



Singapore Healthcare Management 2023

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Community Therapeutics Programme - Delivering Specialist Treatments in the Community

Introduction and Problem statement

Specialist therapeutic infusions and subcutaneous injections are important treatments for rheumatology patients. The Immunology Hub infusion centre and the Autoimmunity & Rheumatology Centre at SGH offers these therapeutic services, respectively. However, the average waiting time was 6-8 weeks for infusions so that many of these patients were admitted to the wards. This impacts bed occupancy and contributes to a critical bed crunch. Furthermore, patients who receive subcutaneous injections in the Autoimmunity & Rheumatology Centre (ARC) mostly require caregivers to travel and escort them which has monetary implications since they require time off work.

Aims

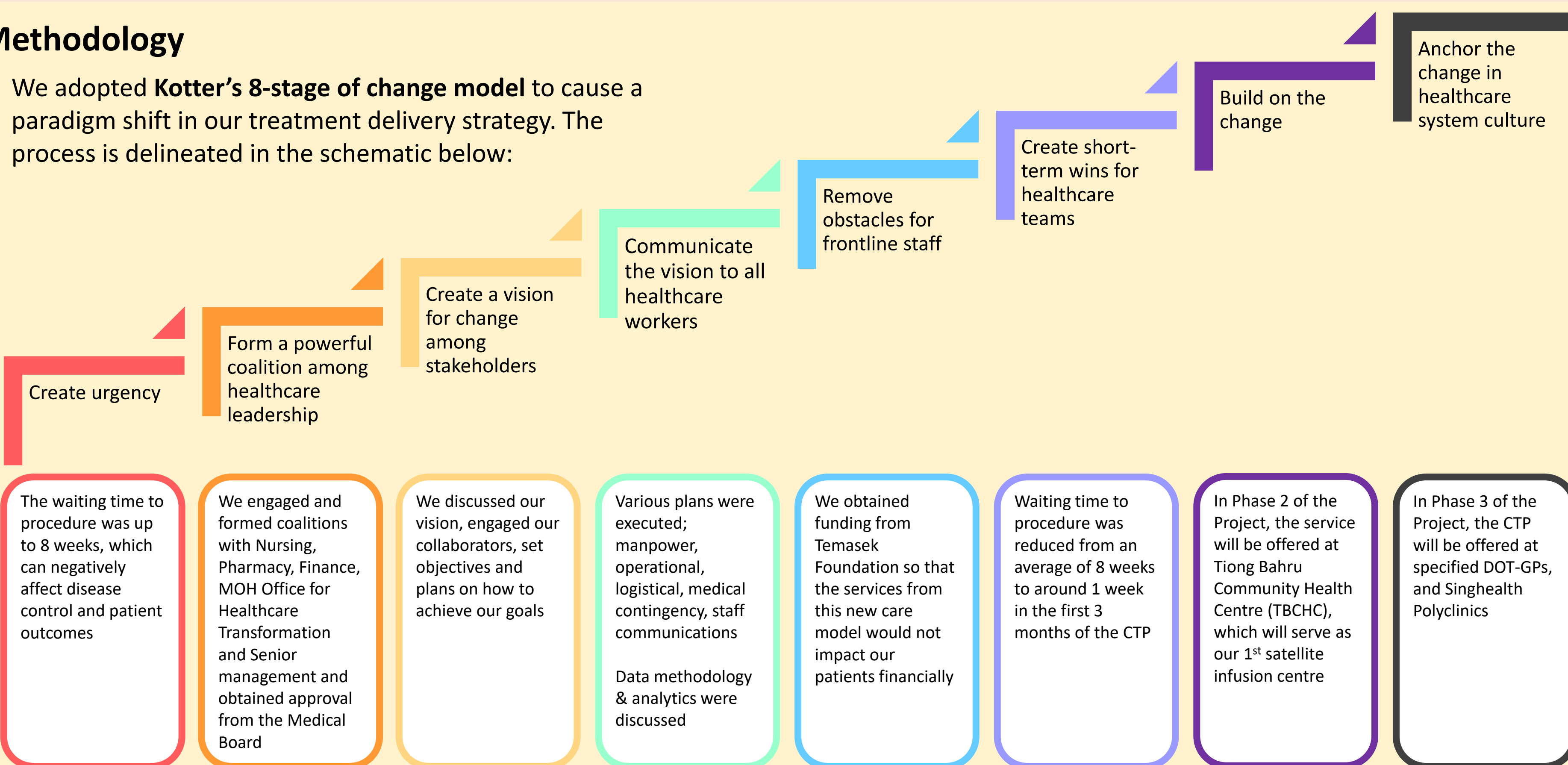
To establish a new model of care for delivery of specialist therapeutic infusions and subcutaneous injections in the community

