



# Job re-designing for better work-life harmony & satisfaction



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## Background

Singapore National Eye Centre (SNEC) performed an approximate of 17,000 day surgeries annually in an ambulatory setting. This project is a taken to achieve and sustain better staff morale and work life balance amongst operating theatre (OT) staff in order to deliver high and safe quality care while managing high volume and fast-paced nature of ophthalmic surgeries.

## Aim

To improve & sustain work life harmony and staff satisfaction rate of nurses in SNEC OT.

## Methodology

A quality improvement methodology using PDSA was adopted to understand the significance of the problems. Results from EES 2017, Burn out and Resilience Surveys, focus groups were consolidated, to define the current situation, brainstorm potential counter measures, develop specific plans to be implemented. A total of three PDSA cycles were conducted to ensure continuous improvement to reach the target condition.

Key area revealed two aspects; 1) insufficient functional support from the supervisors  
 2) unhealthy work-life balance from overtime

The team brainstormed various ideas to streamline the best alternative method to optimize the areas of low satisfaction. Surveys conducted and results were evaluated. Regular presentations were held to ensure effective communication during each PDSA cycle over a period of 5 years

To address the 2 key aspects that were lacking, the team implemented the Team-based leader & stagger duty (SD) system.

## PDSA Cycle

### PDSA 1 (2017-2018)

TBL was piloted in SNEC OT. 2 Nurse Clinicians (NCs) were each assigned a bank of 5 OTs to ensure smooth function of operating list and ground support.

Stagger duty (SD) consisting of a small team of 2 registered nurses (RN) and 1 enrolled nurse (EN) was assigned to a weekly 11am-9pm piloted to reduce overtime hours, staff fatigue and improve work-life balance.

Job redesign by changing of daily routine to better suit workflow and duties.

### PDSA 2 (2019)

TBL continued to provide ground support with good uptake and feedback from staff.

11am- 9pm duty changed to daily rotation instead of weekly rotation.

Staff feedback showed lacking after-hours support due to the small team consisting 2 RN & 1 EN

Self-plot on call & SD implemented to increase flexibility of duty.

### PDSA 3 (2020-current)

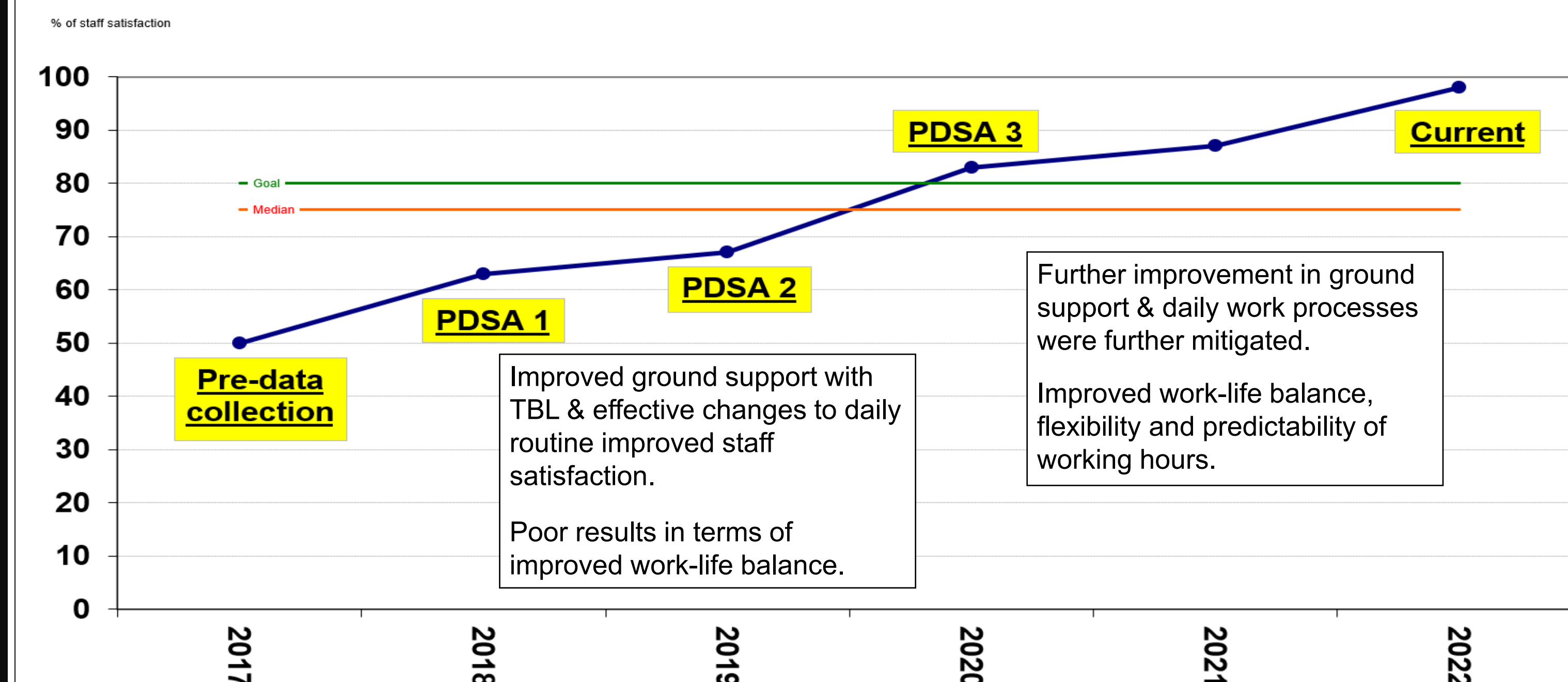
TBL implemented and has continued with good feedback from staff.

