

Driving Behavioural Change: Self Declaration of External Appointment through Secured Webpage

*Ms NEOH Aik Khoo, Singapore General Hospital
Prof FONG Kok Yong, Singapore General Hospital
Ms Nursyuhadah WAHID, Singapore General Hospital
Ms YONG Siew Lan, Singapore General Hospital*

Introduction

External Appointment (EA) refers to professional engagement in activities to support and advance SGH's interests. Staff are required to declare their participation in EA to avoid any conflict of interest and for the doctors in SGH, the declaration was completed in hardcopy with assistance from administrative staff. To foster and facilitate self-declaration, a secured online EA application system was developed. The system resides in People Connexion, a portal which requires password to access and where employee's personal info is stored. It incorporates the benefits of enabling the tracking of application status and retrieval of past applications. However, the take up rate by doctors was poor although all other groups of staff have embarked on this platform.

Aim

A pilot was conducted **to assess the feasibility of implementing the online EA application system for doctors.**



Methodology

Departments of Orthopaedic Surgery and Haematology were selected for the pilot in consideration of their submission load, which constitutes around one fifth of the total submissions from clinical departments.

Doctors were required to log into the secured portal with personal credentials in order to make declaration for their participation in EA. By removing the need to rely on admin staff, this promotes the culture of personal accountability.

Training sessions were conducted through department meetings and a step-by-step application guide was disseminated to each doctor.



Intervention to encourage online submission was accomplished through  and 

Technical support was also made available if required.

Result

Data was collected from 1st May 2015 – 31st October 2015.

Percentage of Applications Submitted Online between May and Oct 2015

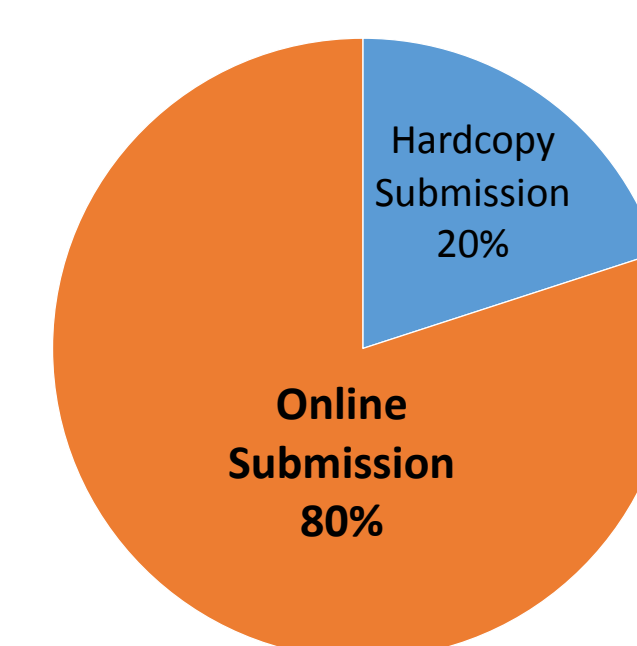


Figure 1. Percentage of EA Applications submitted online during the pilot. In total, **90 applications were made by the two departments, and 80% of these were submitted online.**

Rate of Online Submission per Month May - October 2015

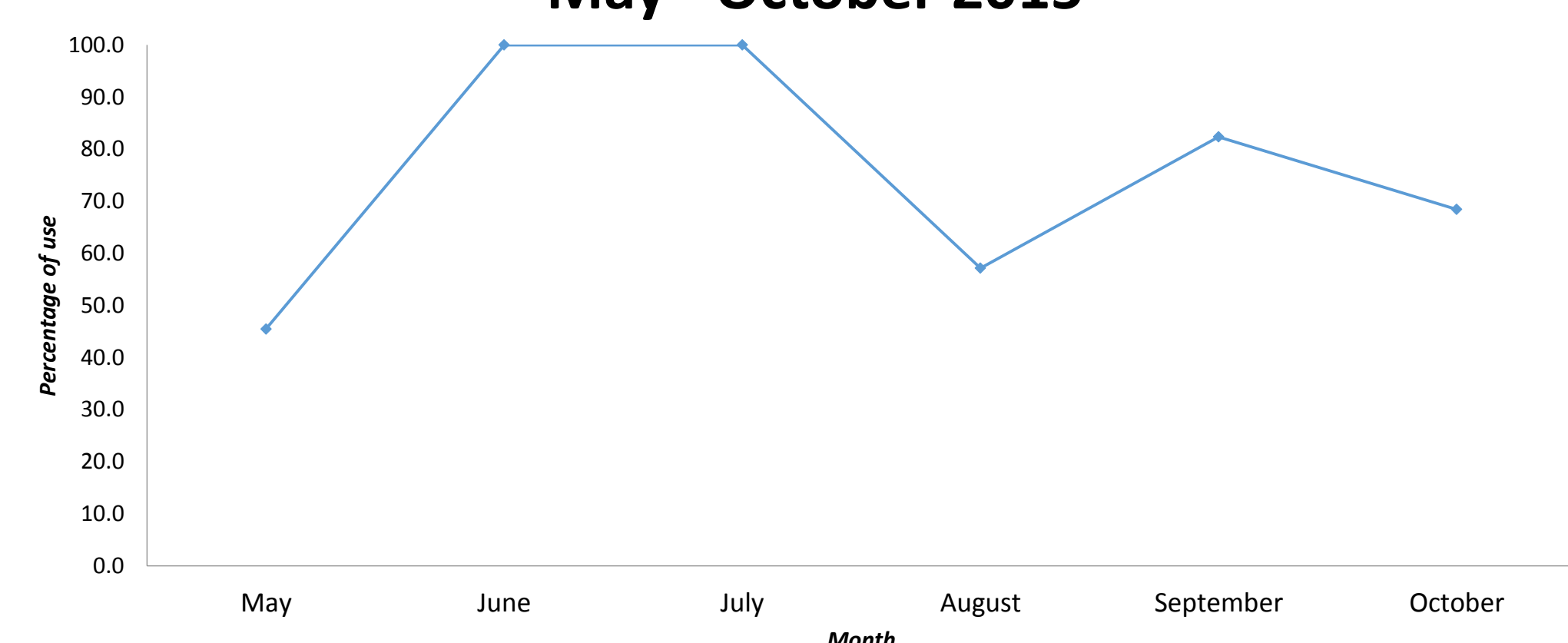


Figure 2. Rate of Online Submission per month. The **monthly take up rate was improved from zero (before the pilot) to an average utilization of 75.6% each month.**

The take up rate was encouraging and demonstrated the feasibility of implementing the online EA application system for the group of doctors.

Feedback

A survey was conducted to understand the preference for using online application system, in comparison to hardcopy submission.

- ✓ **80% of the participants had no objections** to continue using the system
- ✓ majority did not encounter any issues upon making online applications

Unfavourable experience was mainly attributed to the responsiveness of approvers and the type of EA subject to application.

Conclusion

IT is an effective enabler for behavioural change. **With comprehensive guidelines and proper communications, we can achieve acceptance of use.** Unfavourable feedback will be reviewed to address the issues raised, increase usage and ultimately transform the current practice.