

# Ramp.. Ramp Up NCS Service



**Singapore Healthcare Management 2021**

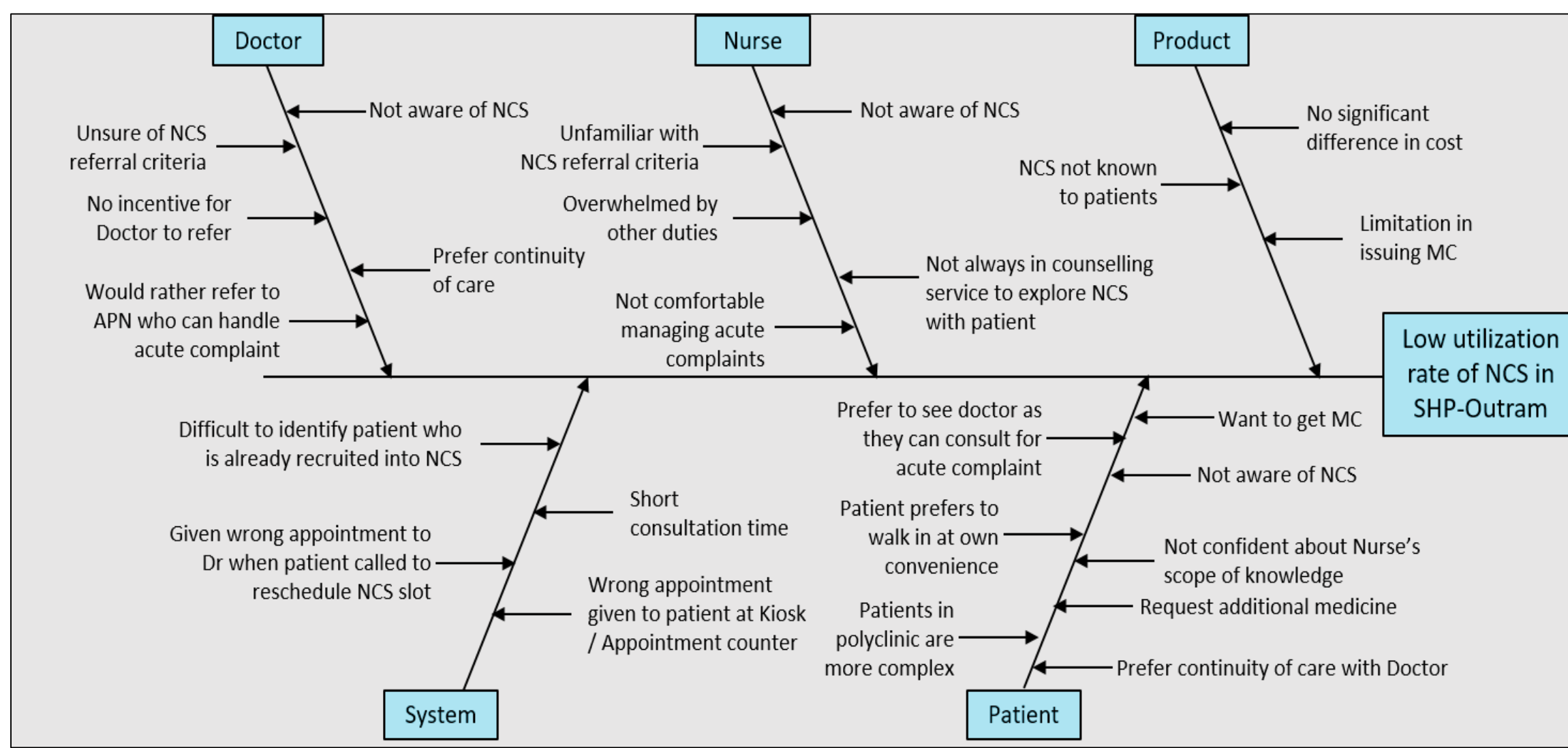


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## INTRODUCTION

- Nurse Clinician Service (NCS) Well-Controlled (WC), a nurse-based service supporting stable chronic disease patients started at SHP-Outram from 2007.
- NCS utilization rate has been less than 15% at SHP-Outram for years, and dipped further in the circuit breaker amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Several QI projects to increase NCS utilization, with focused attention on prompts directed at doctors, were trialled and tested with limited sustained effectiveness over the years across various SHP clinics.
- The intent of the NCS is to maintain continuity of care of patients with well-controlled chronic conditions through a team-based approach to patient care.

