To Improve % of Babies fed with Mother's Own Milk (MOM) in Special Care Nursery (SCN) and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)

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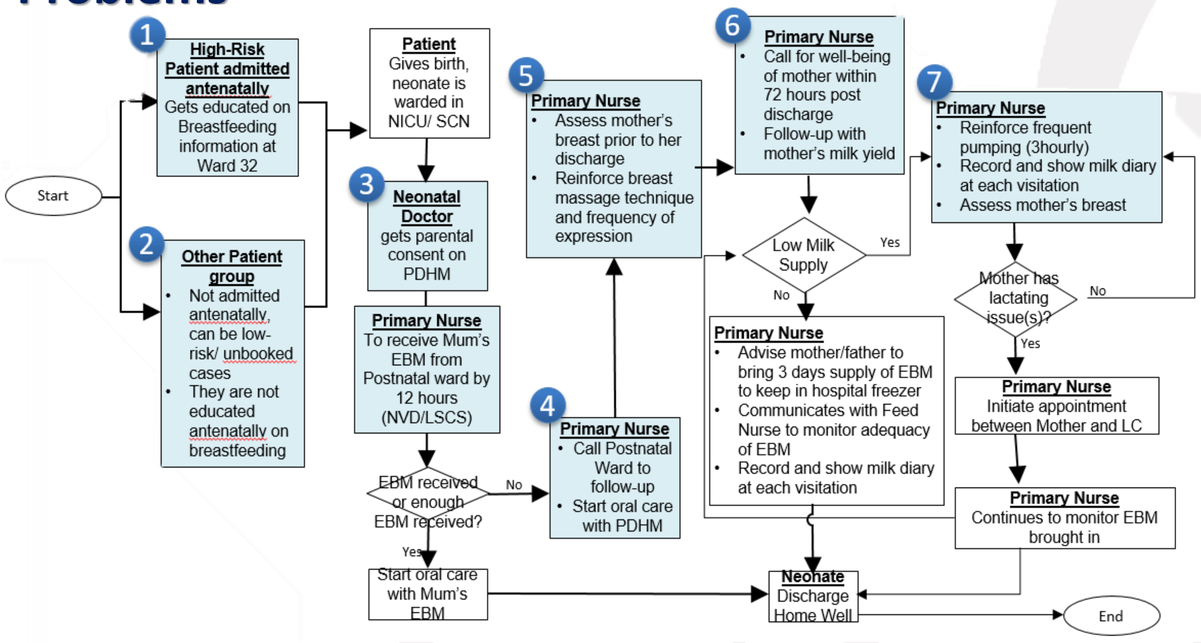
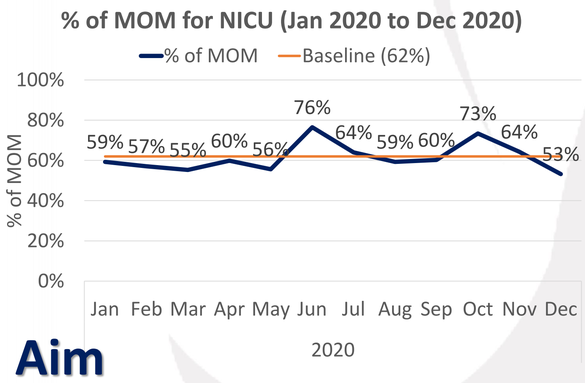
Background

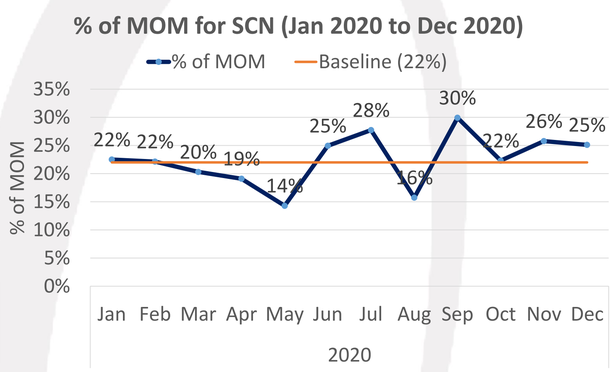
Increasing early exposure of mother's own milk (MOM) in premature newborns can potentially support a healthier microbiome. In NICU and SCN, though pasteurised human donor milk (PDHM) is an option, MOM is designed ideally with the right balance of nutrients and changes along as the baby grows.

Problems



The blue boxes were the problems within the process, following patient's journey. The below charts verify the main problem of low % of babies on MOM in NICU and SCN.





