ONE DIRECTION - Improving Quality through Standardization
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Introduction

Current Situation

In 2016, training unit was set up in A&E Operations where a department trainer was appointed whose role was to oversee and mentor 2 team trainers from each team (a total of 6 teams). The role of the team trainer was to train new hires using OJT method and to train existing PSAs to progress to learn a new function in A&E whenever they are competent in current function. There are a total of 4 functions (Registration, Admission Registration and Financial Counseling, Bed Booking and Appointment Scheduling) that a PSA has to learn and master to be able to perform her duties effectively. The team trainer also needs to cascade new workflows and protocols and ensure that the team members are compliant. Though there was a structure in place, the way training was conducted was inconsistent and trainer used various steps to train 1 workflow with the trainees thus resulting in inconsistencies in the way the PSAs carry out their duties at the counters. With this, frequent mistakes were made by the PSAs as they were unsure of what to do and are not aware of the downstream impact when they fail to do certain steps.

Challenges Faced by Staff

- Inconsistent training methods (different trainers have different way or method in training).
- Inconsistency in daily work processes including basic service language.

Objective of Project

- To improve and standardize the training method across all teams.
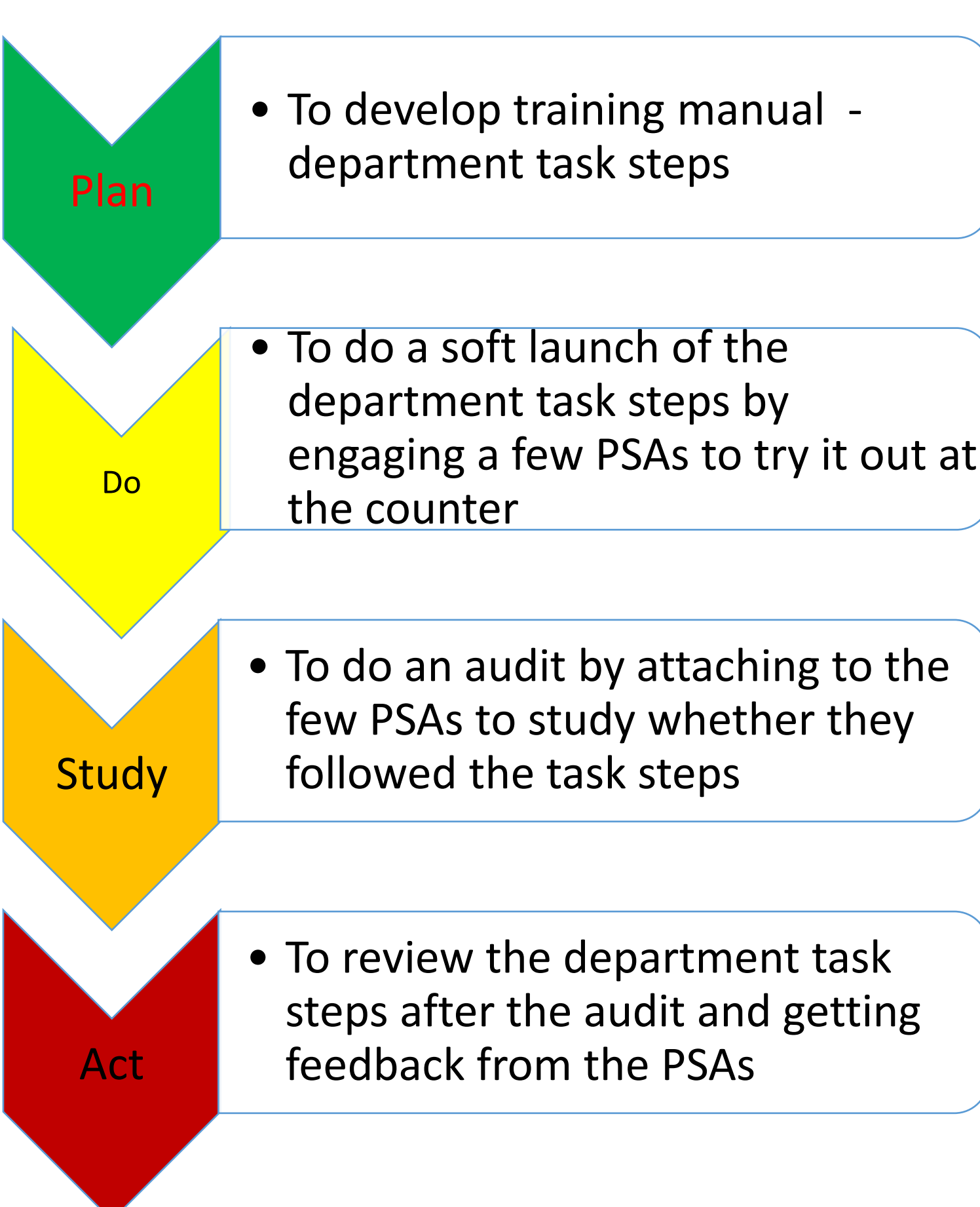- To improve the standards and quality of work including basic service language.

