



Singapore Healthcare Management 2022

Improve Patient Experience and Engage Patient Seamlessly via WhatsApp Communication Channel

Puah Ken Lee¹, Andrew Tan Hwee Chye¹, Pang Hee Nee¹, Chua Kim Chuan², Joanna Loy², Rajashulakshana D/O Rajaram¹, Lee Jiunn Kee¹, Hairil Rizal Bin Abdullah¹, Susan Lee¹, Tiffany Thng¹, Ivan Neo Lin Wen¹, Jerry Wong You², Ng Kai Lee¹, Goh Ze Wei¹, Reanne Lim Ying Xuan¹, Michelle Loh Hui Ping¹, Franklin Tan², Rick Goh³, Liu Yong³, Lei Xiaofeng³, Yang Yechao³, Tan Teck Choon², Debbie Tan Pei Yi², Lim En Xin²

¹ Singapore General Hospital; ² Singapore Health Services; ³ Agency for Science, Technology and Research



Introduction

Patients scheduled for planned surgery would have to grapple with a myriad of information while providing inputs to numerous questions from the hospital right up to the day of their surgery. At times, patients and their caregivers would also misplace or forget to bring along the admission kits issued to them which could contain important information when they visit SGH Pre-Admission Centre (PAC).

Patients would also have to manage their anxiety as they prepare for their surgery while being loaded with more pre- and post-surgery information as well as undergoing educational sessions. The challenges could increase multi-fold for patients who are not IT Savvy and not comfortable with English language.

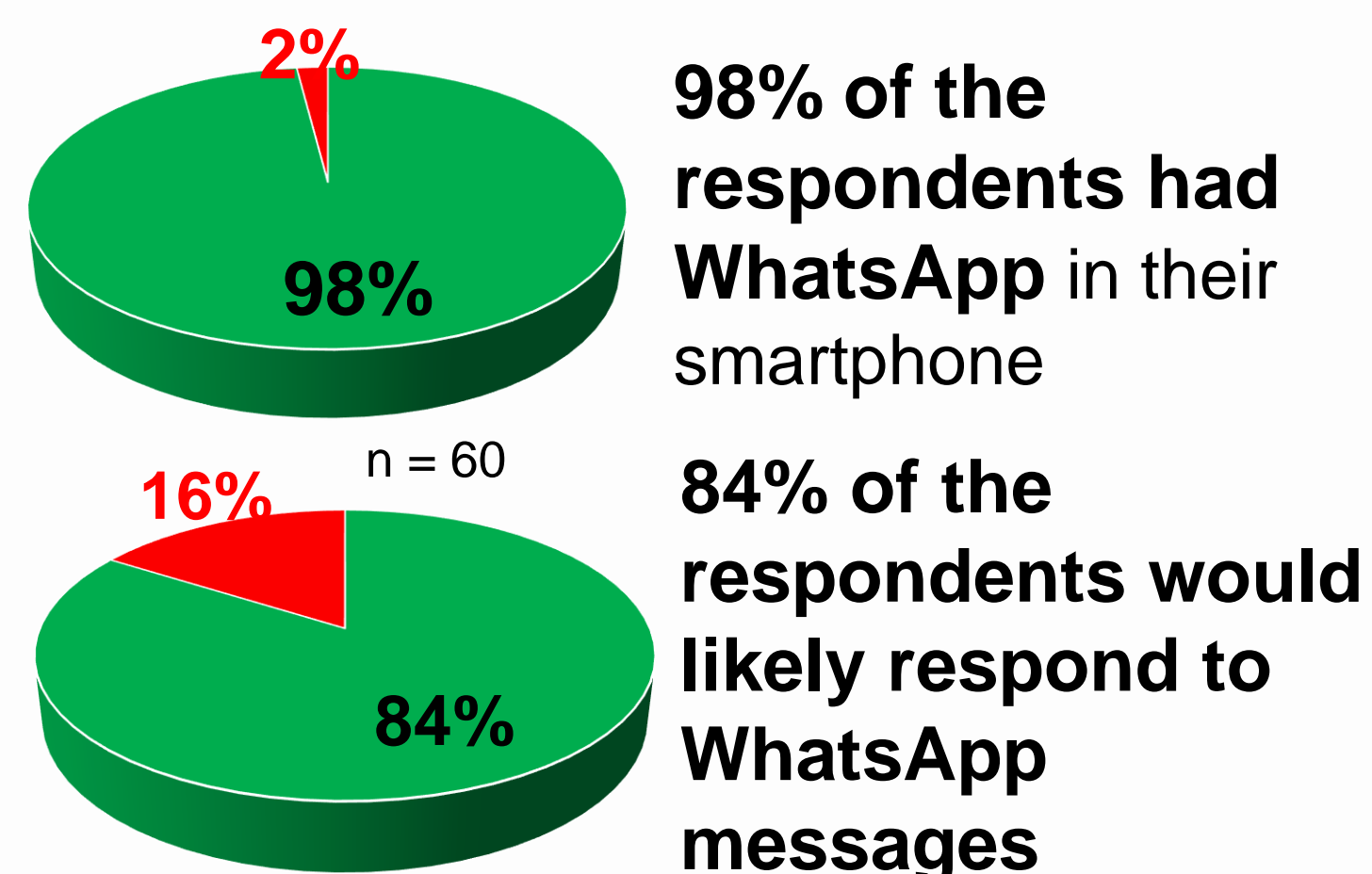
The multi-disciplinary team comprising Doctors, Nurses, Educators and personnel from Operations, Digital Strategy and Office for Service Transformation, was formed to explore, review and implement new way(s) of preparing patients for their planned surgery as well as providing relevant information to patients via WhatsApp, in a timely and efficient manner.

