



Reducing Waiting Time For Colonoscopy Patients Collecting Colonic Lavage At Changi General Hospital Pharmacy A

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Background

Patients collecting colonic lavage powder for bowel preparation before their scope have to wait for an average of 12.5 minutes¹ and for as long as 22 minutes¹ at Changi General Hospital Pharmacy A, not including time spent on queuing to drop off their prescription, for an item that they have already been counselled about by the nurses.

Pharmacy staff also use peak hours to pack colonic lavage packets, resulting in reduction of manpower during critical peak hour.

¹ Based on data collected in September 2017

Primary Aim

- Reduce patient's waiting time at pharmacy for collection of colonic lavage from an average of 12.5 minutes to less than 1 minute within 3 months

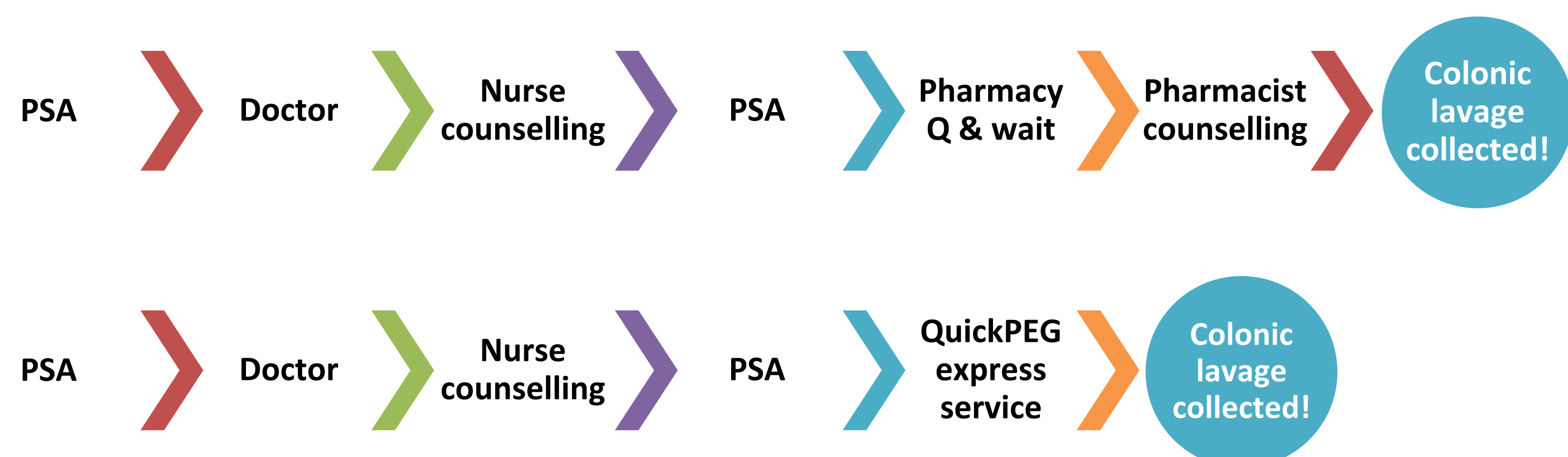
Secondary Aims

- Reduce duplication of counselling from both nurses and pharmacists
- Study usage data of colonic lavage & use pharmacy off-peak hours to prepack colonic lavage at pharmacy

Scope

This implementation will be applicable only to patients collecting colonic lavage, and not for patients prescribed with medications other than colonic lavage or patients who are also collecting medications from other partial scripts.