Methodology

Through brainstorming and discussion with various level of staff at different platforms, we realized the need to develop a standard training manual which includes the task steps for each specific process so that the PSAs can perform their duties confidently and consistently.
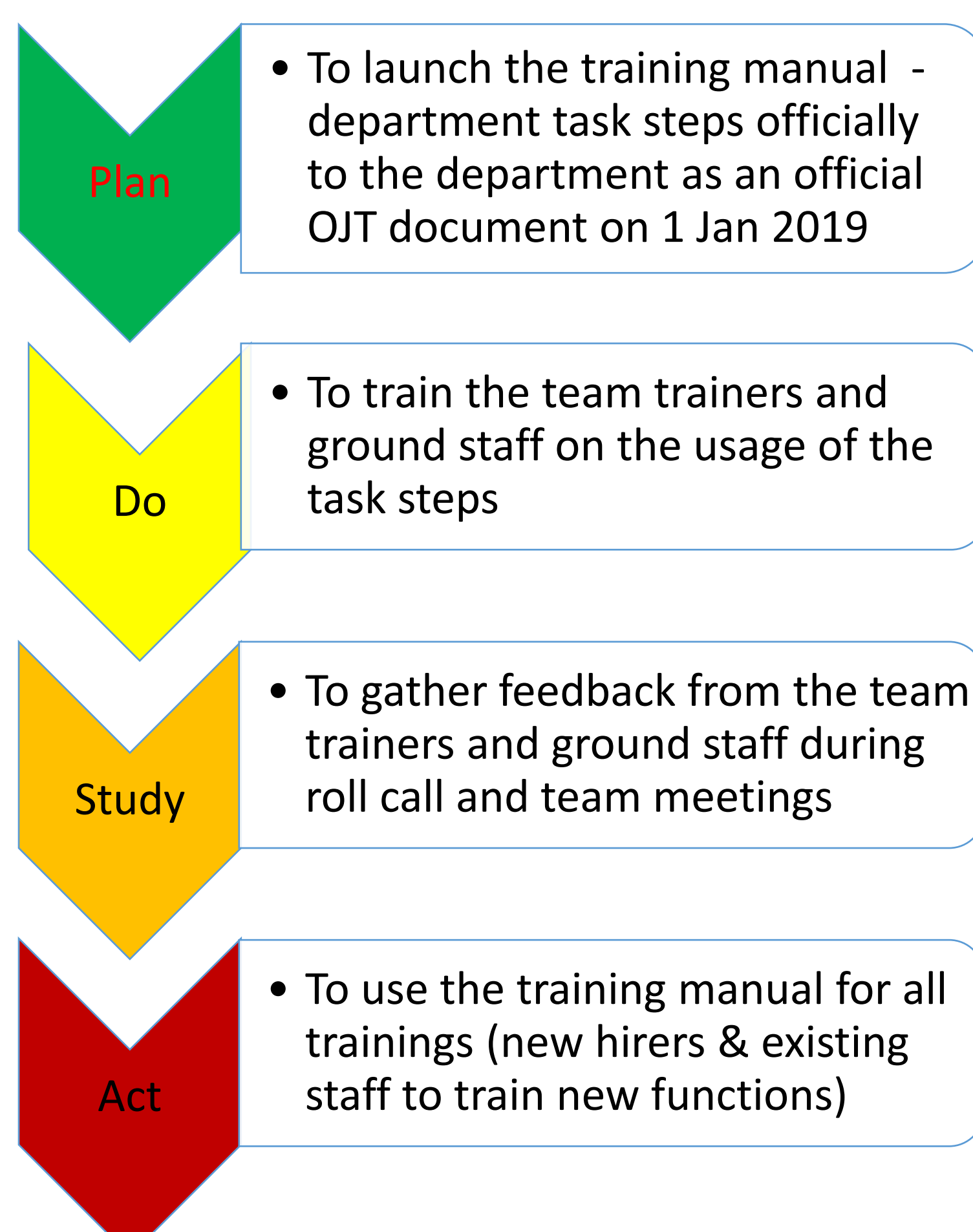
Upon attainment of her Workplace Trainer Programme (WTP) certification issued by WSQ, the department trainer started to develop the training manual (Task Steps) to equip the team trainers with 1 set of standardized resource to utilize and perform training competently. The training manual (department task steps) consists of a step-by-step guide on how to perform a certain job function specifically which includes 3 components:-

