Electronic Review of External Quality Assurance Report

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KK Women's and Children's Hospital — SingHealth

Johnson Setoh W.S, Peh Siew Peng, Lydia Leong L.N, Linda Ho Y.C, Lee Pei Shan
Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

INTRODUCTION

Background

External quality assurance (EQA) programs are used to assess laboratory performance where the laboratory's results are compared with those of other laboratories and/or with an assigned value. The hardcopy results are reviewed by the laboratory and corrective actions to be taken if performance is not acceptable. These reports are kept over a period of three years. However in 2014, one of the EQA providers (Royal college of pathologist of Australasia) has stopped sending us the hardcopy reports. Electronic copy of the report was sent for every EQA report return since then.

Problems

We had to manually print out the EQA reports since year 2014 and the hardcopies reports also need to be stored in boxes for 3 years.
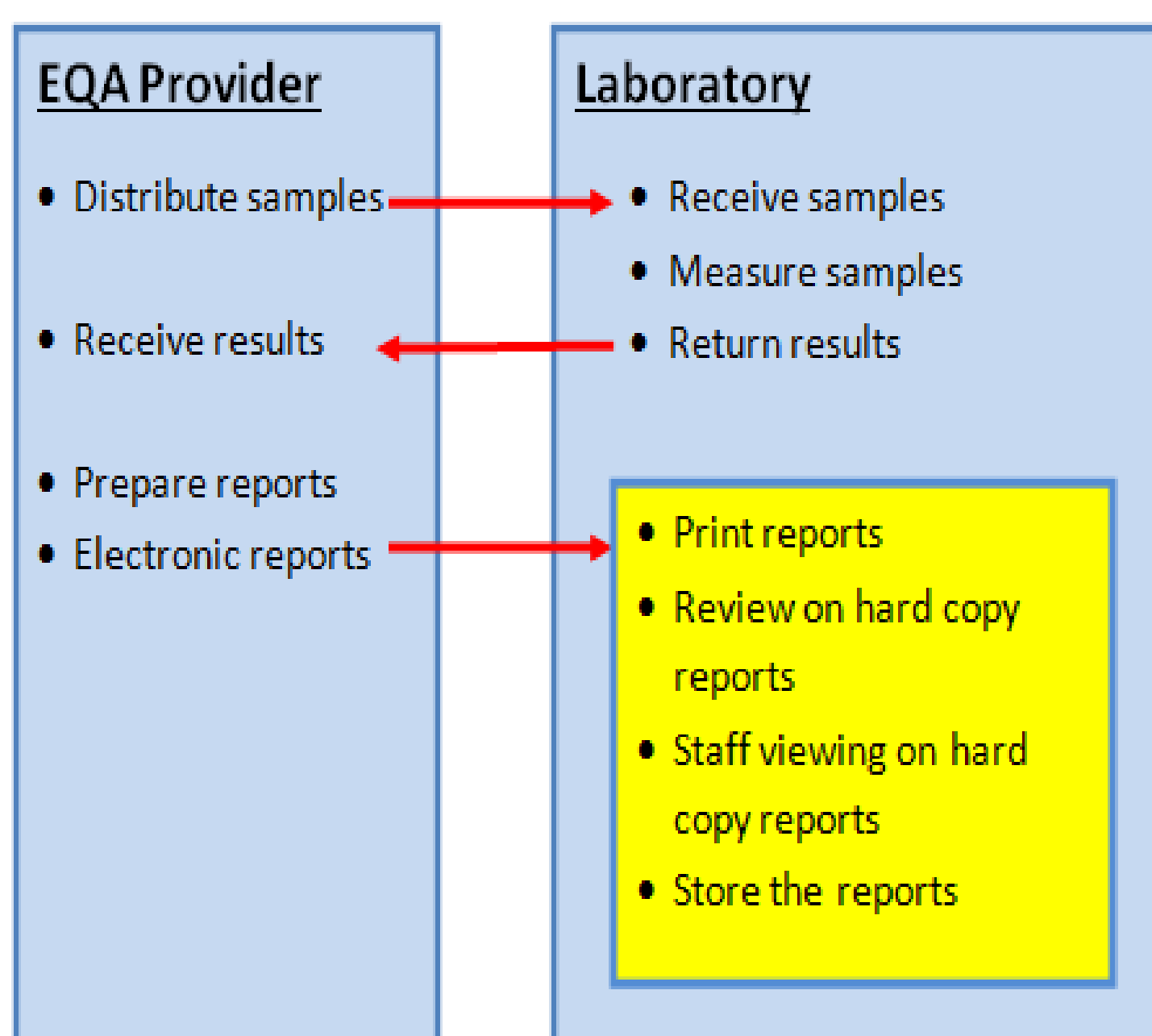

Figure 1. EQA Process

Aim of Study

1. To develop an in-house electronic review for Biochemistry and Immunochemistry Laboratory External Quality Assurance (EQA) reports.