In accordance's to SNEC's direction & future planning to maintain 2 daily operating sessions per OT in a day-surgery setting. The SD was overhauled to 8am-6pm duty instead.

With the revamped 8am-6pm duty, the SNEC OT nurses were split into 4 teams, with an average of 15 nurses per team. Each team will be assigned to 8-6 duty once per week. With the following duty, staff are only rostered 1 Saturday per work month, as compared to 2 with the 11-9 duty.

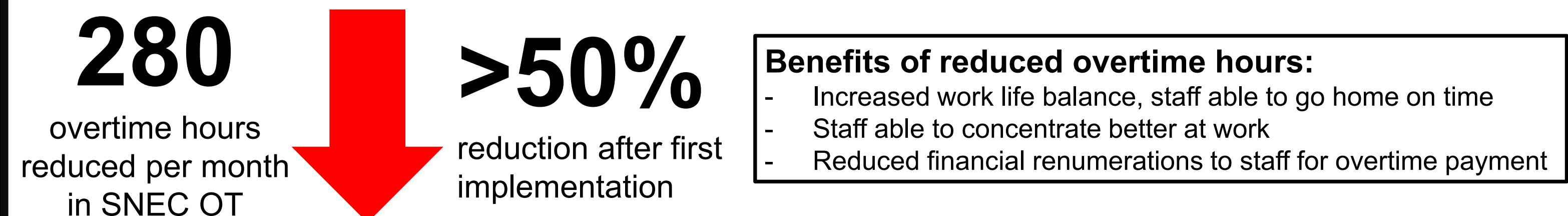
The 8am-6pm duty garnered more support from the OT nurses and was well received due to the increased flexibility and predictability of the working hours, improving their work-life harmony.

