

“Compliance”, the new buzzword

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Introduction

The Accident & Emergency (A&E) Department continues to see a rise in patient load, and with increasing complexities to patient acuity and conditions, it is not uncommon for patients to be recalled back to the department for urgent continuity of care.

With the above, It is paramount that patients’ contact information captured in SAP is accurate, especially when they need to be recalled for abnormalities detected in radiological reports and blood test results. These patients need to be contacted swiftly so as to allow for immediate remedy for their conditions. If there are instances where patients cannot be reached, rectification work such as extra time and effort will be spent attempting to locate the patient or their Next-of-Kins (NOKs).

This may cause potential delay in administering patient care. There is also the risk of contacting the wrong patient (if contact details are not accurate) and in turn **sharing confidential medical information to the wrong recipients.**

The **updating of contact details across the Singhealth Cluster has been given greater emphasis and attention since the cyberattack incident last year. There is a pressing need now for all Singhealth institutions to be aligned in the way personal data of patients are captured accurately.** It is thus important and timely that A&E Operations has a system in place to ensure the accuracy and integrity of contact details captured in SAP.

Project Aim

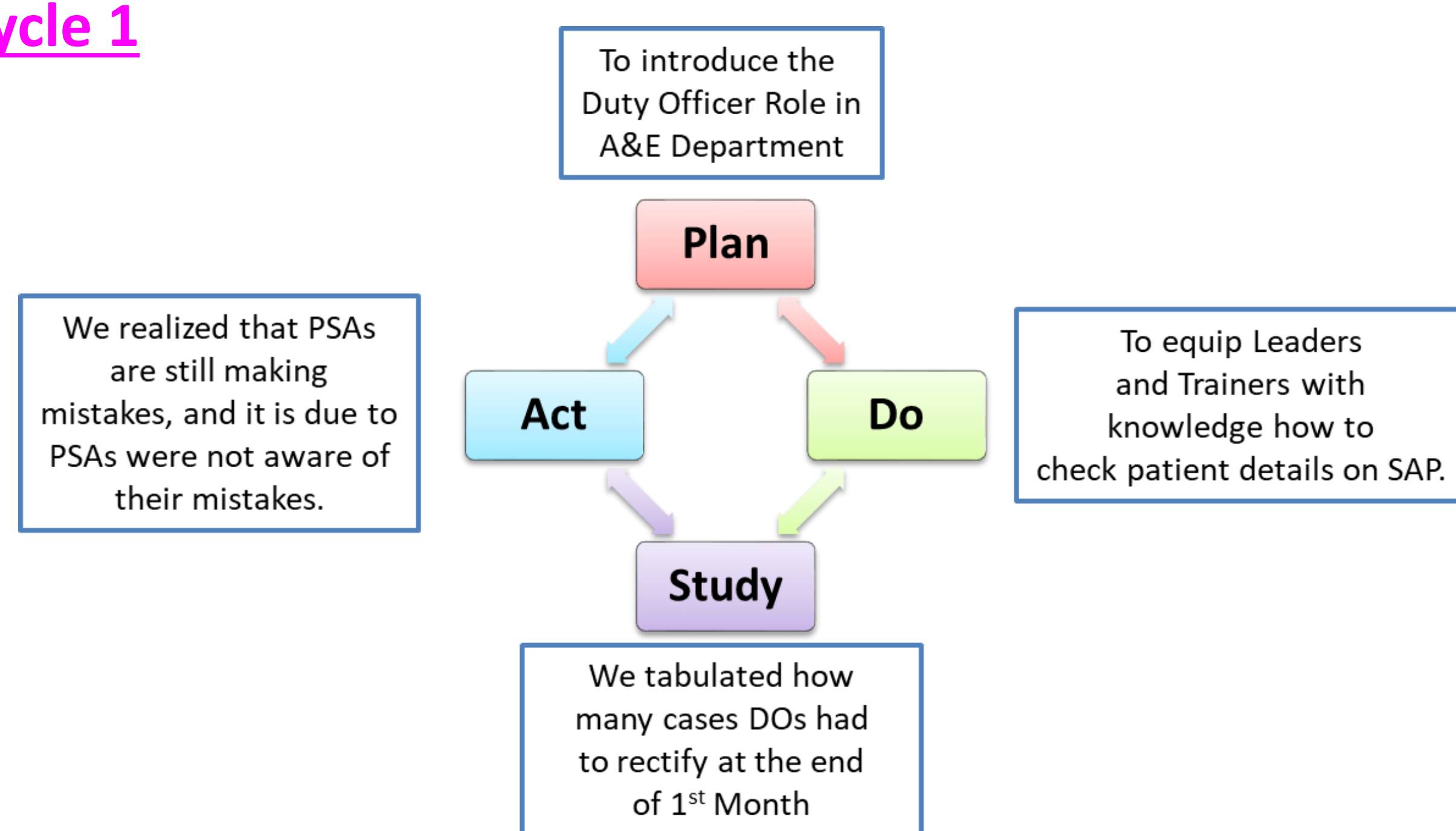
To ensure **the accuracy of contact numbers updated** in the system so **patient care will not be compromised** and also **to increase the awareness within the department of the importance of personal data handling.**