Changes (Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) Cycle 1)

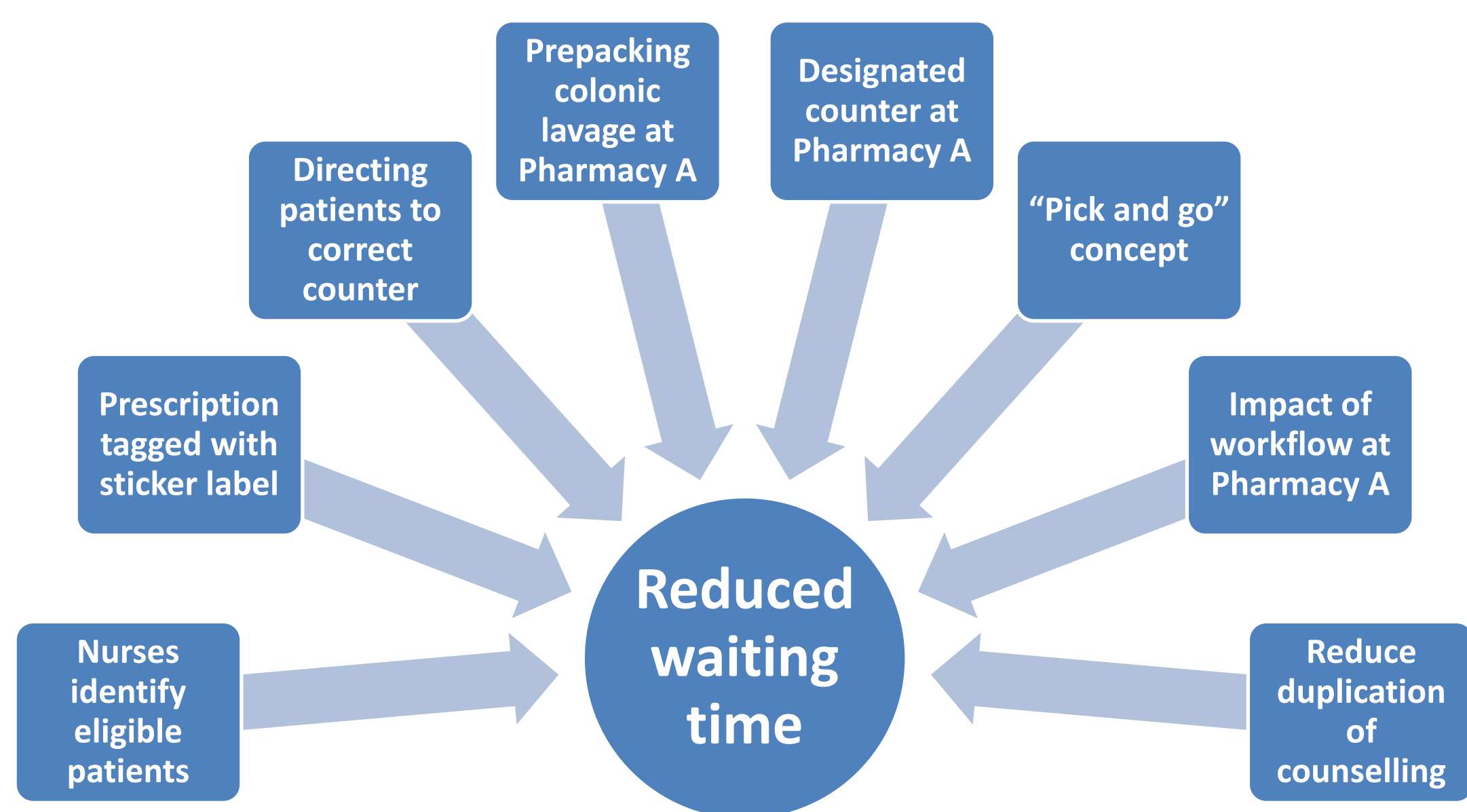


In order to cut down on the time spent to collect their medication, a designated counter was chosen at Pharmacy A for colonoscopy patients to proceed directly for collection of colonic lavage instead of having to join the common queue.

At the time the appointment for the procedure is made, nurses will counsel the patient based on protocol.

