



Patient Service Associate (PSA)-Led Vitamin Dispensing Counter – A One-Stop Service for Subsidised Obstetric Patients

Singapore Healthcare Management 2023



Lynette Cheah(Div of SAS), Kim Ji Yeon(Pharmacy), Dr Seet Meei Jiun(Div of O&G), Tay Siew Guek(Clinic C), Ng Aishing(Pharmacy),Sylvia Sim(Div of SAS)

INTRODUCTION

Obstetric patients at Specialist Clinic C who are prescribed with antenatal supplements are required to collect them from the satellite pharmacy (Pharmacy@B) located a distance away in another clinic. Queueing alongside other patients for these standard supplements prolongs waiting time and the overall journey at the hospital. During peak hours, there was often feedback about the crowd and lack of seats at the waiting area due to the limited seating capacity, which is also shared with consultation rooms.

OBJECTIVE

A multidisciplinary team comprising clinic staff, pharmacists and clinicians was formed to improve the patient experience and reduce waiting time for medication collection through creating a one-stop service in Specialist Clinic C for subsidised Obstetric patients requiring antenatal supplements.

IMPROVEMENT APPROACH

During the exploratory phase, the team evaluated the feasibility of using vending machines. However, this approach is expensive and also the billing process proved challenging due to differences in subsidies accorded based on household incomes.

With savings in space and manpower from new case registration at kiosk, one counter in Clinic C was converted to a Vitamin Dispensing Counter with effect from 1 June 2022. Selected PSAs underwent training by Pharmacists to staff the dispensing station. In between patients, these PSAs also concurrently process backend administrative work to maximise productivity.



Pre-packed antenatal supplements dispensed

These common supplements include calcium carb, vitamin D tablets, DHA capsule, folic acid, iron polymaltose and Obimin multivitamin tablets. They were prepacked and labelled with standard instructions for Doctors to order.

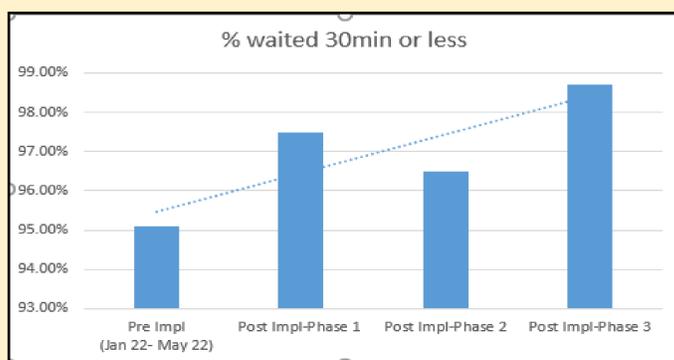
Results

50% reduction in wait time!!

Patients in Clinic C as they now wait 5-7 mins for the vitamins instead of 13 mins if they were to join main pool of patients at Pharmacy@B

Patients at Pharmacy@B wait lesser

Percentage of patients waited less than 30mins at Pharmacy@B improved from pre-implementation of 95.1% to 98.7% post implementation



Positive Feedback from patients as they appreciate the shorter waiting time, convenience, and reduced crowds

More Focused Workflow as pharmacists can now focused on patients who require more complicated medications, pharmaceutical interventions and long counselling.

Increased PSA's Job satisfaction PSAs are upskilled to take on more clinical duties, while concurrently clearing backend administrative work in between serving patients.

Conclusion

This one-stop service is well-received by subsidised Obstetric patients as it creates convenience and reduces time spent waiting at the Pharmacy. This initiative also helped to alleviate the peak crowding situation at Pharmacy@B. The Vitamin Dispensing Counter at Clinic C has been successful in the subsidised clinic setting as standard processes could be implemented. Moving forward, the team will review the effectiveness of further expansion to other clinics.