- The team reviewed prior interventions for identified causes of low NCS utilization, which had short-lived impact:



## MISSION STATEMENT

- To increase and sustain NCS utilization rate for patients with stable active chronic diseases followed up at Outram Polyclinic to at least 25% (SHP quality assurance target) over 6 months
- To collaborate with doctors to manage well-controlled patients with right-siting of care

## METHODOLOGY

- Work on alternative approach to right-site care, focusing on:



### Family Physicians (FPs):

- Reviews and sieves out eligible stable chronic patients from the clinic's weekly forward appointment list based on availability of corresponding NCS appointment slots
- Indicates the outstanding tasks for NCS nurse to follow up on, clearly in clinical documentation



### Administrative Team:

- Eligible patients are then transplanted into time-matched appointment slots in the NCS clinic



### Nurse Clinician Service (NCS):

- Patient actualizes appointment on date of visit directly to NCS room for consultation, with support from adjacent room doctor where needed

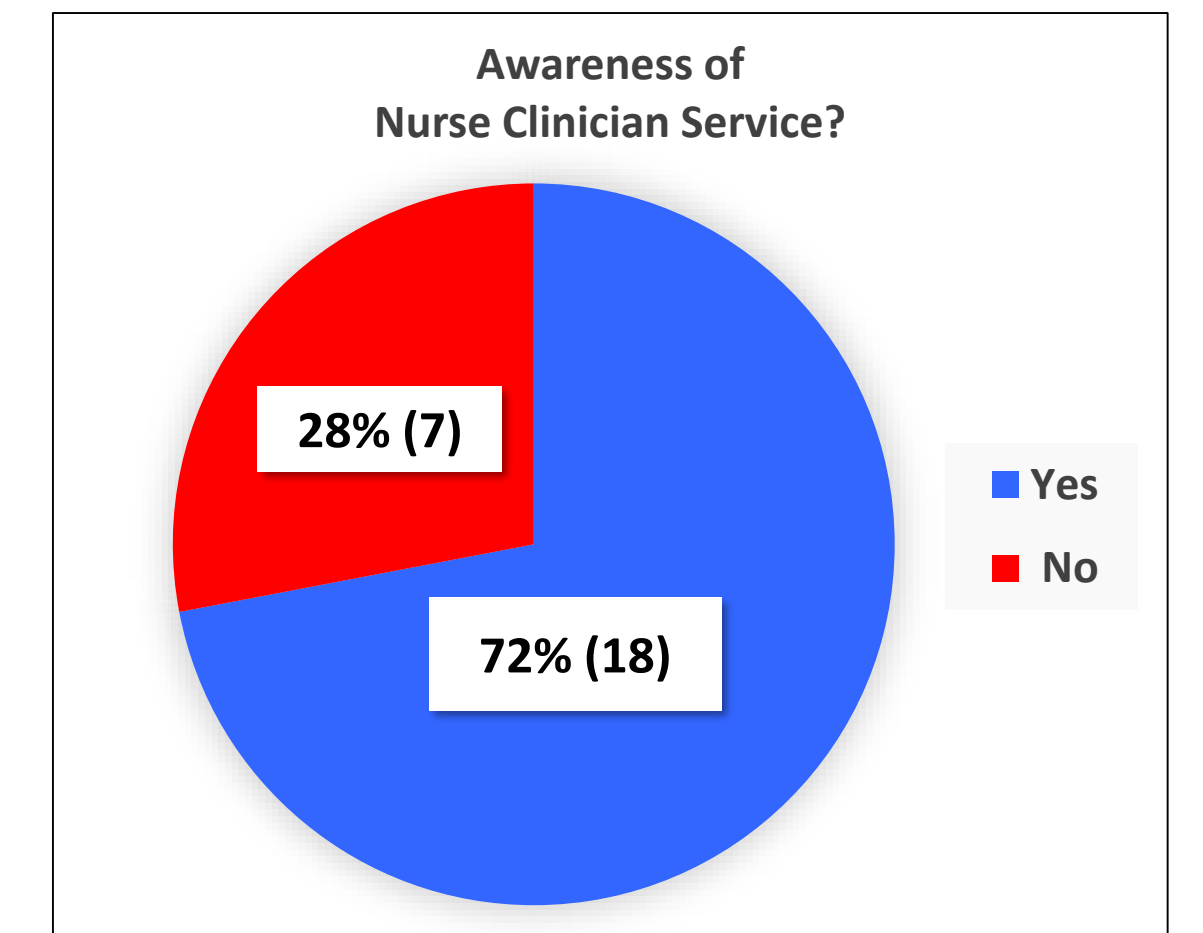
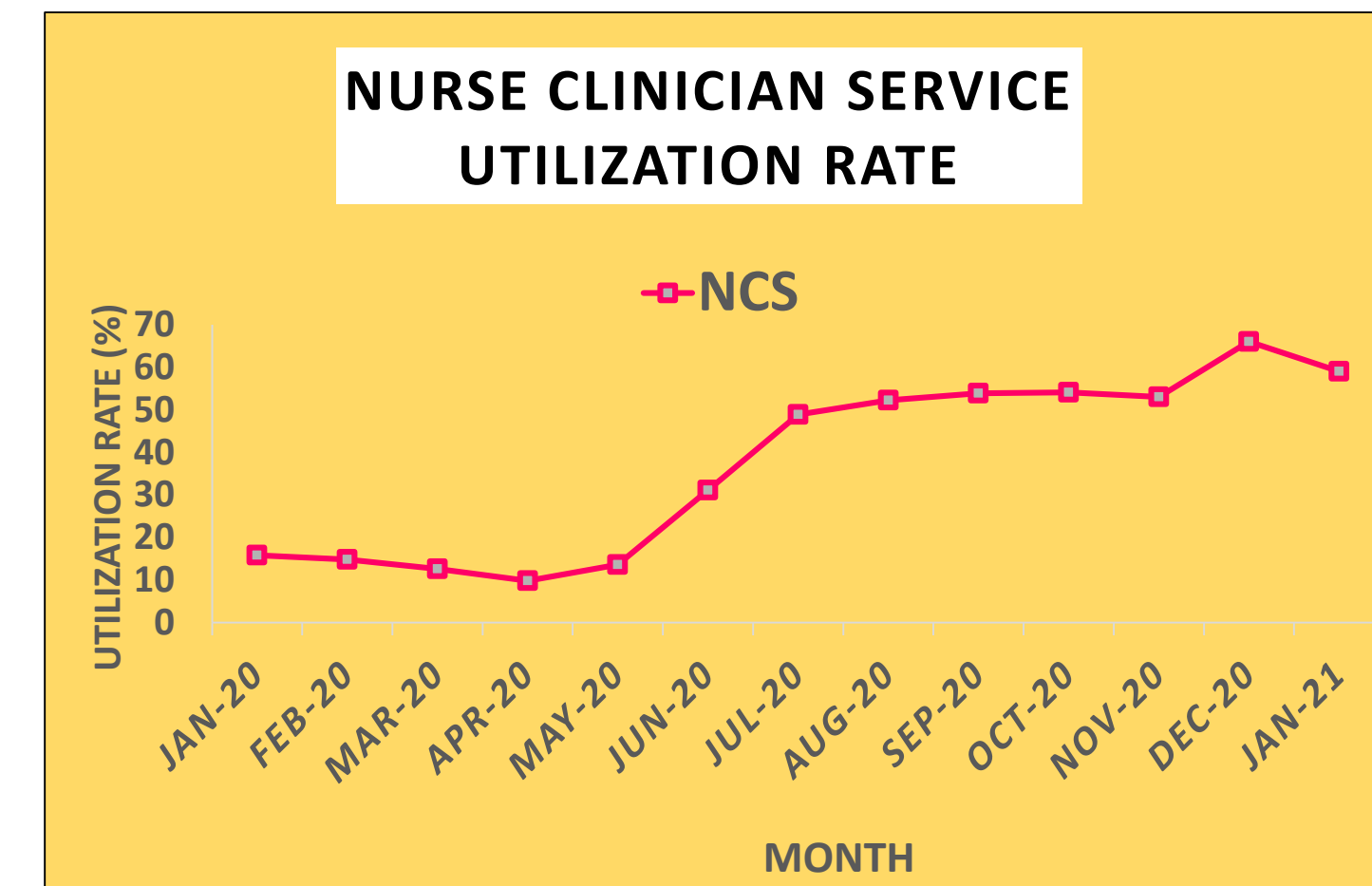
### NCS Service