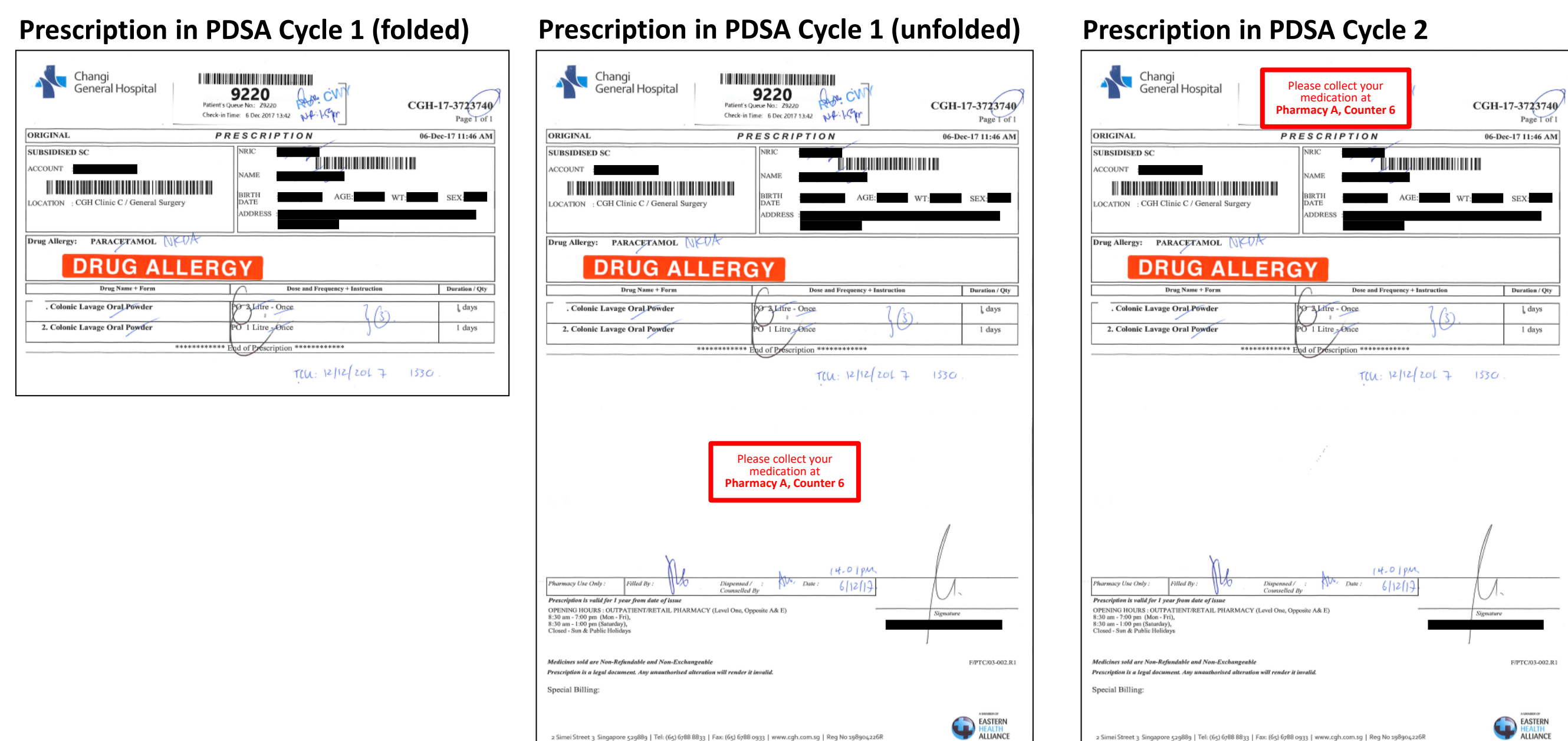
Nurses will also vet through patients' prescriptions to identify patients collecting only colonic lavage and identify them by affixing a sticker label on their prescription.

Patients will be given instructions by the nurses to proceed straight to a designated counter instead of having to queue at Pharmacy A.



Out of the 4 SOC's (Clinic A, C, L, P) that handle colonoscopy patients, Clinic C was chosen to carry out this pilot study for a month as it has the most colonoscopy patients, before rolling out the initiative to the remaining 3 clinics.

