# Minimise the risk of disruption to ENT Centre Operations due to clinical system downtime

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## BACKGROUND

Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT) Centre has an average of 100 patients visiting the clinic daily. Currently, the clinicians in Singapore General Hospital use Sunrise Clinical Manager (SCM) to document the patient's medical condition, view the test records, order investigations and medication for a typical outpatient visit. Hence, it is essential for the clinic team to be prepared for any incidents that may cause disruption to the operations.

## OBJECTIVES

✓ To prepare the clinic team for any disruption to Sunrise Clinical Manager (SCM)

✓ To ensure that there is continuity of care to the patients listed for the appointment day

✓ To ensure no compromise in patient's experience

## METHOD

### PLAN

- Clinic supervisor shared the importance of ensuring the continuity of care and the objective of this initiative at the weekly roll calls in December 2018.
- Clinic team agreed and supported this improvement process.

- **Regular communication sessions** were held to ensure staff is familiar with this downtime process.
- A sample of each document will be placed in the **shared file** for accessibility and reference.
- A downtime exercise was performed in the clinic in January 2019 to ensure the readiness and smooth-running of the session.

### DO

- Each staff was assigned to list down the essential items or documents that will be required.
- A checklist of documents was established to provide a guide on the types of forms to be used during a downtime.
- A file was identified to store all the documents required in each consultation room.

- Engage clinic team and clinicians to gather feedback on the downtime file.
- **Audits** were also conducted by the respective clinic-in-charge to ensure that the downtime files are being updated at all times.

### ACT

### STUDY

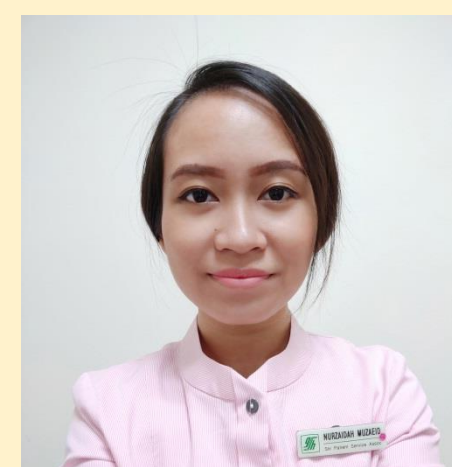## BENEFITS OF THIS INITIATIVE

*In case of any SCM downtime...*

➤ **Improves the productivity** of the room assistants as they do not need to rush to the treatment room for the collection of downtime forms, which further delay the consultation sessions.

> The downtime file helps to minimise disruptions to the clinic sessions when SCM is down. I prefer the downtime file.
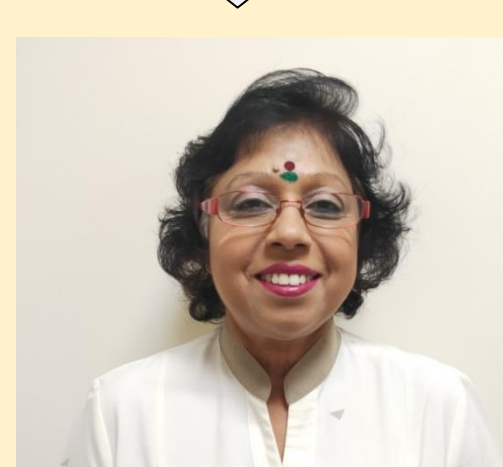
> No more rushing to the treatment room! The forms are just within our reach, makes my work easier!

> I am more confident that the sessions will not be delayed during SCM downtime. Happy doctor, happy staff, happy patients!

**Lu Ling**
*Senior Staff Nurse*

**Nurzaidah**
*Senior Patient Service Associate*

**Bushba**
*Health Care Attendant*

Fig 1. Positive remarks from some of the clinic staff regarding the downtime file

➤ **No disruption to the clinic operations** due to clinical system downtime as the file has all the essential forms and documents required for the clinicians to carry on the consultation process.

Before

After

Fig 2. Room assistants queuing in Treatment room to collect downtime forms

Fig 3. Forms are now compiled in a file in each consultation room

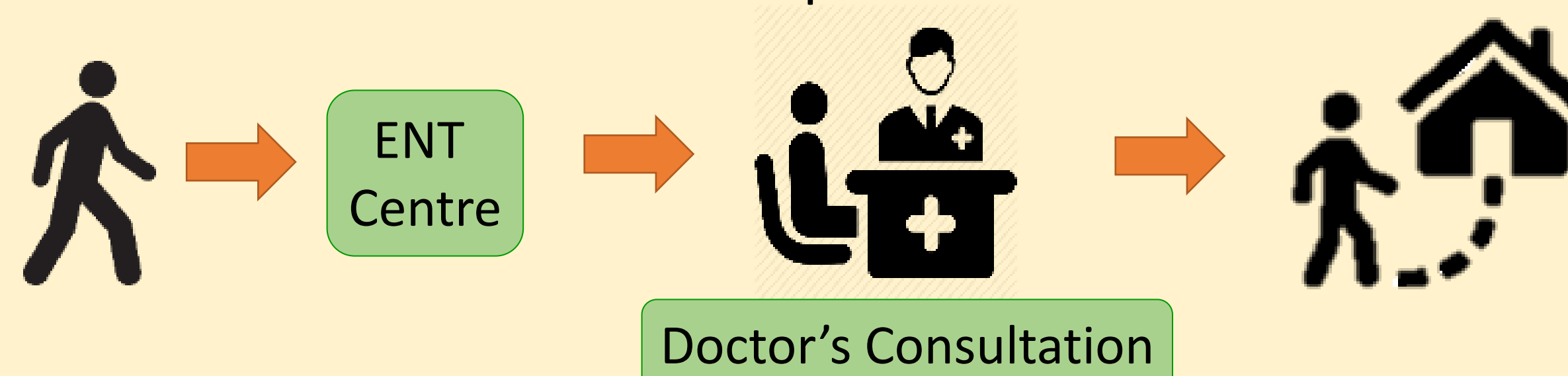➤ **No compromise to patient's experience** as the process is seamless and with no interruptions.

ENT Centre → Doctor's Consultation

Fig 4. No disruption to patient's journey in ENT Centre even during SCM downtime

## CONCLUSION

It is important for all operations to have proper planning and always be prepared for any possible adverse situations. As the saying goes, "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail". Hence, to achieve operational efficiency in a clinic setting, we have to continuously engage the ground staff for feedback and inputs to sustain a well-planned operations. With the relevant inputs from all stakeholders, ideas and new processes for improvement will be established to maintain a high level of standards and achieve organizational goals.