Methodology

The DO role was introduced to Team Trainers and Team Leaders on 1 August 2018.

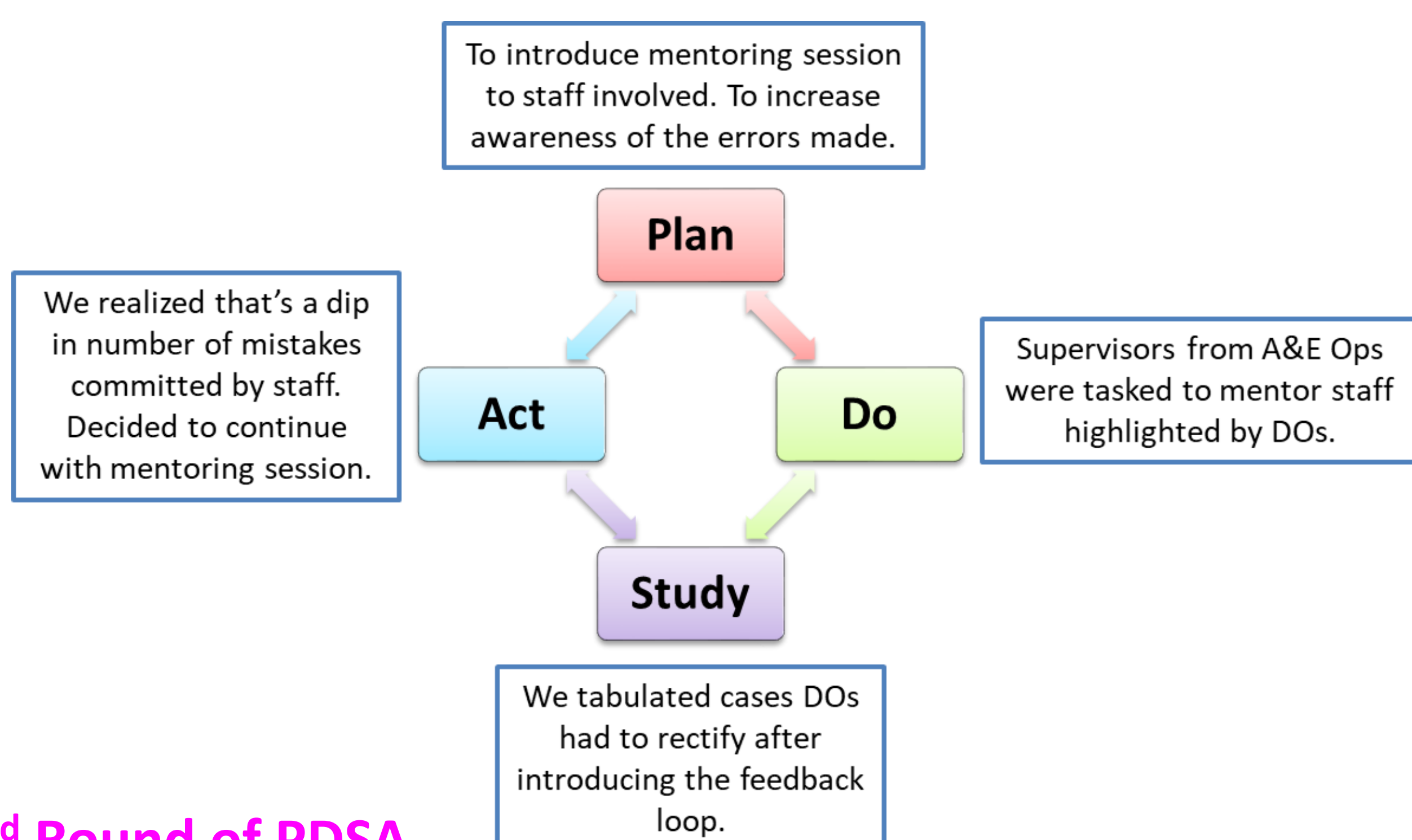
At the start, there were 8 DOs within the department and they were trained and equipped with the skills of checking patient contact details and the knowledge of protecting patient data. During the course of their shifts, the DOs will proceed to sieve out 30 Pink Charge Forms registered by the PSAs and cross check the numbers indicated on charge forms against the numbers captured in SAP to ensure that there were no errors. Mistakes spotted by the DOs will be highlighted to the staff flagged to supervisors.