- NCS nurse provides clinic consultation for patients with well-controlled conditions
- NCS nurse follows up with outstanding tasks indicated on electronic medical records by FP
- NCS nurse assesses status of patient's condition(s)
- NCS nurse answers patient and/or caregiver enquiries pertaining to chronic disease management
- NCS nurse assesses patient's compliance to medications and lifestyle modifications
- Refers to FP to provide consultation to address concerns should patient have additional symptoms for evaluation
- Nurse-doctor joint consultation sessions facilitated by FP
- Prescriptions are issued by FP

## RESULTS

### NCS Utilization Rate:

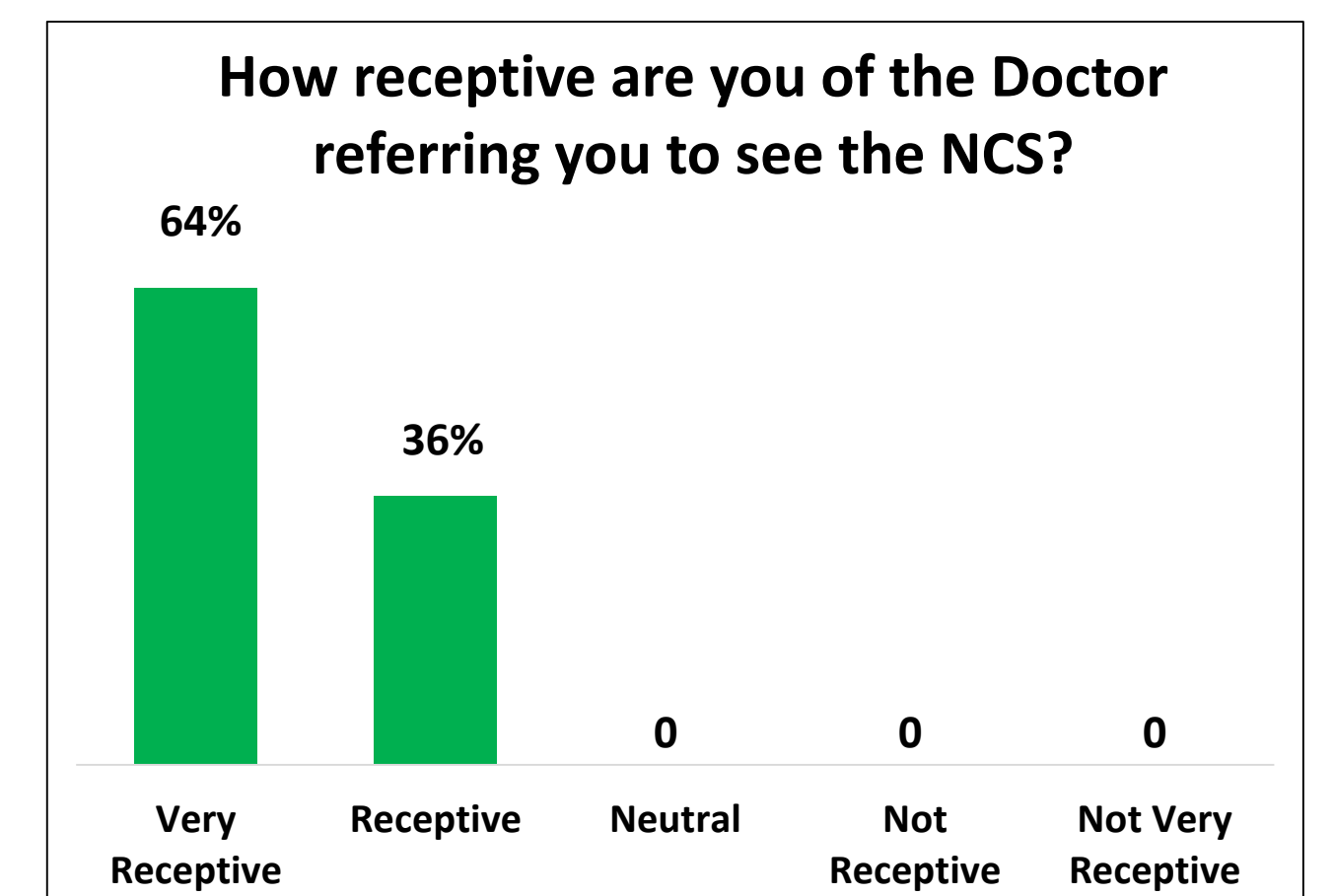
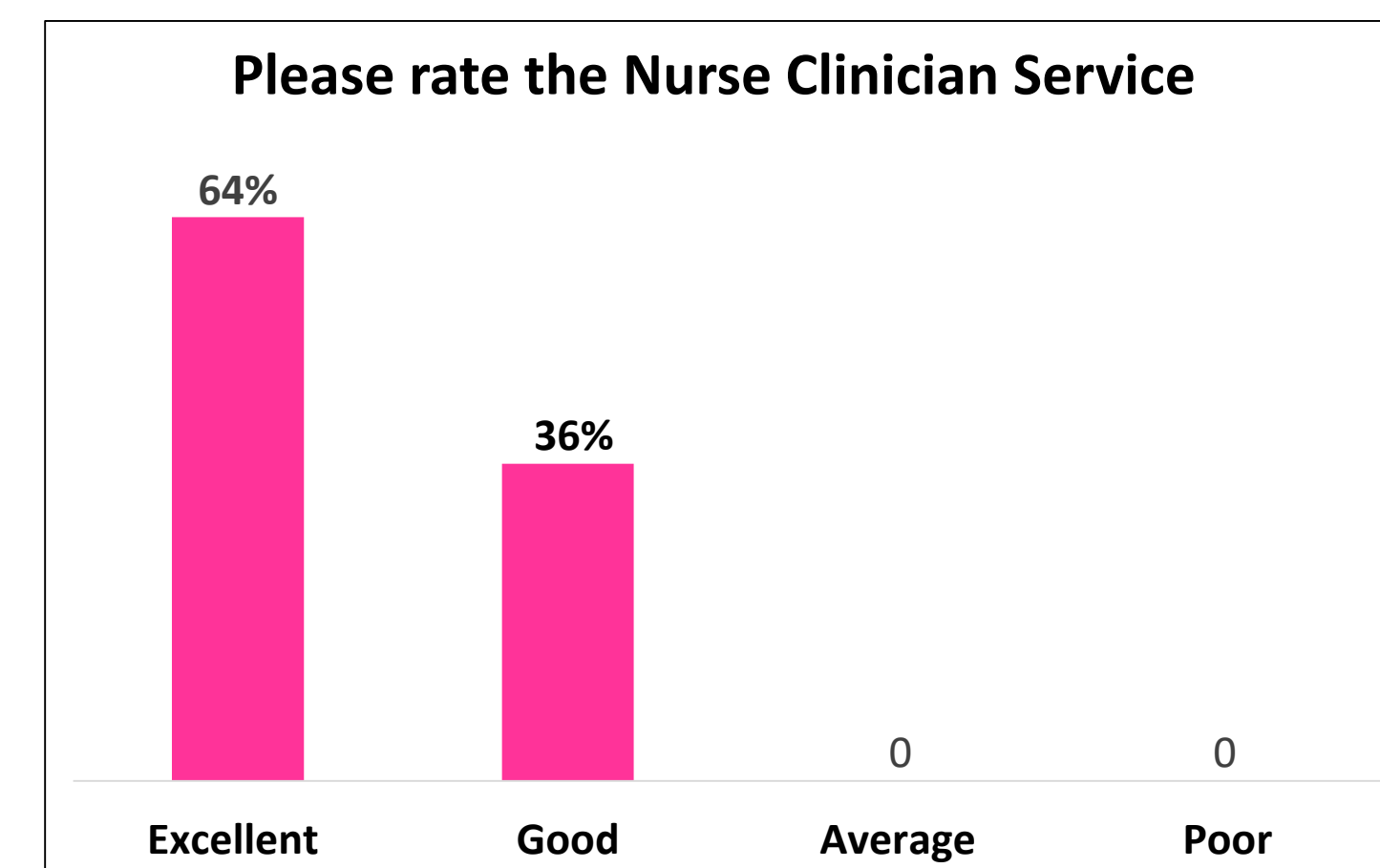
Since June 2020, Outram Polyclinic had achieved a sustained NCS utilization rate of at least 40% per month.



