



To eliminate the incidence of patients presenting at SGH DEM waiting more than 20 minutes for triage within 6 months

Shashi S/O Chandra Segaram ,Singapore General Hospital
Lim Kai Xuan Kenneth, Singapore General Hospital
Muhammad Khairul Anwar Bin Hamid, Singapore General Hospital

Introduction

The Department of Emergency Medicine of Singapore General Hospital sees an average of 370 patients daily. Out of these 370 patients, 70% of the patients are triaged in the main triage area. Audit showed that 31% of the patients waited ≥ 20 minutes for triage during the peak period from 1000hrs to 1900hrs. Due to manpower constraints and limited physical triage cubicles, patients experienced long wait times to be triaged.

Aim

The team aims to reduce patients waiting to be triaged to less than 20 minutes in SGH DEM.

Methodology

The problems were traced back to its root causes by using an Ishikawa diagram.

The Team used a Pareto diagram after voting for the most important root cause and started to work on it.

Root causes

Triage nurses keying in triage notes retrospectively

Influx of patients during peak periods

Unmanned triage rooms during staff break timings

Insufficient supervision to ensure smooth running and efficient decongesting of area

Results

Sick looking patients will be sent to critical care area for triage. This significantly reduced the time for them being triaged and also reducing the implications that may arise.

Workflow in the Fever area was redesigned, which allowed DEM to be more efficient by consolidating the current manpower to the Triage area.

Staggered work timing (1000hrs-1900hrs) was implemented to ease workload during peak timing.

Triage KPI results are shared during Monthly Departmental meeting to motivate the nurses to become more efficient.

Conclusion

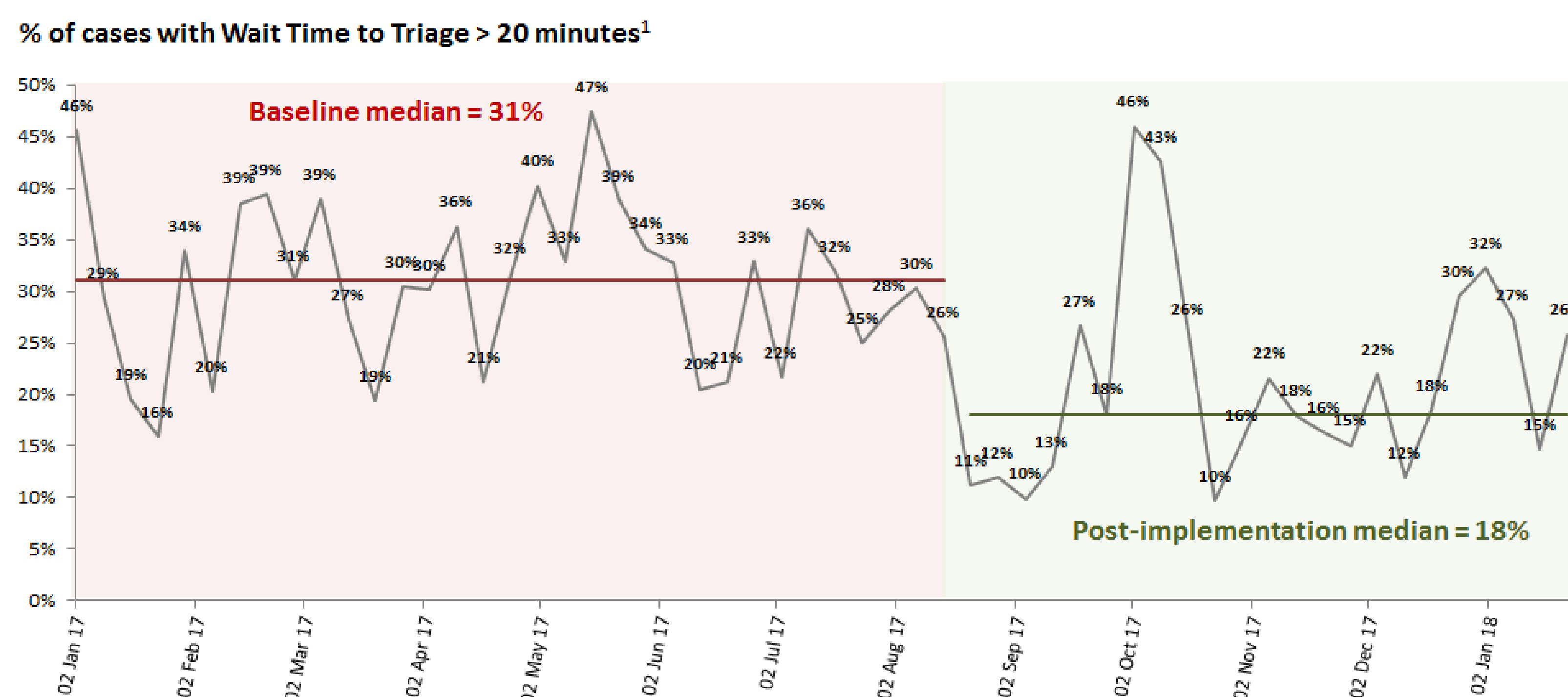


Chart 1: Percentage of patients waiting ≥ 20 mins for triage from Jan 2017 - J an 2018

The team managed to bring down the median wait time and 31% of patient who wait ≥ 20 minutes for triage was brought down to 18 %. The team will continue to work on other root causes to further reduce triage wait time.