Methodology

- Define project goals and deliverables
- Explore & Design possible solutions to meet requirements
- Develop & Iterate desired solution according to requirements
- Deploy & Refine solution to meet requirements

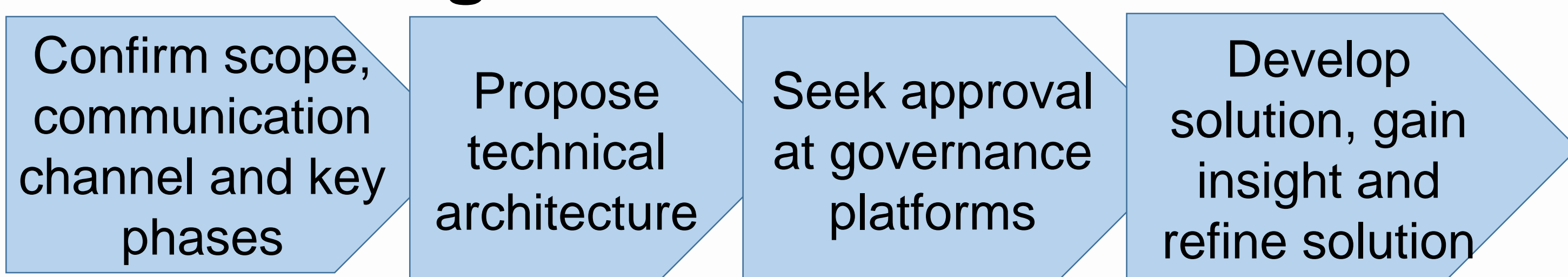
Design a familiar and easy-to-use communication channel for patients to access and share information regarding their planned surgery.

Insights gathering via survey and interview with patients, caregivers and staff.



Pilot, gather insights and refine solution to meet needs of patients, caregivers and staff.

