



Singapore Healthcare
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NHCS Cardiac Clinic 4B Lean Journey to Reduce Patients' Waiting Time to Consultation

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BACKGROUND

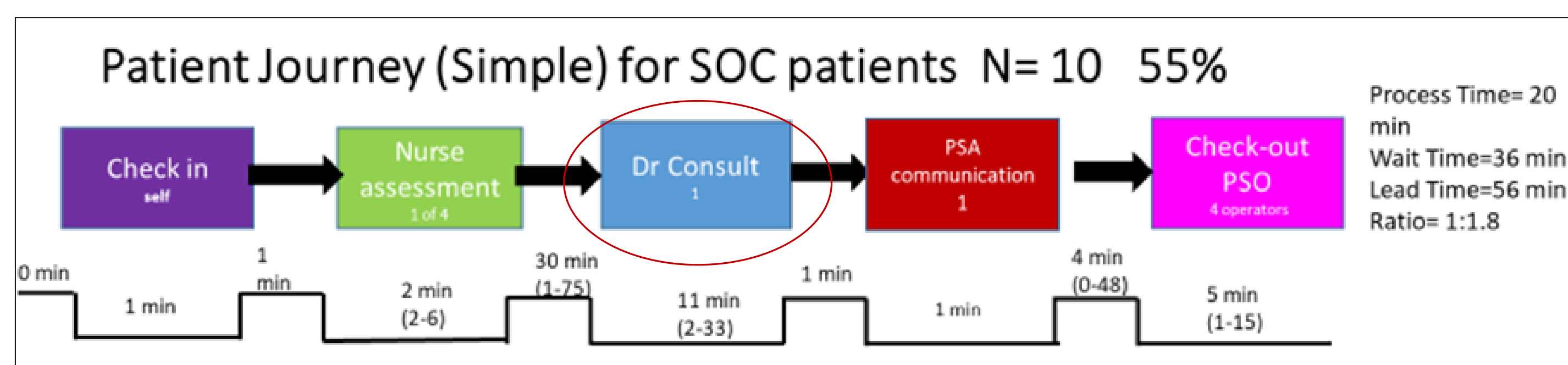
Waiting time for SOC consultation (WTC) is defined as time from the patient registering at the clinic to the first contact with the doctor.

About 10% to 15% or an estimated 650 patients per month experienced a waiting time to consult (WTC) of more than 60 minutes in Clinic 4B. This has led to low patient satisfaction and low staff morale when dealing with angry patients.