To reduce waiting time to procedure and optimize inpatient bed use and Specialist outpatient clinic visits

To reduce traveling time, transport cost and time off work for patients and their caregivers

Methodology

We adopted **Kotter's 8-stage of change model** to cause a paradigm shift in our treatment delivery strategy. The process is delineated in the schematic below:

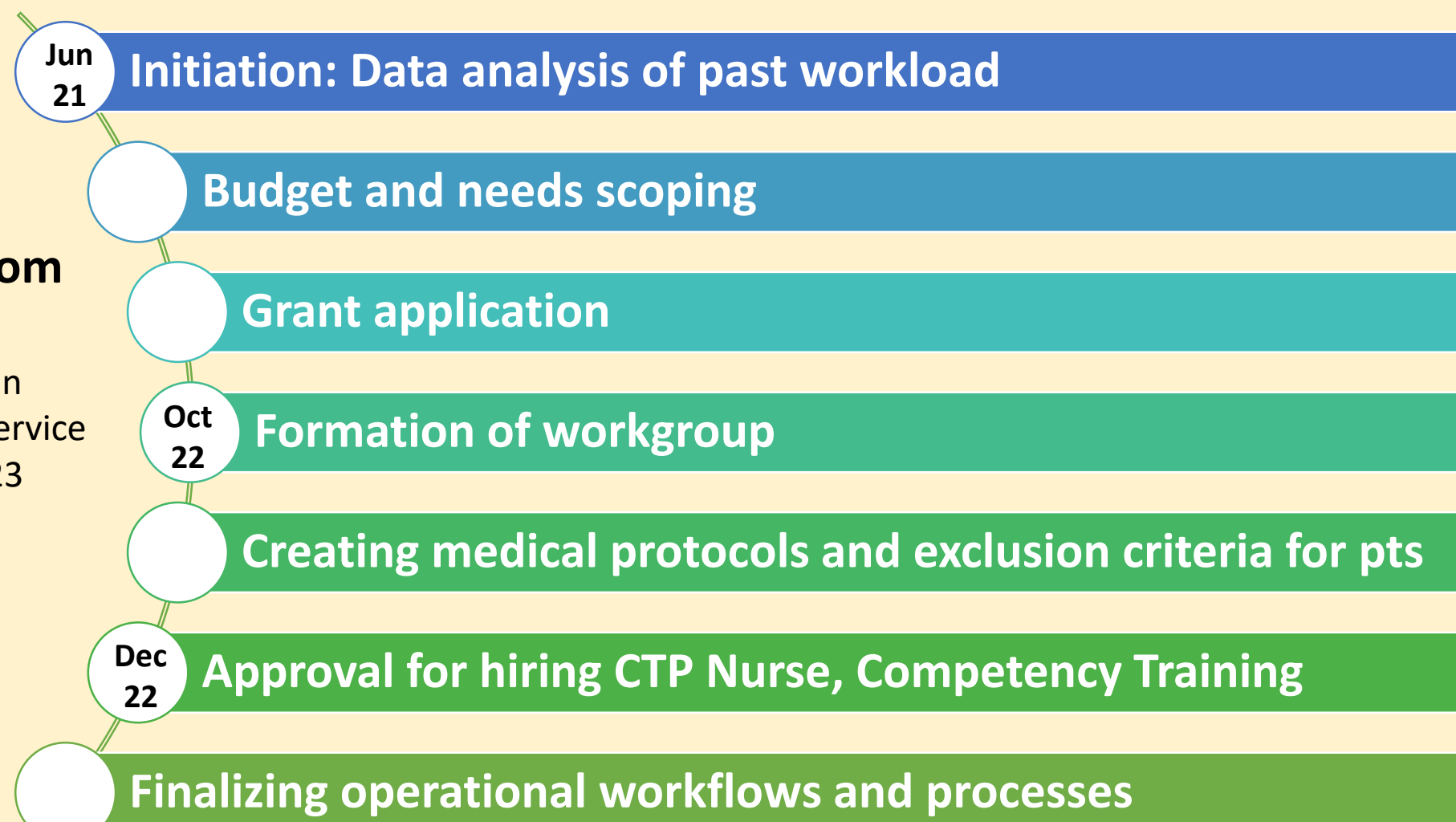


Workflow for the CTP

- Eligible patients are recruited by Doctors. **Exclusion criteria** include:
 - Poor venous access
 - History of unauthorized IV use
 - Psychiatric conditions
- Contingency workflows are in place to ensure:**
 - Continuity in treatments
 - Safety for the patient and CTP nurse
 - Ability to mark-task procedures
 - That the necessary medications were prepared and delivered in time for the procedure