PDSA Cycle 1



After 1st Round of PDSA

Over time, we found out that even though DOs are doing a good job verifying information, there was however, a lack of feedback channeled back to the ground staff, and they were not aware of their mistakes. There was thus a need to instruct supervisors to follow up with staff and to coach and mentor to them the emphasis placed in protecting patient data as well as the importance of PDPA in the healthcare landscape.



After 2nd Round of PDSA

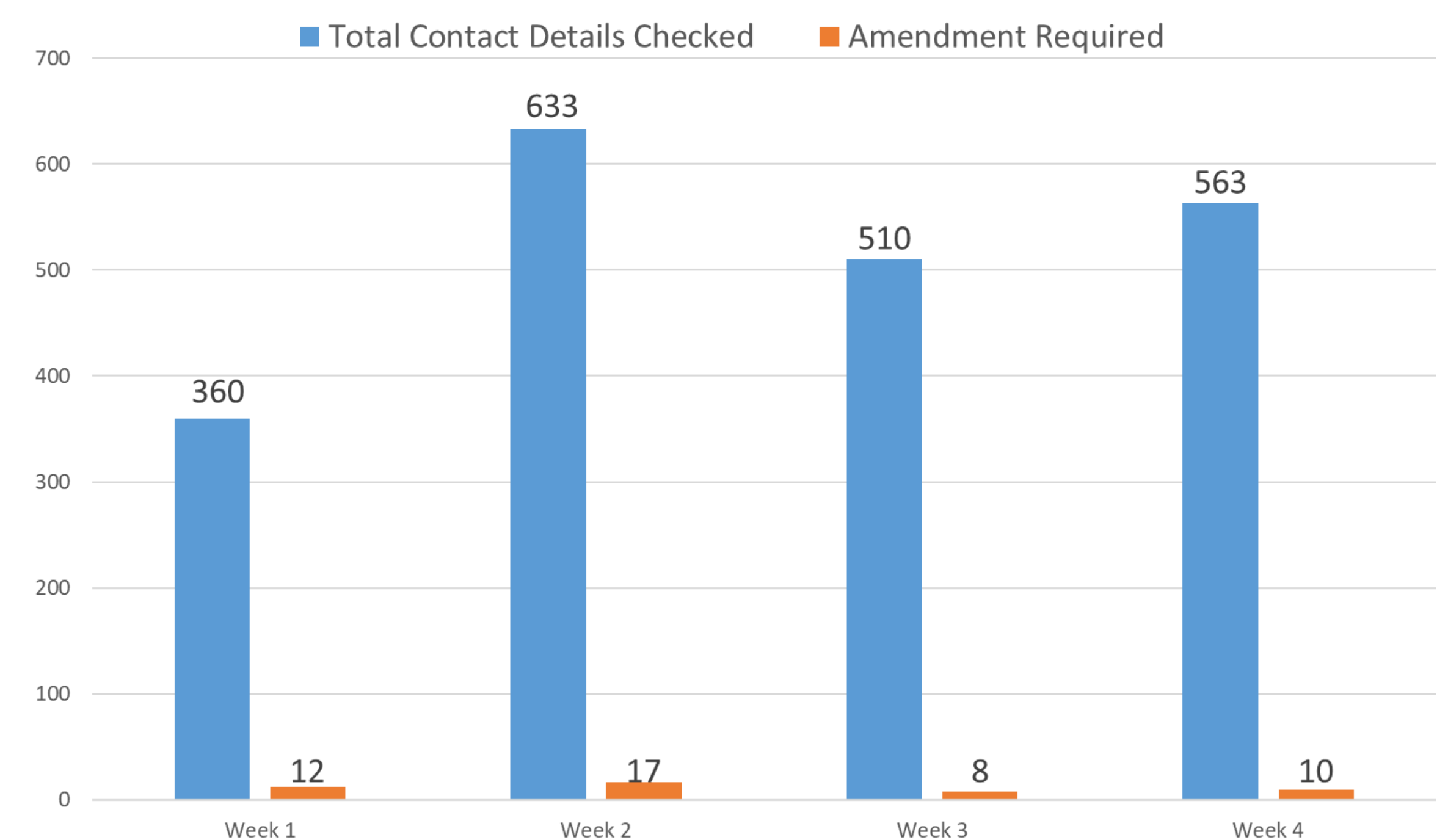
We found out that the combination of mentoring sessions together with the DO role, had a positive impact on spreading the awareness of the importance of handling patient data and we were also able to see the drop in errors made by the PSAs when it comes to contact details updating.

Result

In order to measure the impact of DO role, DOs were tasked to provide 2 data sets at the end of every shift.