Aim: The aim of the project is to reduce WTC > 60 min to 8% within 6 -9 months

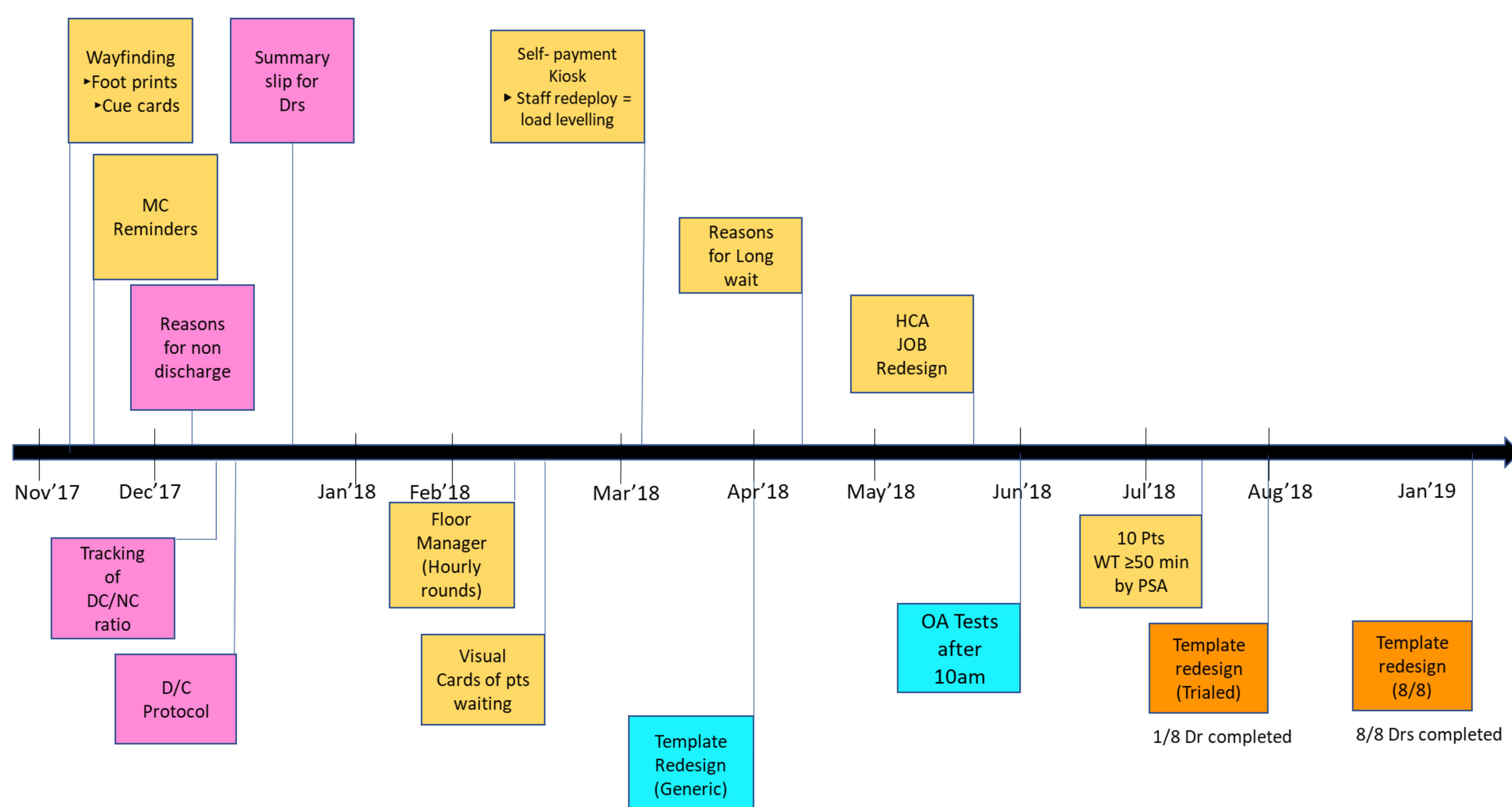
METHODOLOGY

SOC Lean Journey was started in November 2017. 20 patient journeys were followed and a value stream map (VSM) was created for the 10 patient journeys.



The studies showed there was lack of visibility of flow for patients who has been waiting a long time, patients frequently experienced long waiting time due to these reasons.

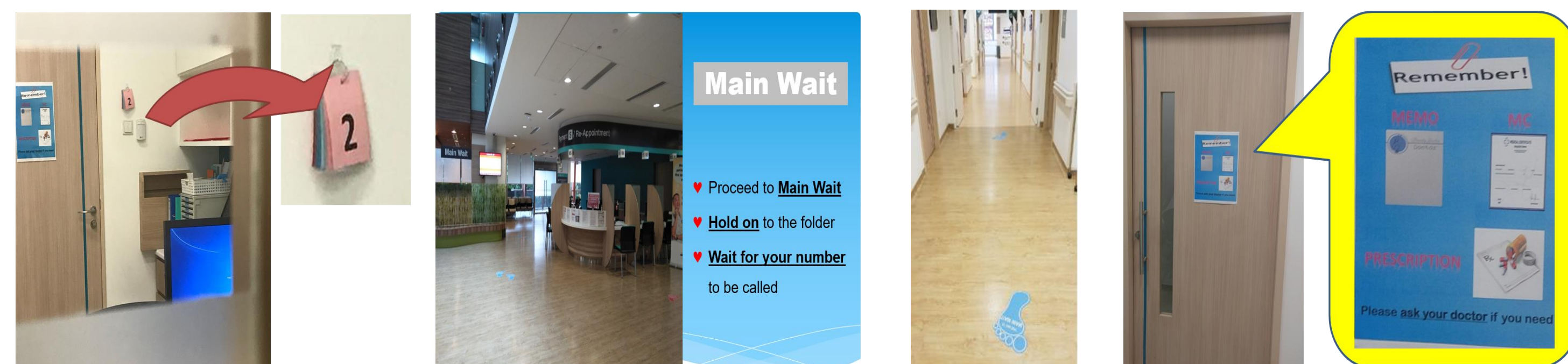
- ❖ It is difficult to identify who has been waiting a long time
- ❖ Patients don't know where they are up to after consult
- ❖ Doctor consult time is highly variable ranging 2 minute to 33 minutes (average 11) .
- ❖ Analysis of patients who waited more than 60 minutes showed that patients seeing 8 doctors frequently experienced long waiting time.
- ❖ Further analysis showed that doctor's appointment templates has not been designed to their needs. The current template has long waiting times inherent in its design



SOC Lean Journey time line

Interventions:

