Experimentation of new dental operatory design

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Singapore Healthcare Management 2019

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1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing complexity of the dental operatory environment influences productivity and workflow for dental clinicians. Well-designed workplaces are crucial to efficiency and productivity. This enables staff to establish a natural working rhythm in which the body utilizes normal patterns in a logical sequence.
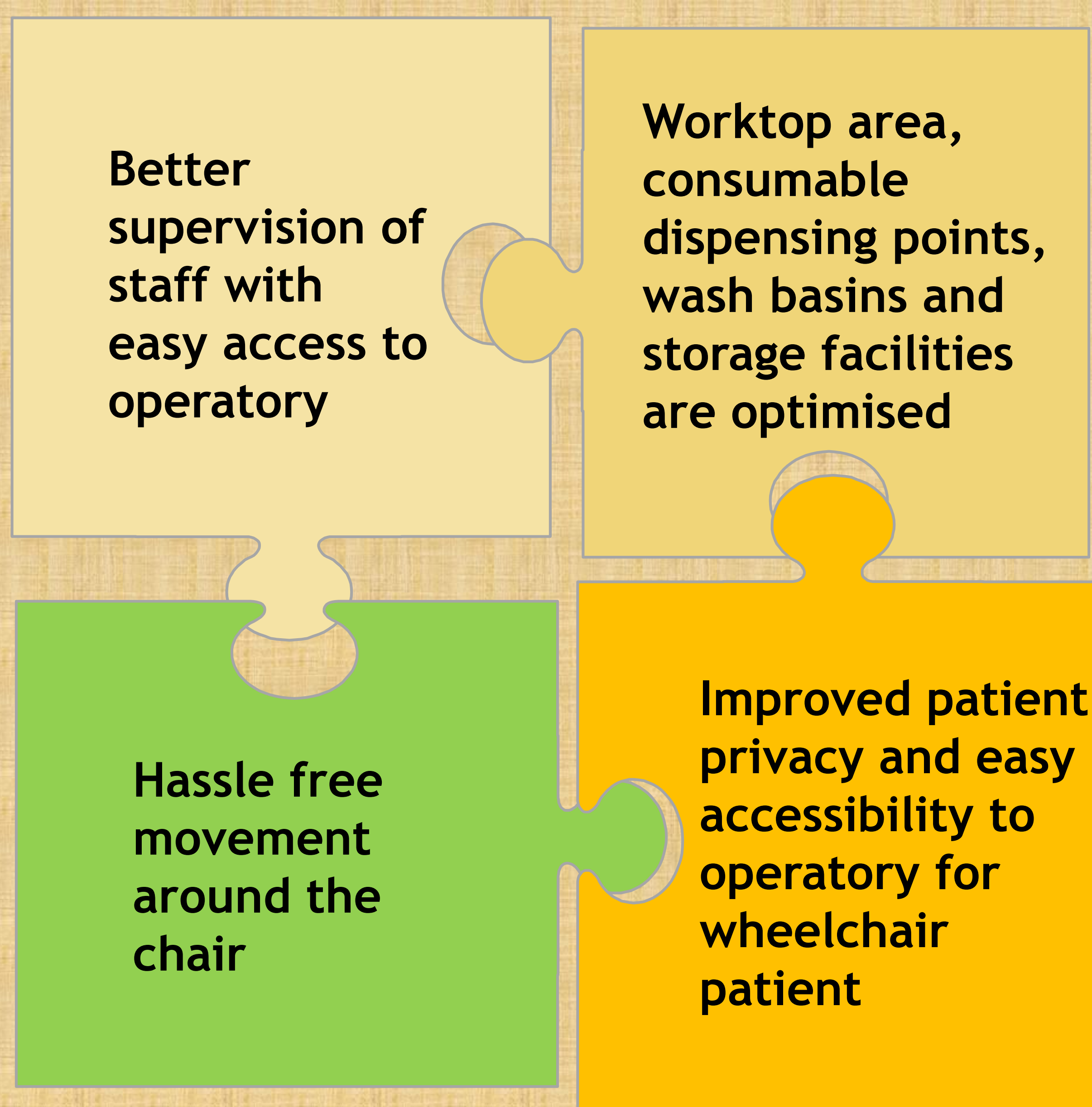
2. METHODOLOGY

a. A committee of clinicians and operations staff were formed to look into the design of opened dental operatory for the new NDCS. Surveys were conducted to get feedbacks from clinicians, dental assistants and patients. The feedbacks provided the following considerations in designing the new opened operatory.