High Level Phases



~6 months

2021

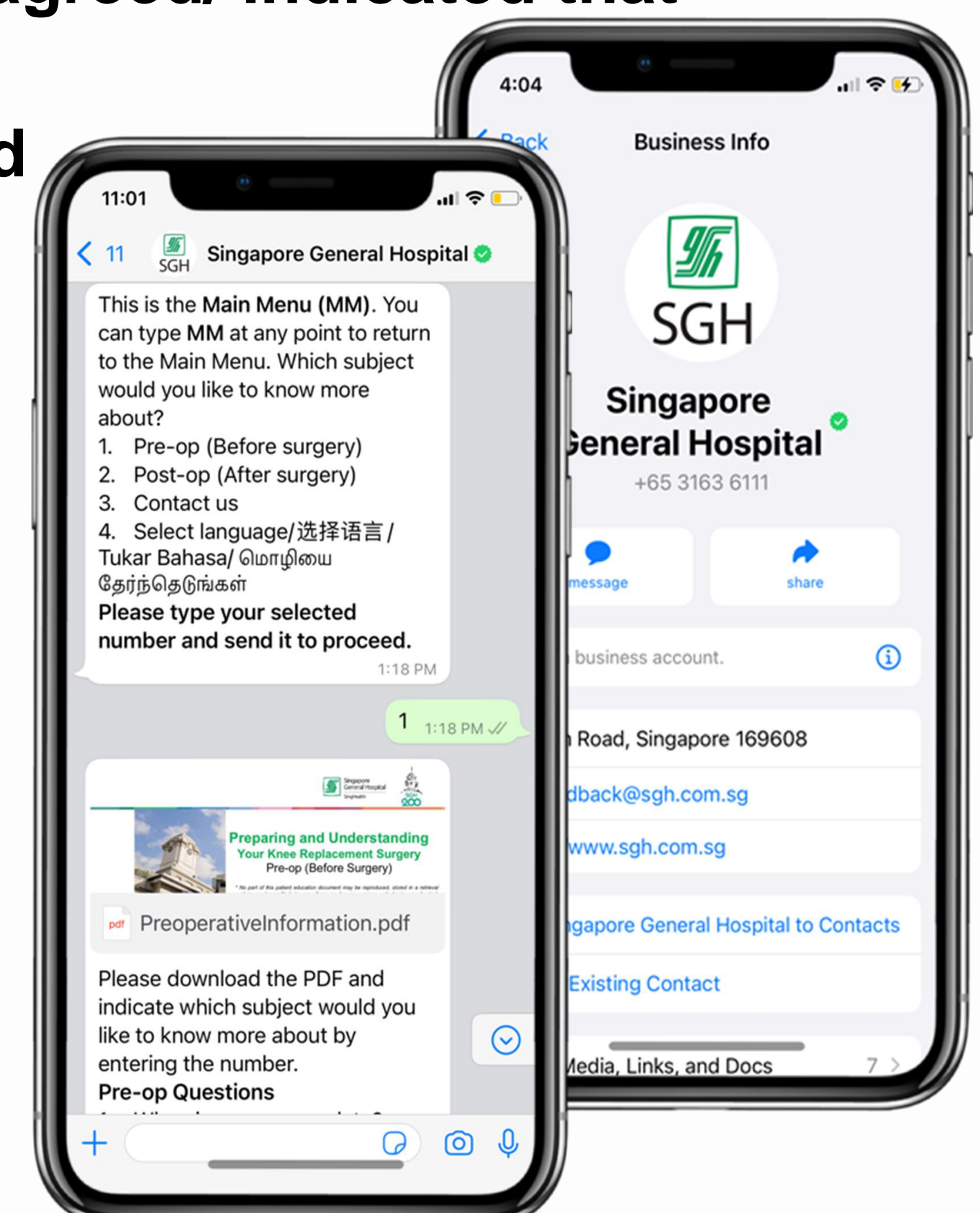
Good support from stakeholders on grant funding, IT Cybersecurity, procurement, etc.

2022

Results

100% of the survey respondents agreed/ indicated that

- The Project/ Bot helped to reassure them and reduced their level of anxiety.
- They were happy with the Bot and receive information via it.
- The Bot saved clarification time (and reduced dwell time of ~10% of the education counselling session).
- They would recommend the Bot to other patients.



"I enjoyed navigating the WhatsApp platform for SGH. It is user friendly and could answer many of the questions a patient would want to know pre and post operatively. The post-op information pamphlet for Knee Replacement Surgery is excellent. Simple to read, lots of visuals and very pertinent advice from nutrition to ambulation!"

- Dr Khoo Sork Hoon, SPAN member

"The Bot serves as a helpful additional communication tool. Able to easily tell patients to scan the QR code on their mobile phone if they have questions or forget certain information. It is also helpful that the FAQs on the Bot are available in the various languages."

- Cheryl Ho, Senior Staff Nurse, Pre-operative Services, SGH

Conclusion

The multi-disciplinary team has demonstrated the importance of gaining insights from patients and their caregivers (i.e. users), conceptualised solution for the pilot, solicit input for the pilot and refine the solution while making it relevant to our patients. The multi-lingual Bot has engaged patients (and their caregivers) as well as reduce their anxiety for their planned surgery.

The project team has provided patients who are scheduled for Total Knee Replacement surgery with interactive Bot that coupled with useful information via the WhatsApp in 24/7, thus helped to address frequently asked questions and concerns from patients, and improve patient experience as part of the workflow redesign. The project has been made possible by the great team spirit.