Staff Satisfaction level in SNEC OT from 2017-2022



## Results

### Overall Staff Overtime Hours

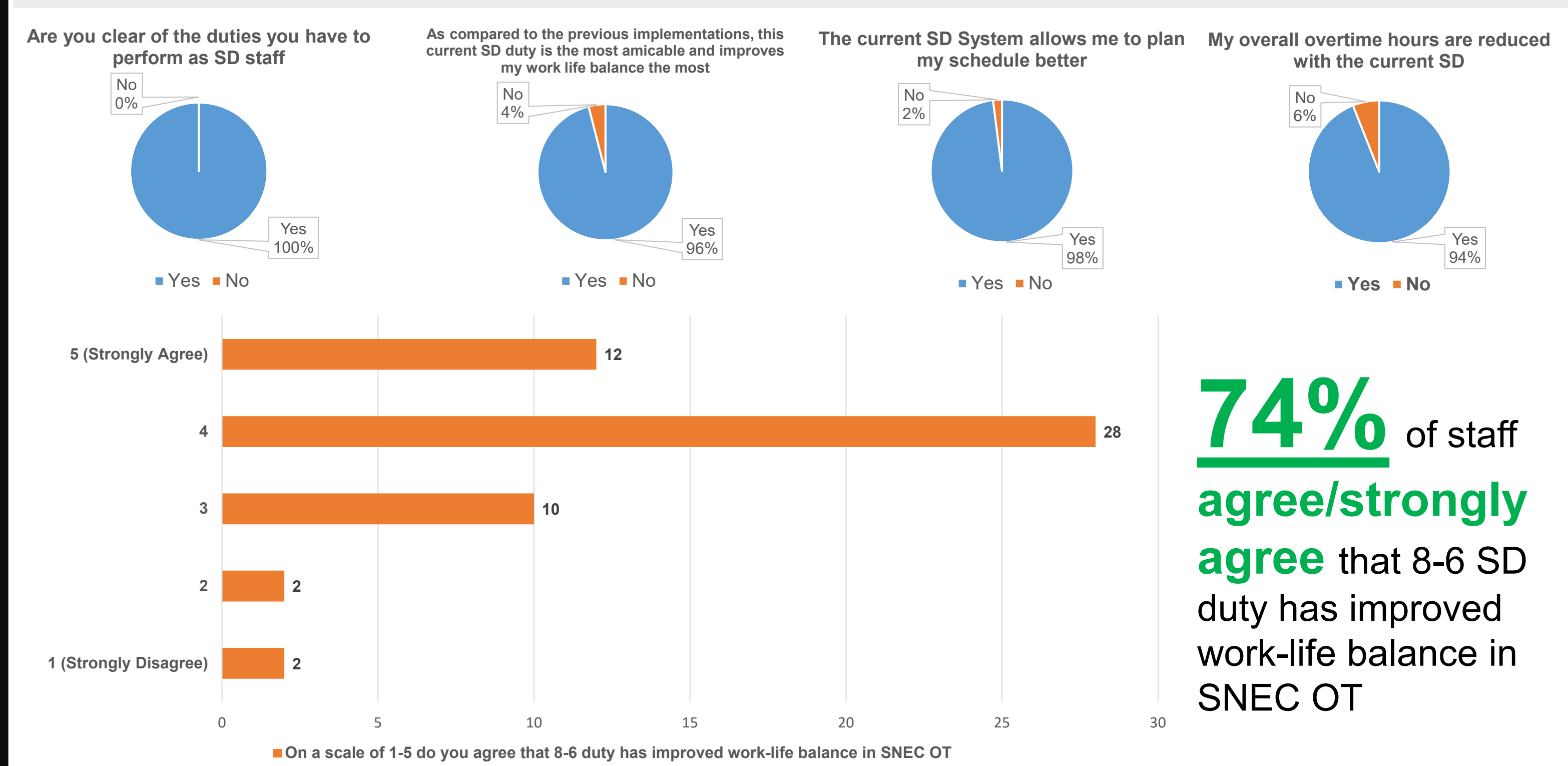


- Benefits of reduced overtime hours:**
- Increased work life balance, staff able to go home on time
  - Staff able to concentrate better at work
  - Reduced financial remunerations to staff for overtime payment

### Data Comparison: PDSA 3 vs Pre-data

Staff Survey Questionnaire	Before (Pre-data) vs After (PDSA 3) implementation	Results
Do you foresee SD to be sustainable in the future?	Before: 40% Yes, 60% No After: 96% Yes, 4% No	<b>140%</b> increased sustainability
Are you in favor of the current roster scheduling system?	Before: 57% Yes, 43% No After: 100% Yes	<b>75%</b> more in favor of the system
There is sufficient after-hours support	Before: 29% Yes, 71% No After: 98% Yes, 2% No	<b>Increased</b> after hours support by <b>2.37x</b>
With the current workload, do you feel supported by the TBLs?	Before: 40% Yes, 60% No After: 96% Yes, 4% No	<b>Increased</b> staff support from TBLs by <b>2.4x</b>

### PDSA 3 Data



### Learning points

- Learning points from SD & TBL:**
- Improved ground support from supervisors and peers led to better team cohesiveness and helped bridge communication gaps.
  - Decrease in overall overtime hours led to benefits in both staff wellbeing and organizational aspects.
  - Increased flexibility and predictability of working hours in PDSA 3 led to improved work life harmony and staff satisfaction. This also led to reduction in staff turnover & daily absenteeism rates.
  - With the benefits from PDSA 3, SNEC OT nurses agreed that SD & TBL was sustainable for the future

### Further implementations

**2022: SD officially enforced & integrated as a centre-wide implementation !!!**

## Conclusion

Both TBL & SD proved to be effective in increasing support for staff in SNEC OT by improving work-life harmony, staff morale and staff satisfaction. Additionally, it has also benefitted the organization in terms of reduced financial remunerations.

## Acknowledgement

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