### Patients' Feedback on NCS Care

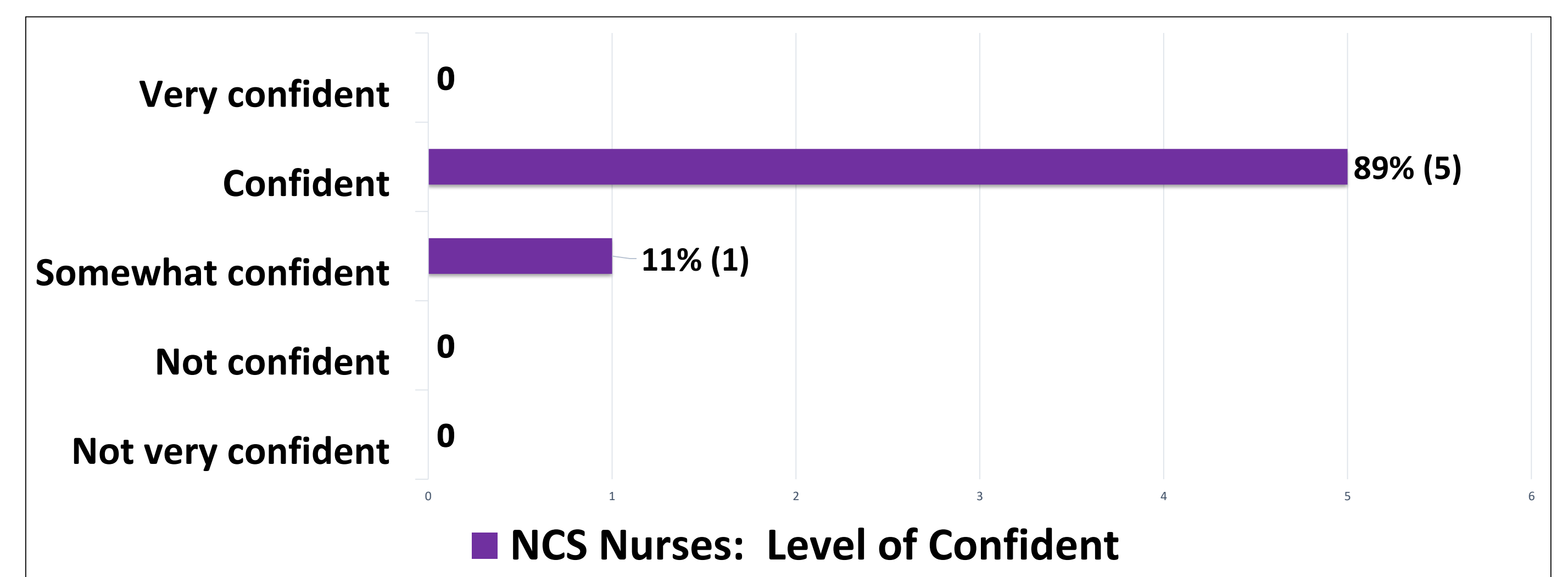
25 patients who attended the NCS clinic were surveyed in September 2020:

- 72% were aware of the NCS service in the polyclinic
- 64% rated 'Excellent' for the NCS service
- 64% were very receptive of care provision by the NCS



### Providers' Feedback on New Model of Right-siting Care

Survey conducted among NCS nurses to rate their level of confidence in care provision for the patients in the new model with adjacent physician support



- Expressed desire to have more formal and informal inter-professional learning sessions to increase knowledge and confidence for collaborative care.
- More time allocation for the NCS clinic to allow for a smoother process of joint-consultation with the FP and providing care for patients with well-controlled chronic diseases.
- To improve waiting time for prescription from the doctor's room to be issued to the patient.
- Additional FPs to support Nurse-Doctor joint consultation and obtaining prescription for patients.

## CONCLUSION

- This platform of care right-siting well-controlled patients into the NCS clinic achieved a sustained  $\geq 40\%$  NCS utilization rate through the past 9 months.
- Mutual support from the doctors provided to the nurses was critical in providing a conducive environment for care delivery to the patient, and provided the patients with a positive experience in this care model.
- Inter-professional communication and collaboration is essential to support the NCS.

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