- Created a **"Virtual Room"** in the Outpatient Administration System to differentiate CTP resource from the other normal resources
- We removed the **location indicator** from the default SMS reminder template to avoid any confusion to patients
- A **FormSG** survey was created to collate patient feedback and is sent via SMS following the service. Our CTP nurse also offers a printed **QR code** (shown on the left) in case of difficulties accessing the link
- Our CTP Nurse is the **Core** of the new model of care. She coordinates resources; appointment, equipment, consumables and travels to homes to deliver quality patient care

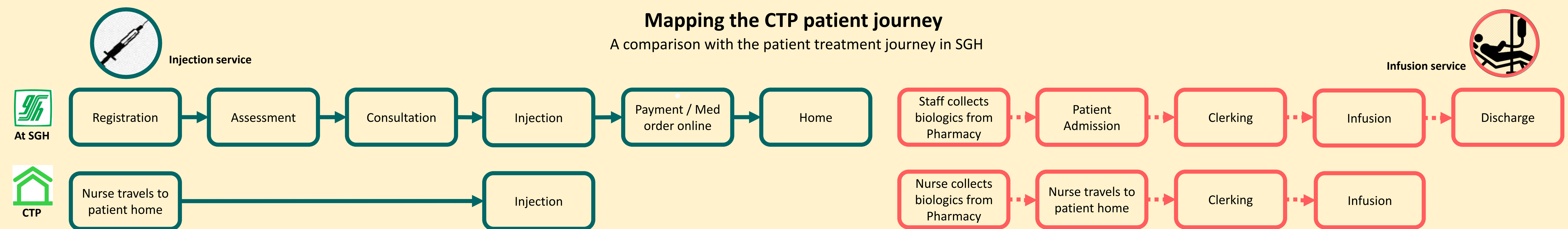
Milestones

Timeline of events from Jun 21 – Jan 23
We started planning since Jun 2021 and worked until the service operationalized on 4 Jan 2023