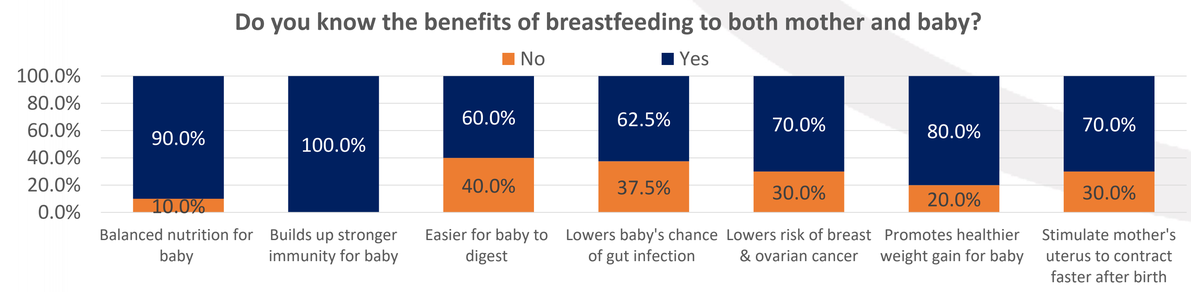
Aim

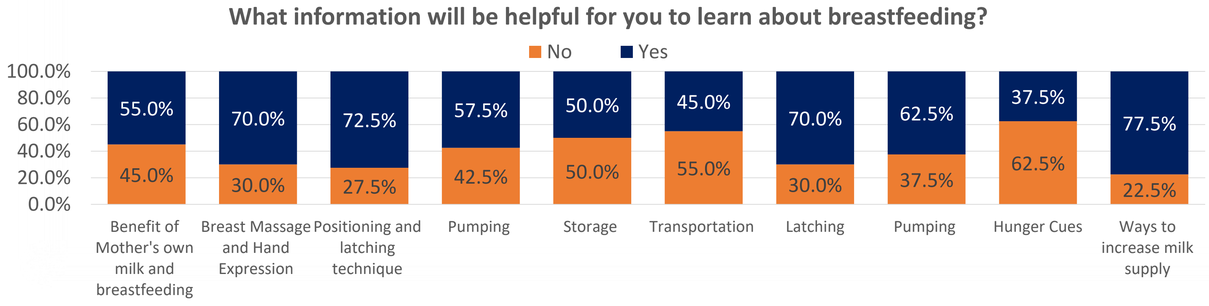
A multi-disciplinary team comprising neonatal doctor, antenatal ward nurse, obstetric ward nurse and neonatal wards nurses was formed to improve the % of babies on MOM) in SCN and NICU from **34%** to **60%** within 6 months.

Methodology

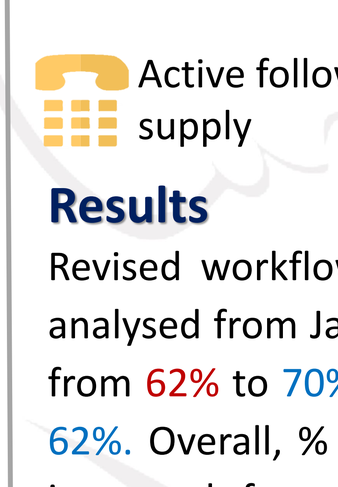
The root causes of the low % of babies fed with MOM in NICU and SCN during their hospitalisation were discussed extensively and feedback were solicited from 40 antenatal patients and 30 postnatal patients to understand their needs and concerns.

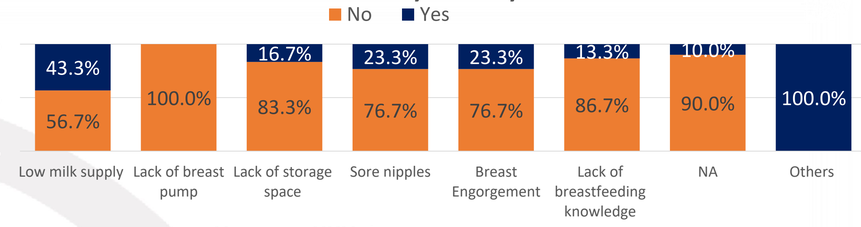
Antenatal patients (n=40)