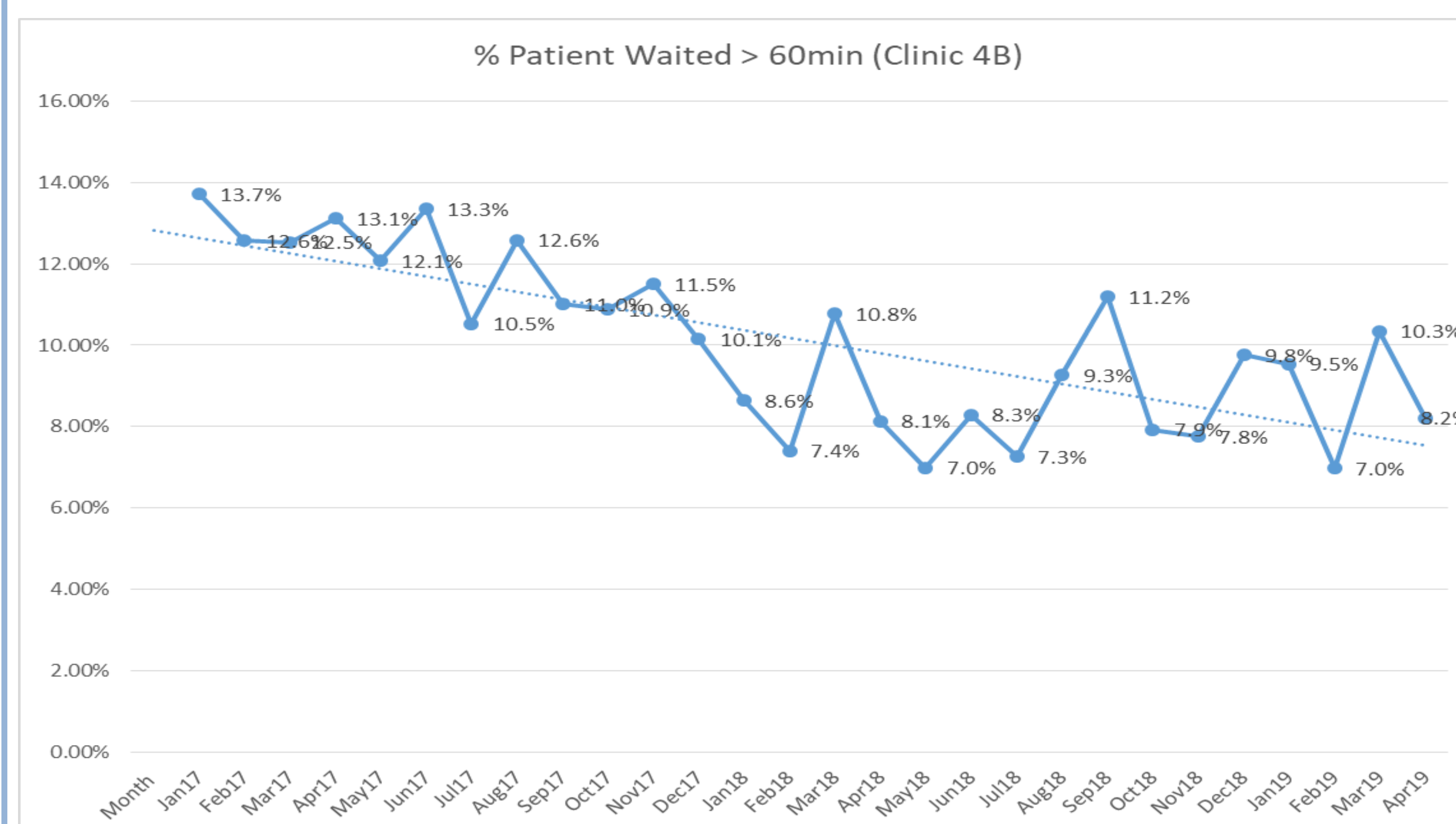
- ✓ Improved way-finding – signage, visual cues and cue cards – specially for guiding patient around during & after consult
- ✓ Appointment of Floor Managers to make hourly checks on the waiting time to see doctor
- ✓ Floor managers to make pro-active adjustments to flow patient faster in the clinic system.
- ✓ From Aug 2018, SOC template has been re-designed and implemented progressively by phases. Change of templates for the eight doctors who have longer consult time has been implemented.



Various signage, visual cues and cue cards to improve flow in the clinic

RESULTS

Before the SOC Lean Journey, WTC > 60min used to be 14% but with various initiatives, we saw the percentage dropping to 8-9%. With the Lean approach the team learned to monitor flow on a daily basis to improve overall patient experience.



CONCLUSION

Since November 2017, many improvements / countermeasures have been developed by the team and trialed. Template redesign has taken into effect from August 2018 and focus of changing templates for 8 Doctors who have longer consult time is completed. SOC is still proactively looking into identification of reasons for long waits, more work needs to be done in this continuous Lean journey.