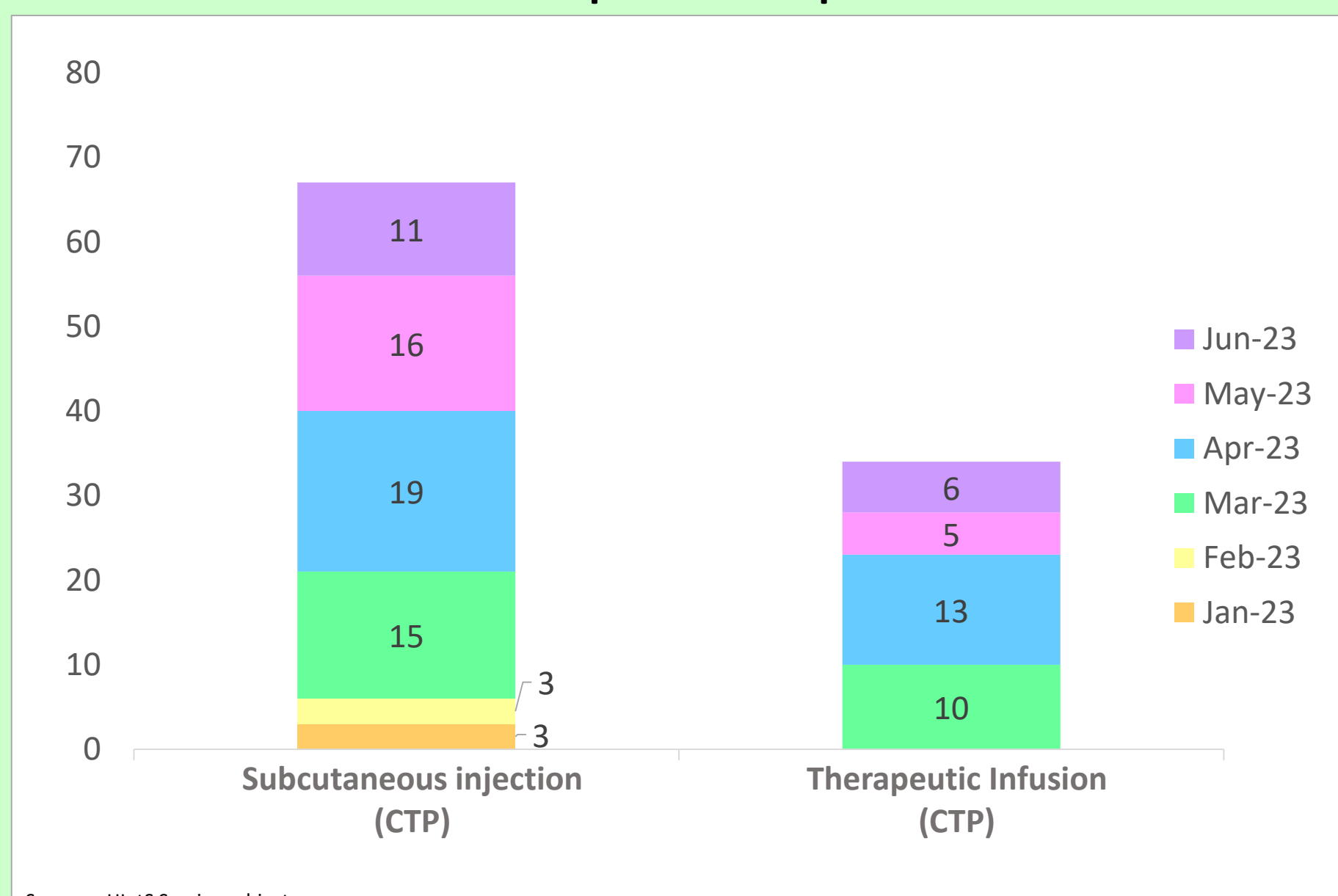
Mapping the CTP patient journey

A comparison with the patient treatment journey in SGH

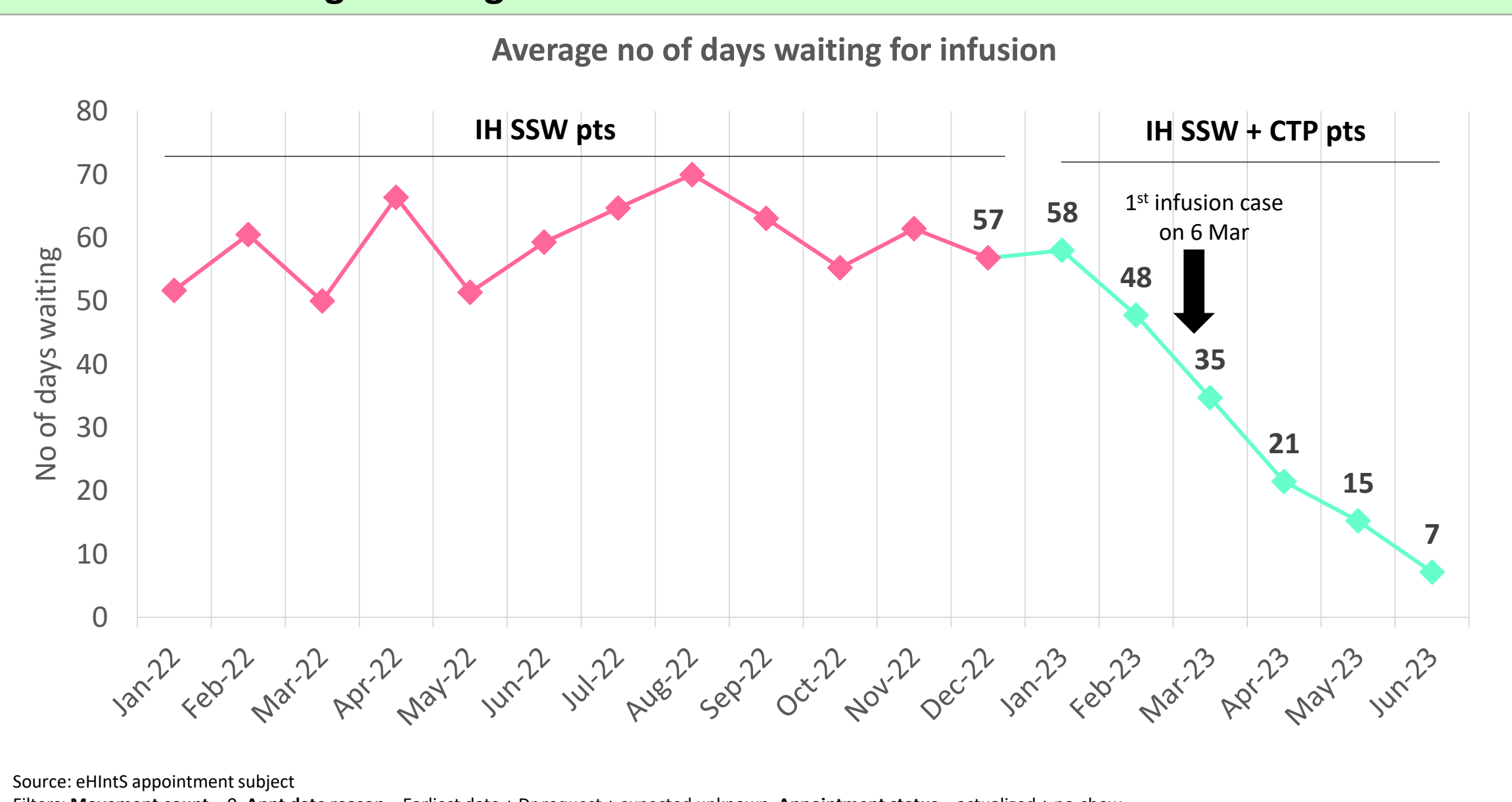


Results

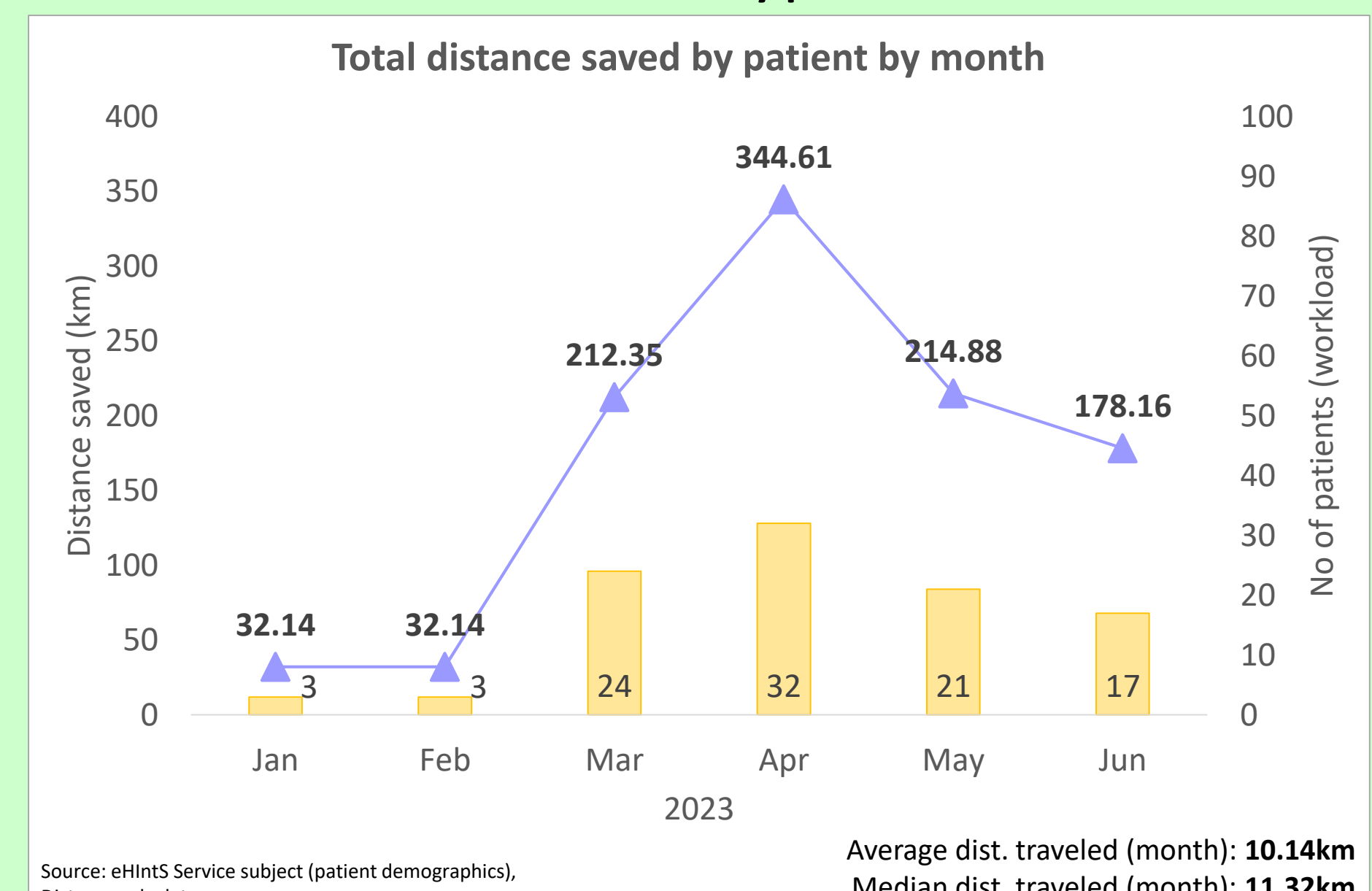
Total no of procedures performed



Lower average waiting time for infusion services after CTP was introduced



Distance saved by patients



Updated data for number of procedures performed to **19 June 2023**. Our target number of procedures performed under the CTP is **1000 procedures** (injections and infusions) by 2026.

The average number of waiting days for infusion services at the Immunology Hub was **57 days (approx. 8 weeks)** in Dec 2022. The CTP has reduced average waiting days to **7 days (approx. 1 week)** in Jun 2023.



We **successfully** crafted and implemented a model of care which delivers specialist therapeutics in the community in a relatively short time of under 2 years.

Conclusion / Future planning

We were able to operationalize this new model of care and create short-term wins for the healthcare team (stage 6 of Kotter's 8 stages of change). This programme will be expanded to our community partners (DOT-GPs, Singhealth polyclinics) with an ultimate aim to anchor it in our healthcare culture nationwide (stage 8 of Kotter's 8 stages of change).