- Reduction of wash basins
- Common consumable dispense point
- De-clustering of worktop space with sufficient storage facilities
- Easy access for wheelchair bound patient
- Prioritise patient privacy without claustrophobic environment
- Appropriate colour scheme to enhance clinician and patient experience

b. Using the considerations established for designing the new opened operatory, an experimentation clinic (Clinic 1A) was set up in July 2018. A pair of 2 opened operatory was constructed with the new design, taking into considerations of space allocated at the new NDCS.

c. Feedbacks were collected from patients, dentist and DSA working in Clinic 1A. The result is summarised in Section 3.
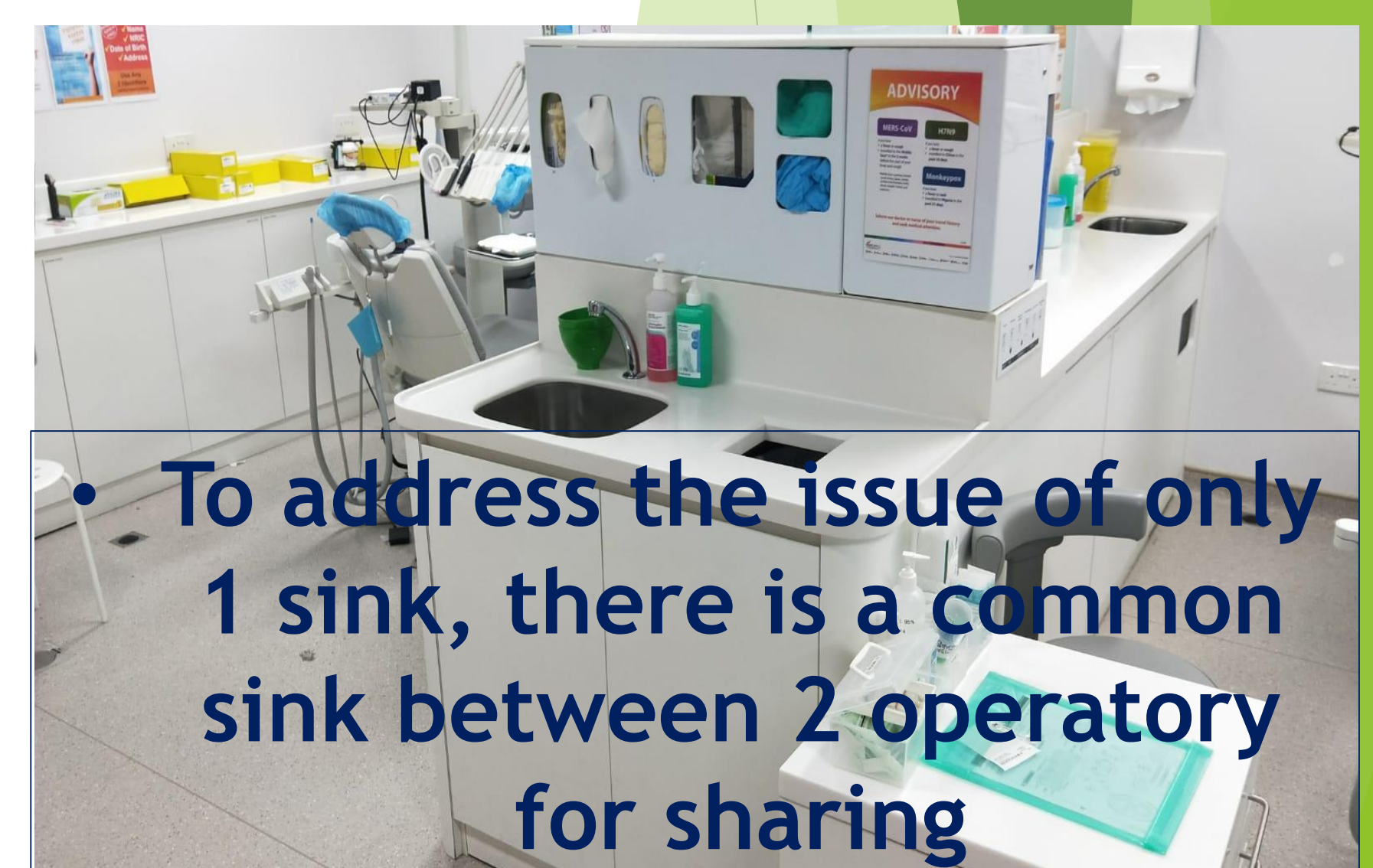
3. RESULT

- Better supervision of staff with easy access to operatory
- Worktop area, consumable dispensing points, wash basins and storage facilities are optimised
- Hassle free movement around the chair
- Improved patient privacy and easy accessibility to operatory for wheelchair patient

Before

- 2 sinks and less cabinet space

- Narrow entrance - Not Wheelchair friendly
- Orientation of chair reduce privacy

After

- 1 sink and more cabinet for storage

- To address the issue of only 1 sink, there is a common sink between 2 operatory for sharing

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- Entrance is wider - Wheelchair friendly
- Orientation of chair is inward (More privacy)

4. CONCLUSION

The experimentation of the new opened operatory allowed NDCS to gain insights of an envisioned design being implemented into a real life clinic. Feedbacks will be collected so that we can continue to make enhancement to the design before we embarked in mass implementation of these opened operatory at the new NDCS.