1. Task steps (sequence of steps including basic service language)
2. Key points (important pointers to take note when performing the step)
3. Non-Compliance (implication when the particular step is omitted)

PDSA Cycle 1

Plan	• To develop training manual - department task steps
Do	• To do a soft launch of the department task steps by engaging a few PSAs to try it out at the counter
Study	• To do an audit by attaching to the few PSAs to study whether they followed the task steps
Act	• To review the department task steps after the audit and getting feedback from the PSAs

After PDSA Cycle 1

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Plan	• To launch the training manual - department task steps officially to the department as an official OJT document on 1 Jan 2019
Do	• To train the team trainers and ground staff on the usage of the task steps
Study	• To gather feedback from the team trainers and ground staff during roll call and team meetings
Act	• To use the training manual for all trainings (new hirers & existing staff to train new functions)

Results

✓ Consistency seen in training conducted by team trainer as all new hires and existing staff are trained in one direction.

✓ Consistency seen in daily work performed by the PSAs at the counter as there is 1 standardized training manual (task steps) for the PSAs to refer to seek clarification when unsure.

✓ Staff are more confident at the counters as they know that they are on the right track.

✓ Lesser time spent on rectification by the supervisors on errors made by staff so they can be more productive by using this time saved to perform other supervisory duties.

An example of the improvement was the task step to perform registration of patients under police custody. The number of mistakes made by the registration PSAs was reduced thus causing the number of billing errors to be reduced too. With this, the supervisors spent lesser time to liaise with Business Office to rectify the errors.
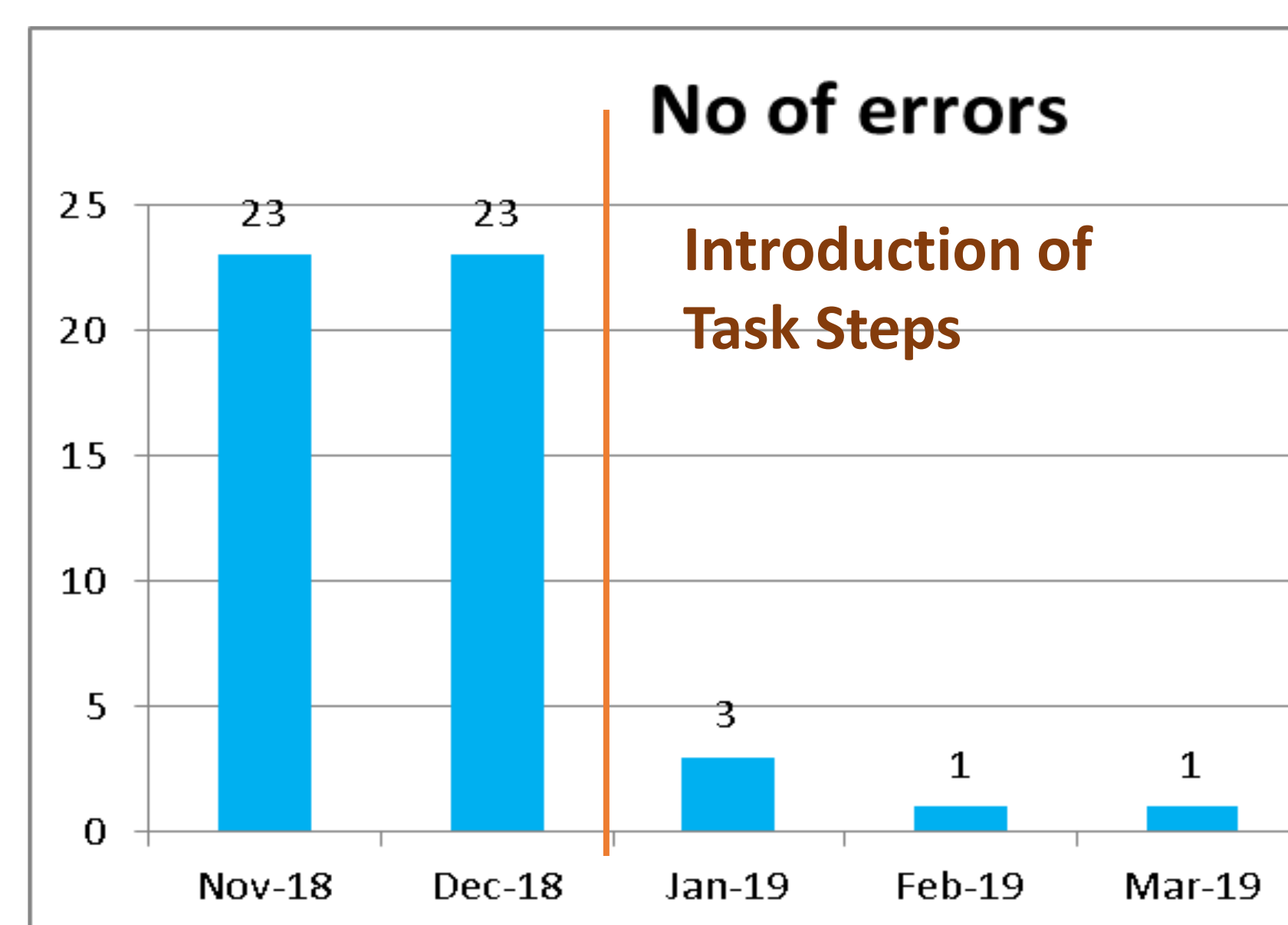
No of errors

With the introduction of task steps, the number of errors reduced sharply from 23 per month to only 1 per month within the second month of implementation.