Changes (PDSA Cycle 2)



Post implementation, there were patients who missed out on this express service as prescriptions were often folded in half by patients or staff, thus the label directing patients to the designated counter could not be seen. A change was made to affix the sticker label at the top instead of in the middle of the prescription.

Outcome (Waiting Time)

A total of 227 patients' waiting time was tracked during the 2 PDSA cycles.

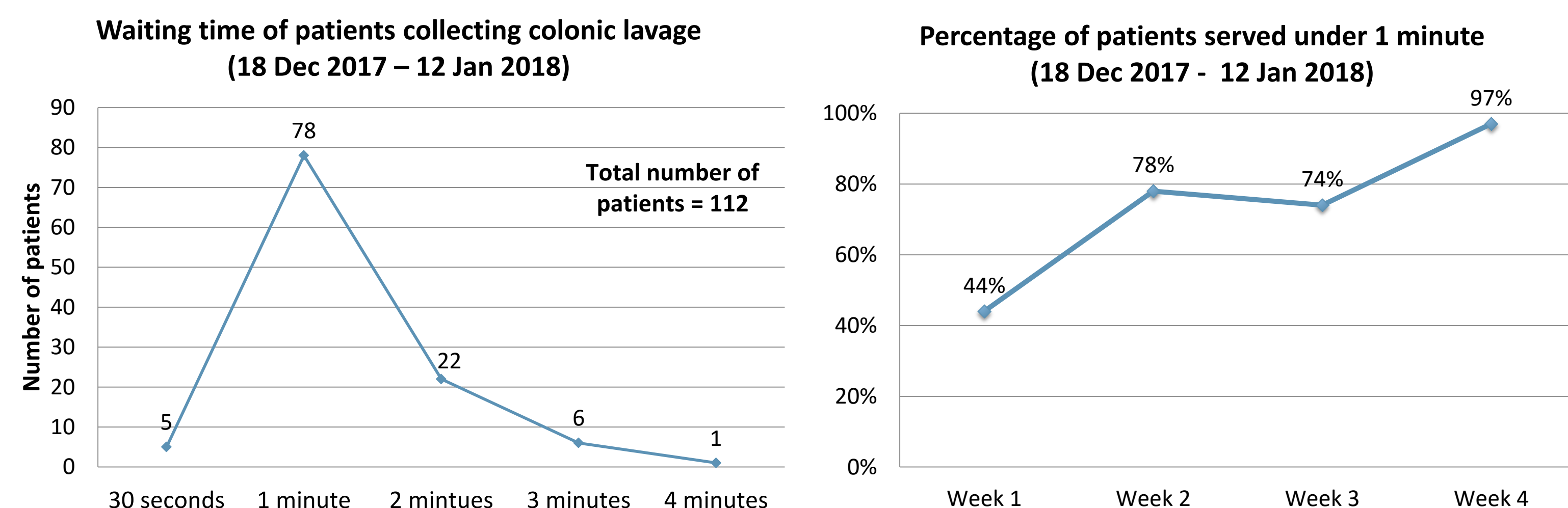
PDSA Cycle 1 (112 patients) – Pilot Roll Out At Clinic C

100% of patients were able to collect their medication within 4 minutes, with 74% of patients collecting their medicines in less than 1 minute.

In week 1, only 44% of patients collected colonic lavage under 1 minute as pharmacy staff were adapting to the new workflow. However, this number improved to 78% and 74% at week 2 and 3 respectively and eventually hit 97% at week 4.

