



Singapore Healthcare Management 2021

Establishing an Effective Data Protection Compliance Programme in Singapore General Hospital

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A. BACKGROUND

In healthcare, vast amounts of patient information is collected to serve the needs of their medical care. With the increase use of data comes growing concerns on how their personal data is used, and inevitably, **data security risks threatening the organisation from data breaches.**

To mitigate these risks, SGH Accreditation & Licensing / Personal Data Protection Office established a **Data Protection Compliance Programme** in the hospital, which include the following components:

1. Assessment & Audits
2. Engagement Strategies
3. Staff Feedback
4. Establish Working Network



B. OBJECTIVES

Objectives of the Data Protection Compliance Programme are:

- To ensure processes are in compliance with Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA)
- To ensure staff knowledge of PDPA and organisational data protection practices and policies
- To mitigate data security risks by enhancing internal controls on data protection



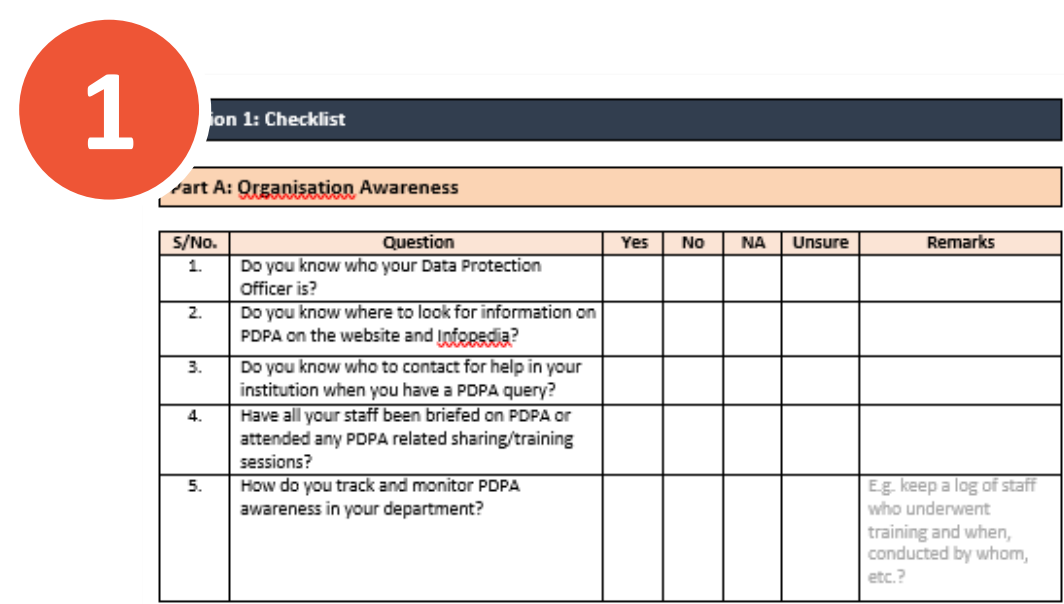
C. METHODOLOGY

1. Assessment & Audits

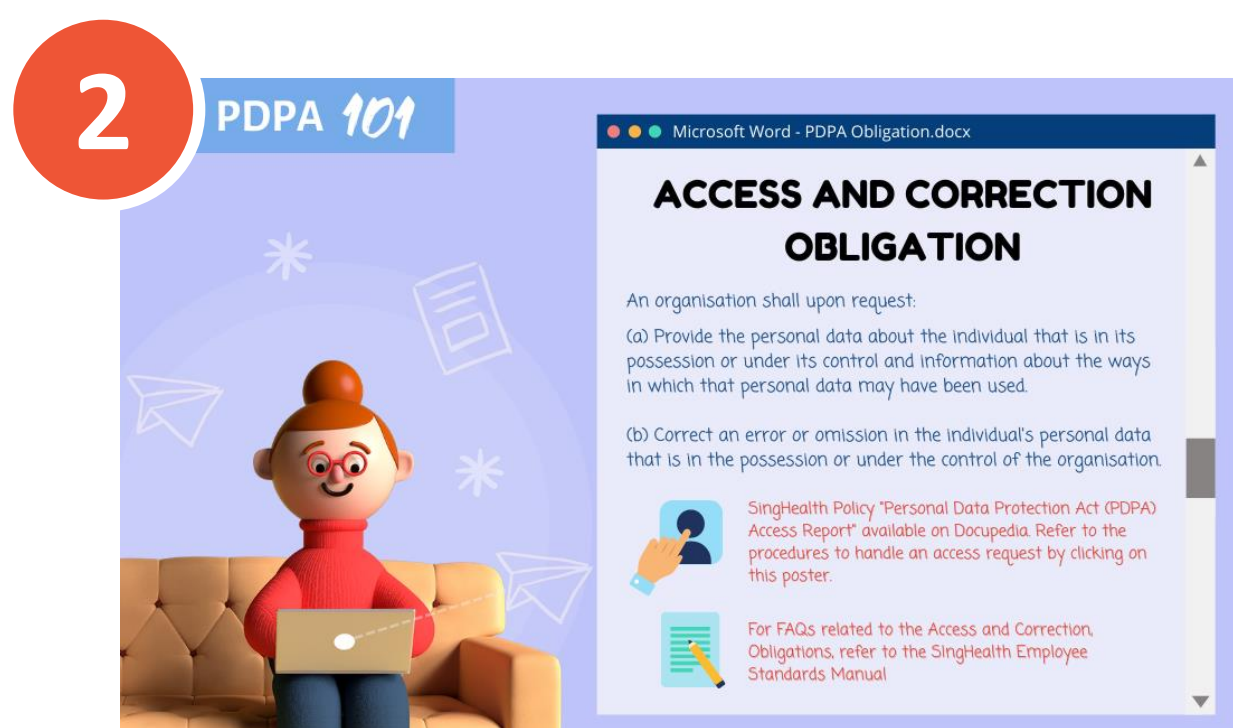
- **Department PDPA audits** were conducted, with the following components, and **prioritised by level of risk:**
 - i. Self-assessment Checklist
 - ii. Online Staff Assessment (*selected Divisions*)
 - iii. On-site Audits (*selected Divisions*)
- **196 departments** submitted the self-assessment checklist for review of processes to ensure compliance.
- **Data Assessment Questionnaire Exercise** conducted to review the organisation's collection, use, and disclosure of all personal data.
- **Clean Desk Sweeps** to ensure safeguarding of all sensitive and confidential information according to a set of new guidelines.

2. Engagement Strategies

- **PDPA orientation and trainings** conducted on SingHealth Wizlearn, as part of staff assessment.
- **Monthly educational materials** communicated via a new **SGH PDPA Workplace group** and **PDPA 101 emails**, reinforced with **quizzes** to boost participation rate.
- **PDPA screensavers and mousepads** designed in-house and used as visual reminders.
- **PDPA resources available on intranet.**
- **Developed Clean Desk Guidelines poster.**



PDPA Self-assessment Checklist



PDPA 101 Email



Clean Desk Poster

3. Staff Feedback

- **Various staff surveys** were conducted to evaluate the Programme's effectiveness and identify areas of improvement for continual improvement and adaptation.