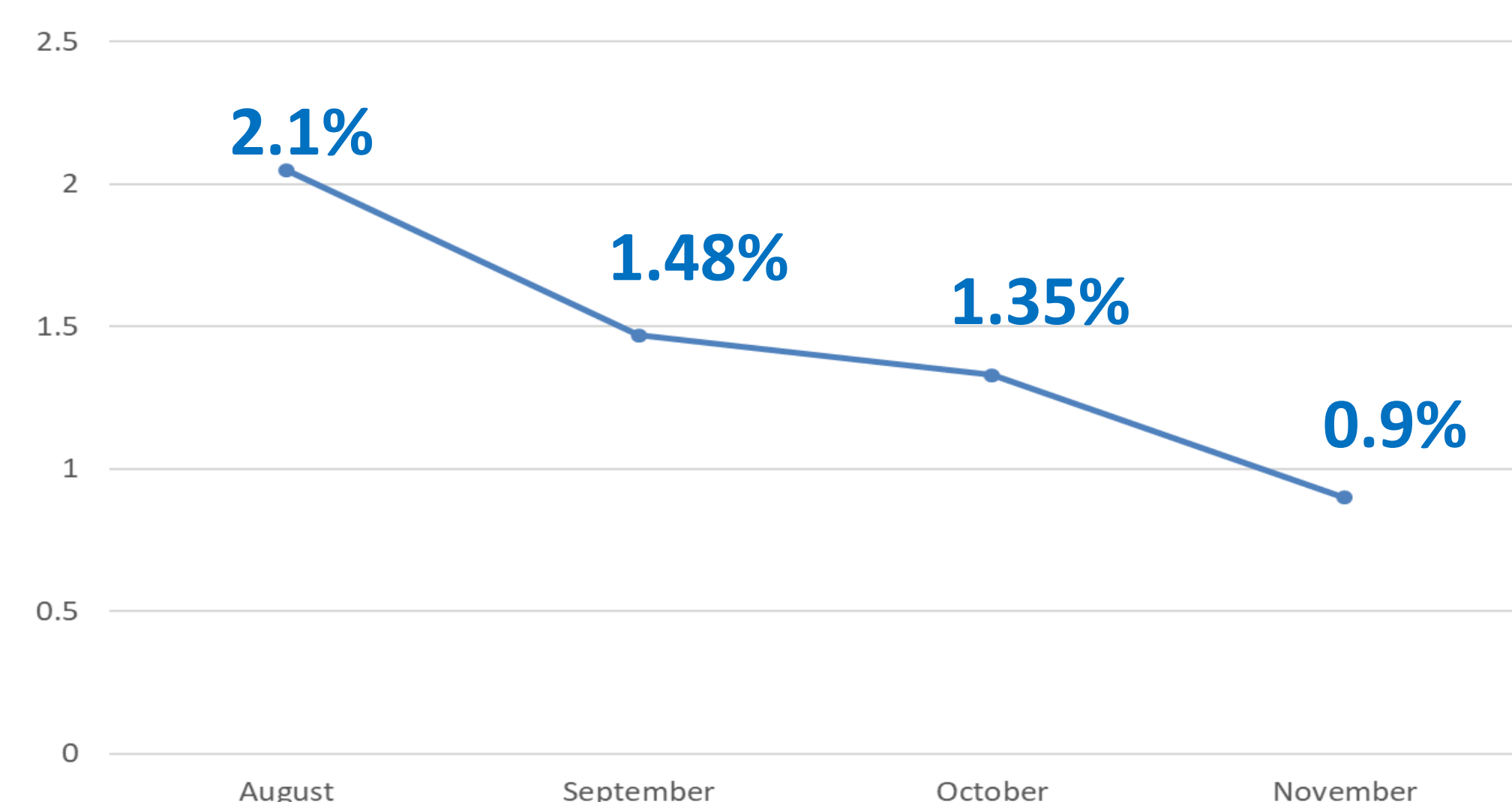
1. Number of Pink Charge Forms Checked
2. Number of Amendments Required

With the above set of data, we were able to determine the baseline number of errors made by staff, and the impact of DOs’ verification work.



The graph shows the number of Pink Charge Forms checked and number of errors that were made by PSAs during the first month of DO’s checking (Breakdown into weeks). With the baseline obtained, we realized DOs were not making much impact with the checking.

With the data submitted by DOs, we realized there are no improvement to the situation as feedback were not given to staff involved. So feedback and mentoring sessions had to be introduced to close the loop, to emphasize the importance of contact data updating, and to coach PSAs to learn from their mistakes.



*Since the introduction of DOs together with mentoring session, the contact errors have dropped significantly to a **GLARING 53%!***

Impact of DOs

Since the introduction of DOs, the A&E Ops Department is able to reduce error rates of contact number updating, which in turn translates to lower Personal Data breaches and time savings from fewer errors.

The DO also serves as a reminder within the department of the importance of Personal Data handling, which in turn helps to cultivate the culture of proper personal data handling.

Conclusion

Challenges Faced

It was challenging to introduce a new role within the department, and it was more challenging to cultivate a cultural shift towards personal data handling by ground staff.

At the start of the project, the team was not sure of it’s impact or how it will help to increase the awareness of the importance of personal data handling, hence, there was a lot of discussion to identify the focus of the project, and what kind of data were needed to be collected for impactful results.

Impact Made

With the data collected, the DO role has indeed contributed in reducing the contact number error rates within the department. Members in the department are also more aware of the importance of proper patient data handling.

Moving forward

The department hopes to sustain the DO project and also find a new focus area which DOs can concentrate on, such as checking of documents submitted to other departments or other patients’ data in SAP.