Issues that surfaced during the pilot phase and subsequently resolved were:

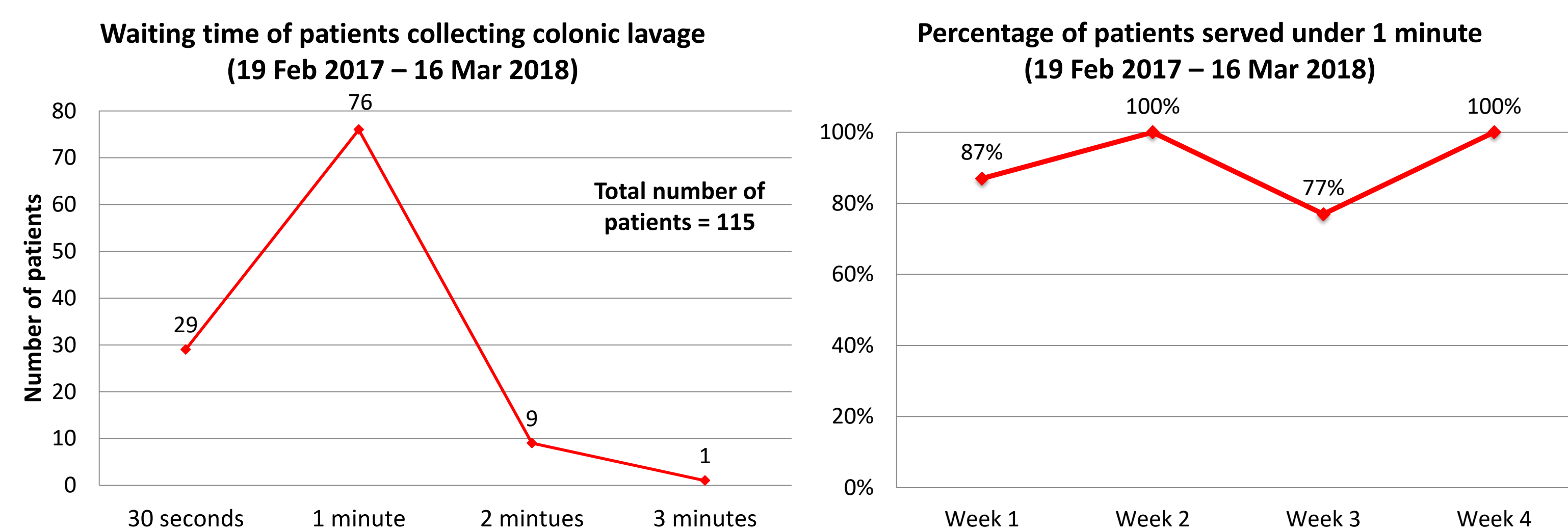
- Staff were getting accustomed to new workflow.
- The most commonly prescribed pack size of 3 packets of colonic lavage ran out during peak period, and staff had to enter the packing area of the pharmacy to get the medicine.
- This was resolved by prepacking and stocking more pack size of 3 colonic lavage at the dispensing area and cutting down on the other pack sizes.
- Some patients had their prescriptions tagged with the sticker label directing them to the designated express service counter despite having other medications in addition to colonic lavage prescribed.
- This was resolved by reinforcing to the SOC nurses that only prescriptions with colonic lavage solely were to be tagged with the sticker label.