4. Establish Data Protection Network

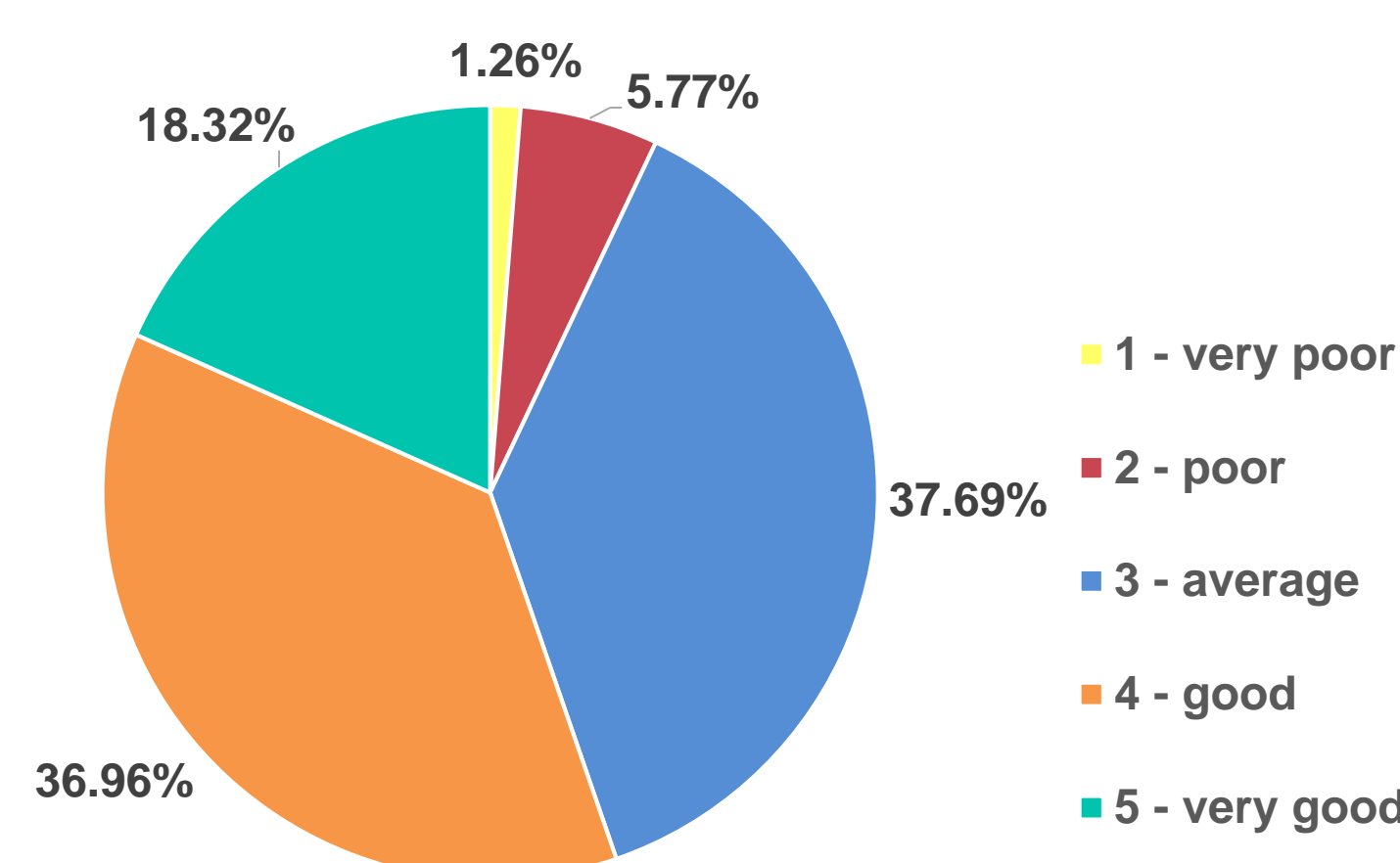
- A **Hospital-level working network** was established to enable effective communication with staff at all levels.
- Members are **Division representatives who are key points of contact** and instrumental in representing domain interest and knowledge.