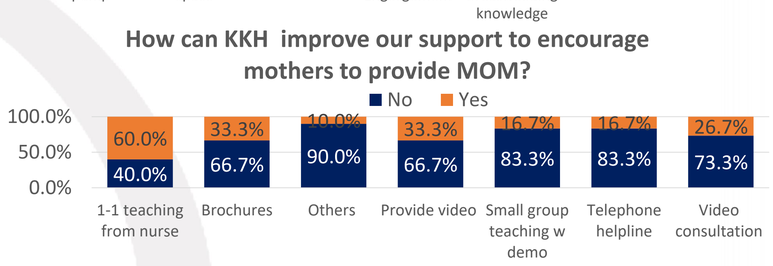




Postnatal patients (n=30)





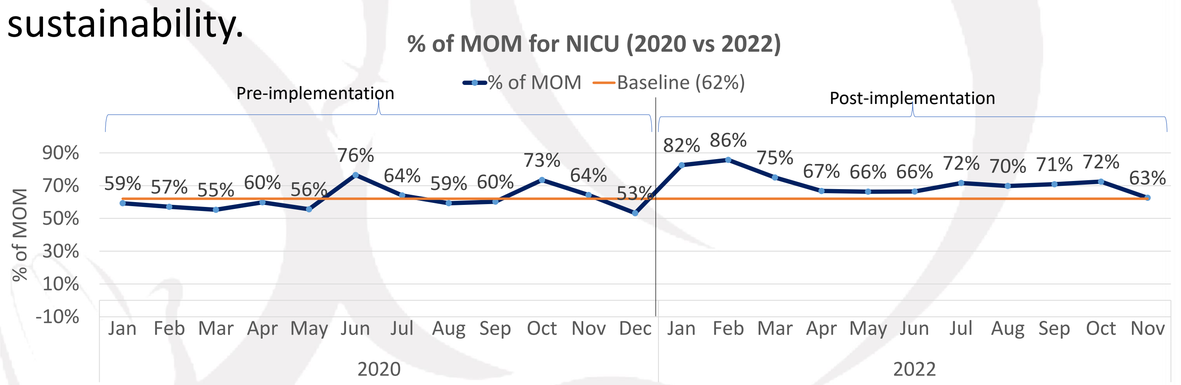


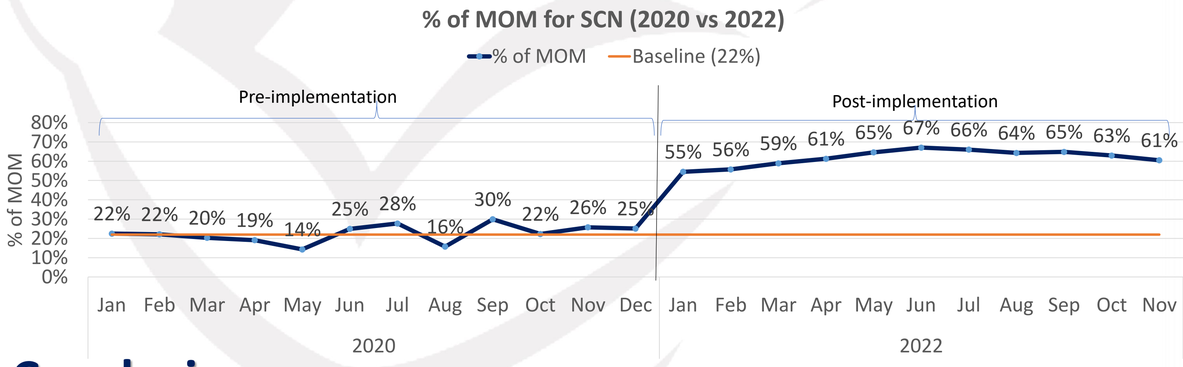
Solutions

- Revising PDHM consent forms, with emphasis on MOM and induction to all new Medical Officers.
- High Risk antenatal patients will receive education on benefits of MOM.
- Primary care nurses of SCN/ NICU establishing first contact with mothers prior to discharge
- Active follow-up post 5-days of mother's discharge on milk supply

Results

Revised workflow was implemented in Dec 2021, and data was analysed from Jan to Nov 2022. The % of MOM in NICU improved, from 62% to 70%, while % of MOM in SCN improved from 22% to 62%. Overall, % of babies fed with MOM for both NICU and SCN improved from **34%** to **65%** over the same period, showing sustainability.





Conclusion

It is well established that breastmilk improves immunological defense, leading to better neurodevelopmental outcome. With the improved and sustainable outcome of the sicker babies fed with MOM, the team has achieved the goal by *understanding the needs from our antenatal and postnatal patients* and feeding their babies with pre-term MOM – contains higher levels of antibodies that directly protects the sicker babies against infections. The team also saw an increased morale among the neonatal wards' nurses as they are more confident in handling patients with lactating issues.