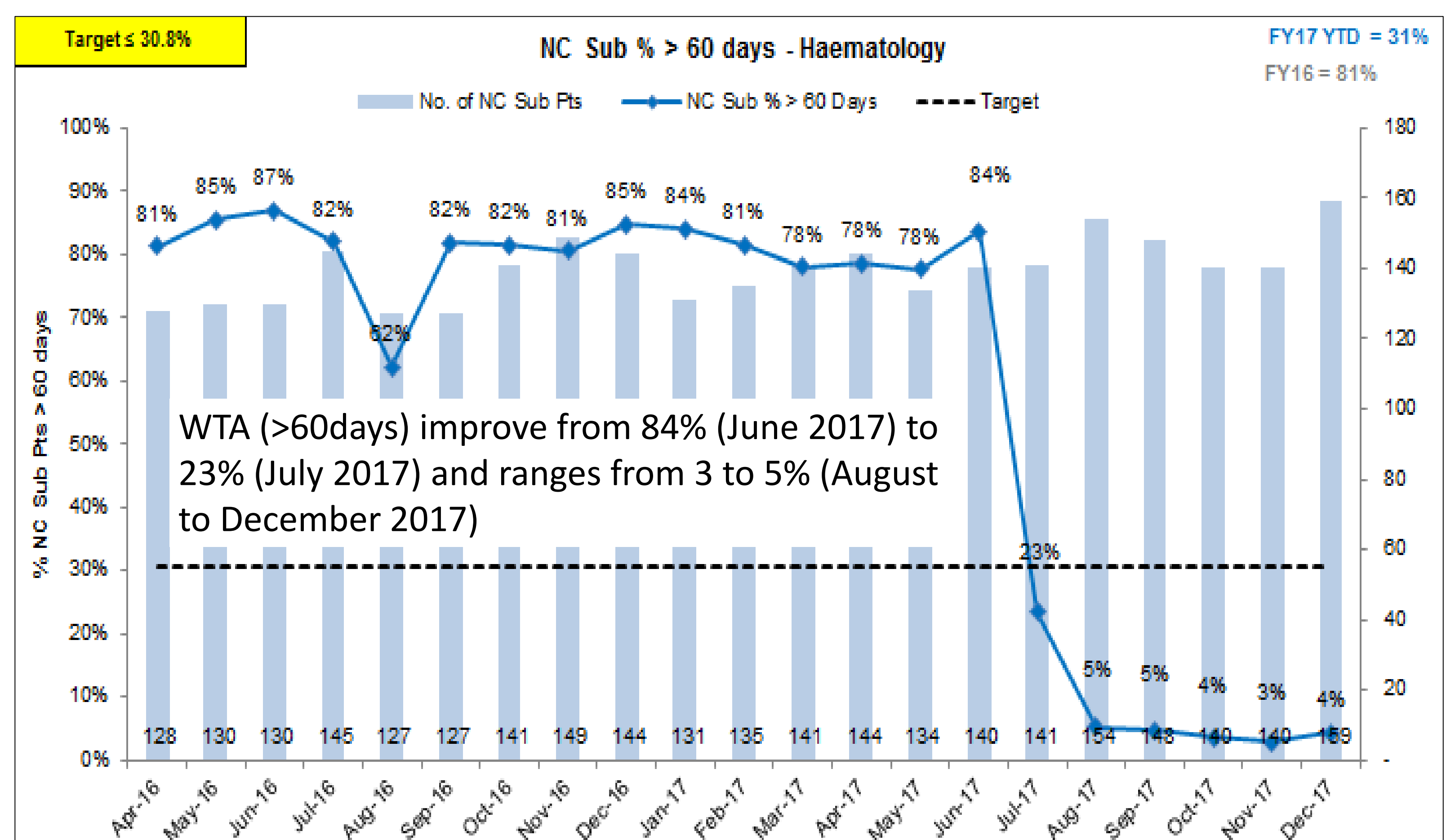
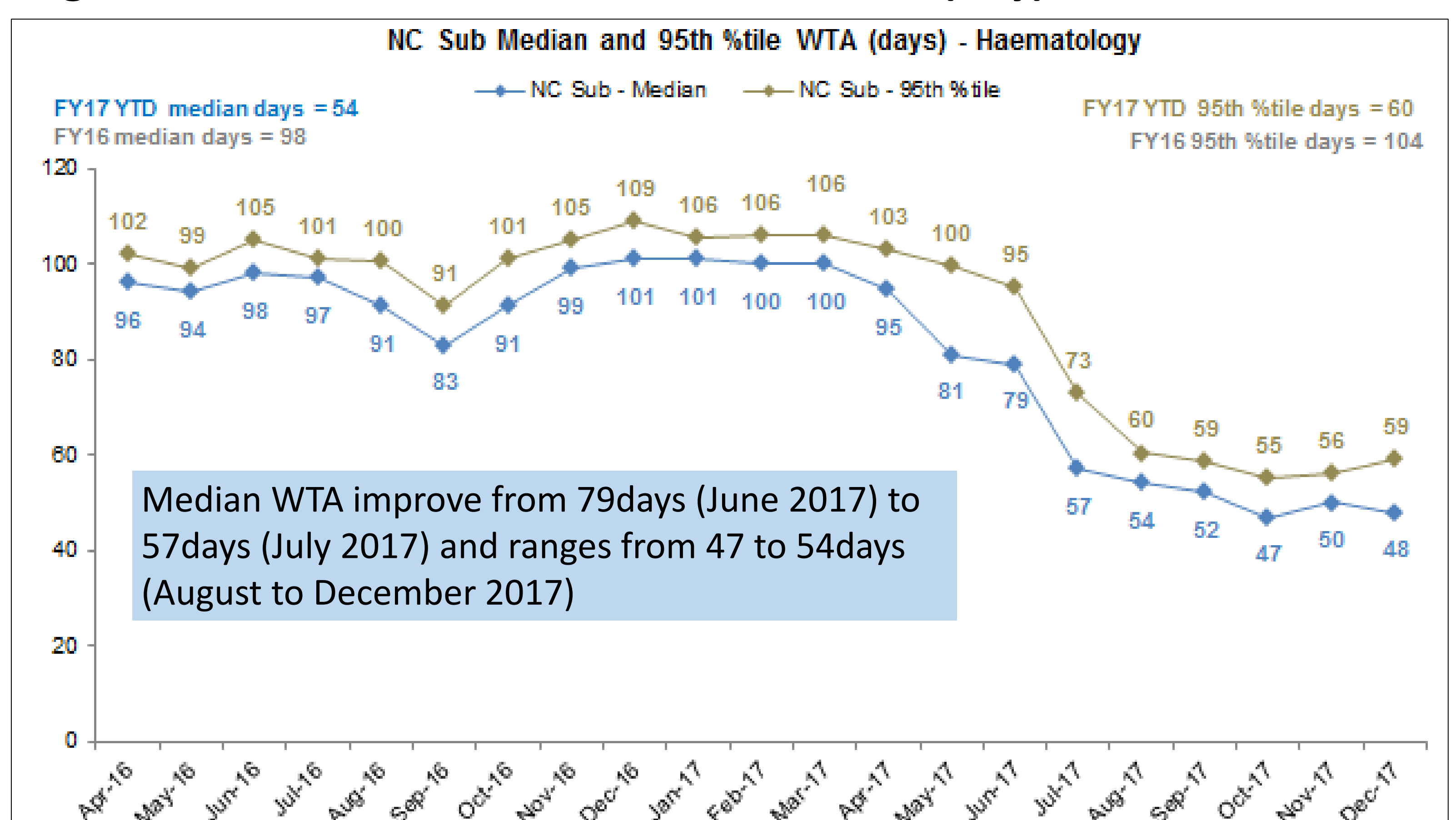


Figure 2: Subsidized new case median WTA (day)



Discussion and Conclusion

- SGH Haematology Department received average 250 outpatient new case referral per month
- Main referral sources are inter-hospital (mainly Changi General Hospital) and intra-hospital (both ward and clinic)
- New case waiting time to appointment (WTA) can be long and variable leading to hindrance of patient care
- With this project, problems identified and measures implemented
- Early result of WTA reduction is promising
- Ongoing WTA monitoring is needed with further PDSA cycle to prevent rebound in view of dynamic changes noted in manpower, clinic resource and referral demands