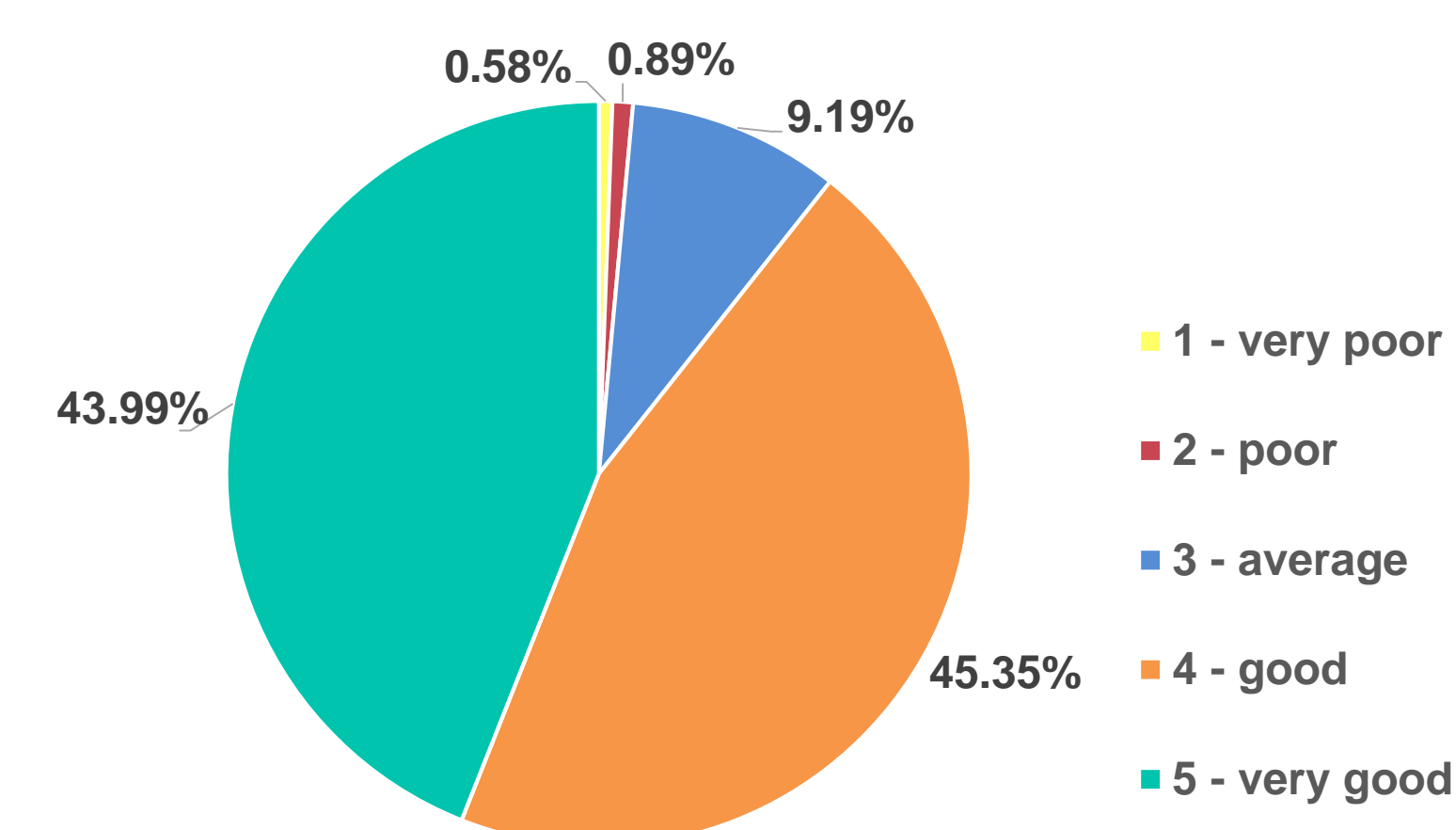
D. RESULTS

- The **PDPA online assessment** was **completed by 2,214 staff**, with a **100% passing rate.** (*As of Apr 2021*)
- **SGH PDPA Workplace group** saw an **increase of 440% in membership** since its launch, providing a platform for staff interaction and information sharing.
- **Staff understanding about PDPA increased.** Based on a survey feedback conducted, staff who rated their understanding with a rating of 4 and 5 out of a band score range of 1-5 (1 – poor, 5 – very well) **increased from 55% (1,045) to 89% (1,689)** after the online assessment (N=1,905).

Understanding Before Assessment



Understanding After Assessment



- In a separate survey, **97% of surveyed staff consider the engagement strategies to be effective** in ensuring staff awareness and compliance to PDPA (N=39).



E. CONCLUSION

- The **Data Protection Compliance Programme** in SGH has proved to be successful in **establishing strong and effective data protection controls.**
- With the various initiatives in place, there is **increased awareness** of the importance of data protection amongst staff, and the hospital can continue **maintaining high levels of compliance in data security and PDPA.**