PDSA Cycle 2 (115 patients) – Roll Out To All Clinics

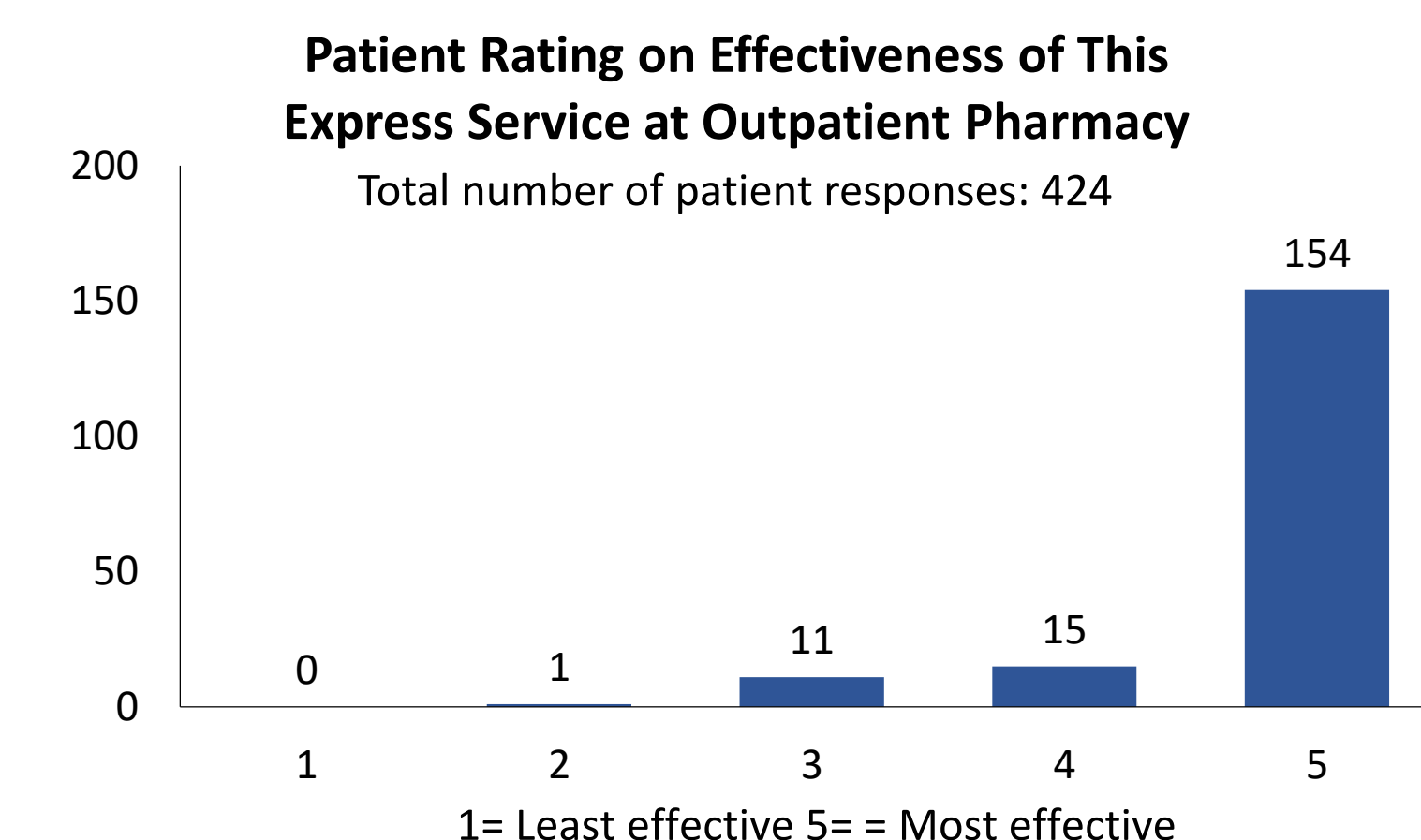
100% of patients were able to collect their medication within 3 minutes, with 91% of patients collecting their medicines in less than 1 minute.

The percentage of patients that were served within 1 minute was consistently high during PDSA cycle 2, with 100% of patients achieving the target waiting time of less than 1 minute on week 2 and week 4.



Outcome (Patient Satisfaction Survey)

- Patients were asked to rate the effectiveness of the workflow on a scale of 1 to 5
- 93% of patients surveyed gave a rating of 4 and above
- Patients were generally happy about the shorter waiting time.



Conclusion

- This project has cut down on waiting time for colonoscopy patients collecting colonic lavage, resulting in an improved patient journey in this group of patients.
- By serving our target group of patients more quickly, it frees up the patient waiting area at Pharmacy A, thus creating a more pleasant environment for the rest of the patients.
- Rolling out the project on a smaller scale during the pilot phase helped surface problems so that the different departments could easily iron out issues. This resulted in a sustainable success when implementing it on a larger scale.
- In conclusion, waiting time has improved and patient experience is positive. This implementation is successful due to the teamwork exhibited across different departments.
- Our next step for the team is to come out with a similar workflow for the same group of patients at the upcoming Changi General Hospital Medical Centre.