Time spent rectifying the cases
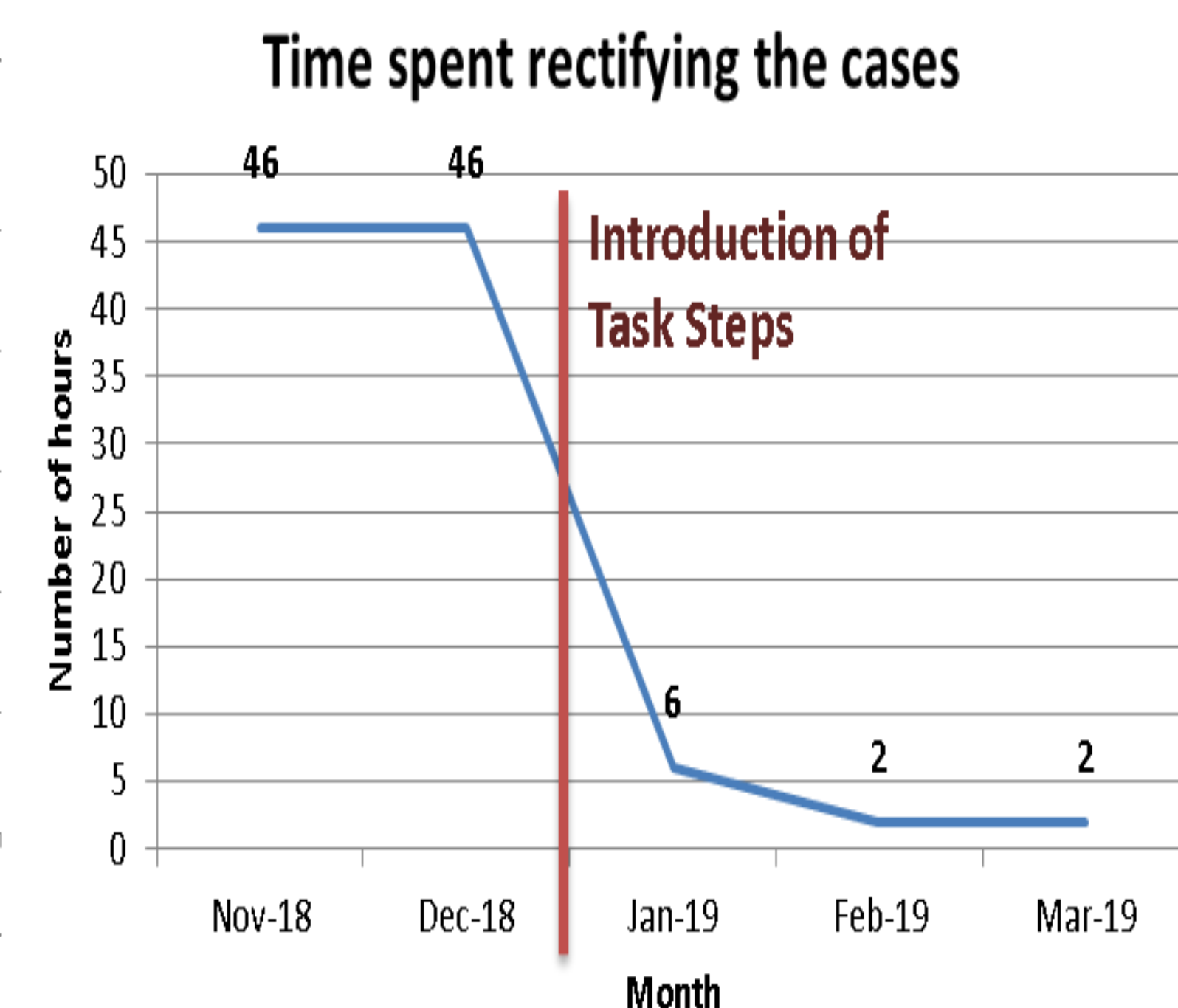
Instead of spending 46 hours per month trying to rectify the mistakes made by the PSAs, Supervisors only spent 2 hours per month within the second month of implementation.

Conclusion

Challenges

It was very tedious and time consuming to develop the training manual (standardized department task steps) as it has to be very specific for each process. As there are 4 main functions in the department, the whole development took about 4 months, on top of running the daily operations of the department.

During the soft launch period, the PSAs were not very receptive initially as they felt very "robotic" when performing the task steps. On top of that, they were very experienced PSAs thus it was not easy to get their buy-in so lot of time was spent getting feedback to make the task steps less "robotic" and for the experienced PSAs to see the value in implementing the task steps.

Impact

With the new implementation of the training manual (standardized department task steps), it has helped to improve both the standards and the quality of the work produced by the PSAs. This in turn increases the productivity of the department since lesser mistakes are made hence lesser time spent to rectify the issues downstream.

Moving forward

The training manual now serves as the official department's OJT document and the department trainer will conduct quarterly review of the documents to ensure information is always up to date. On top of the review, there will be regular audits to ensure that the PSAs are following the department task steps.

With this training manual, we hope the department workflows and processes will be carried out consistently by the PSAs so that we are moving in ONE DIRECTION.