2. To eliminate printing of hardcopy reports to demonstrate our commitment to protect the environment by going paperless.

METHODOLOGY

We implemented a new workflow to review and troubleshoot our EQA reports electronically by Senior Medical Technologist (SMT), Principal Medical Technologist (PMT) and Consultant Chemical Pathologist.
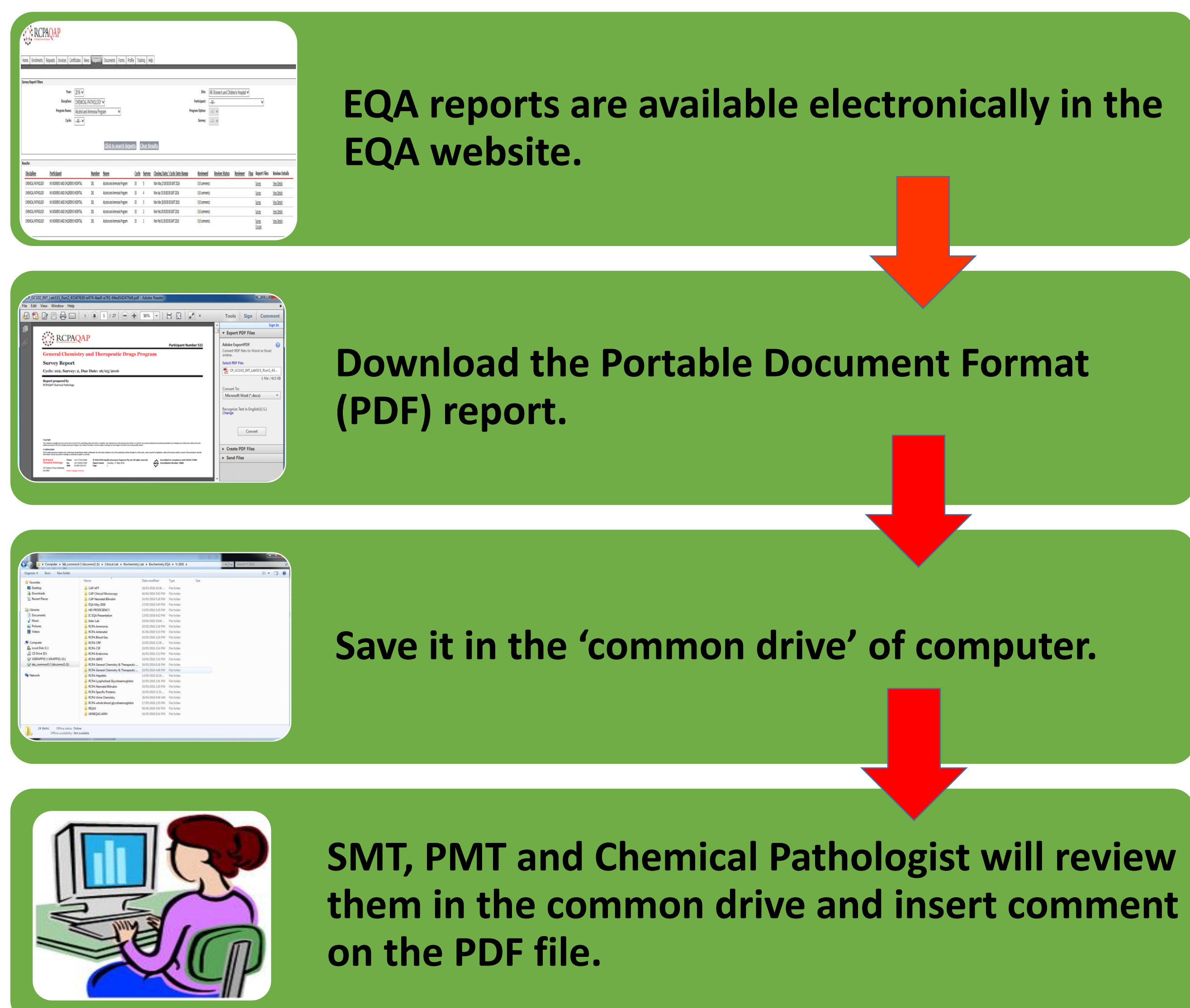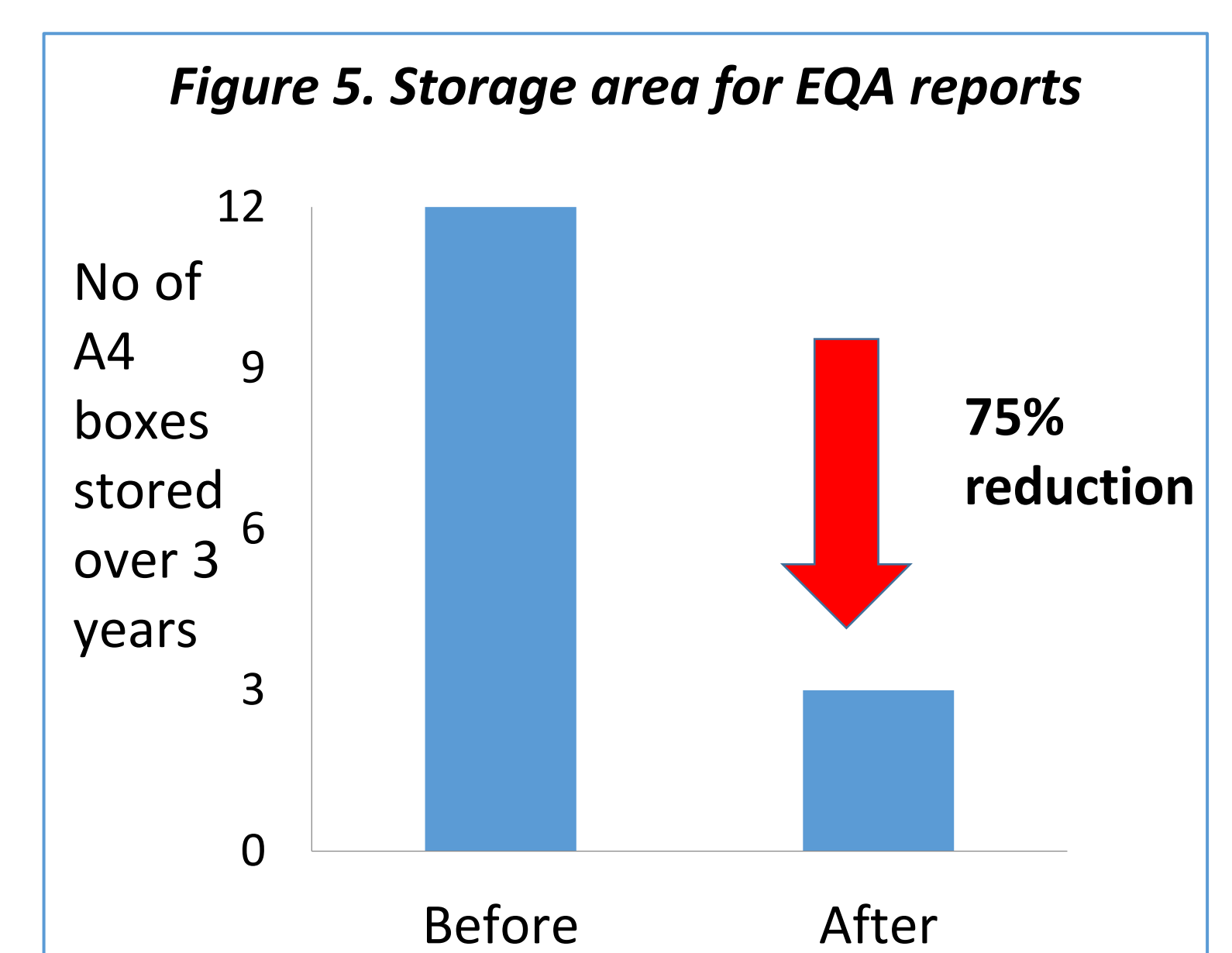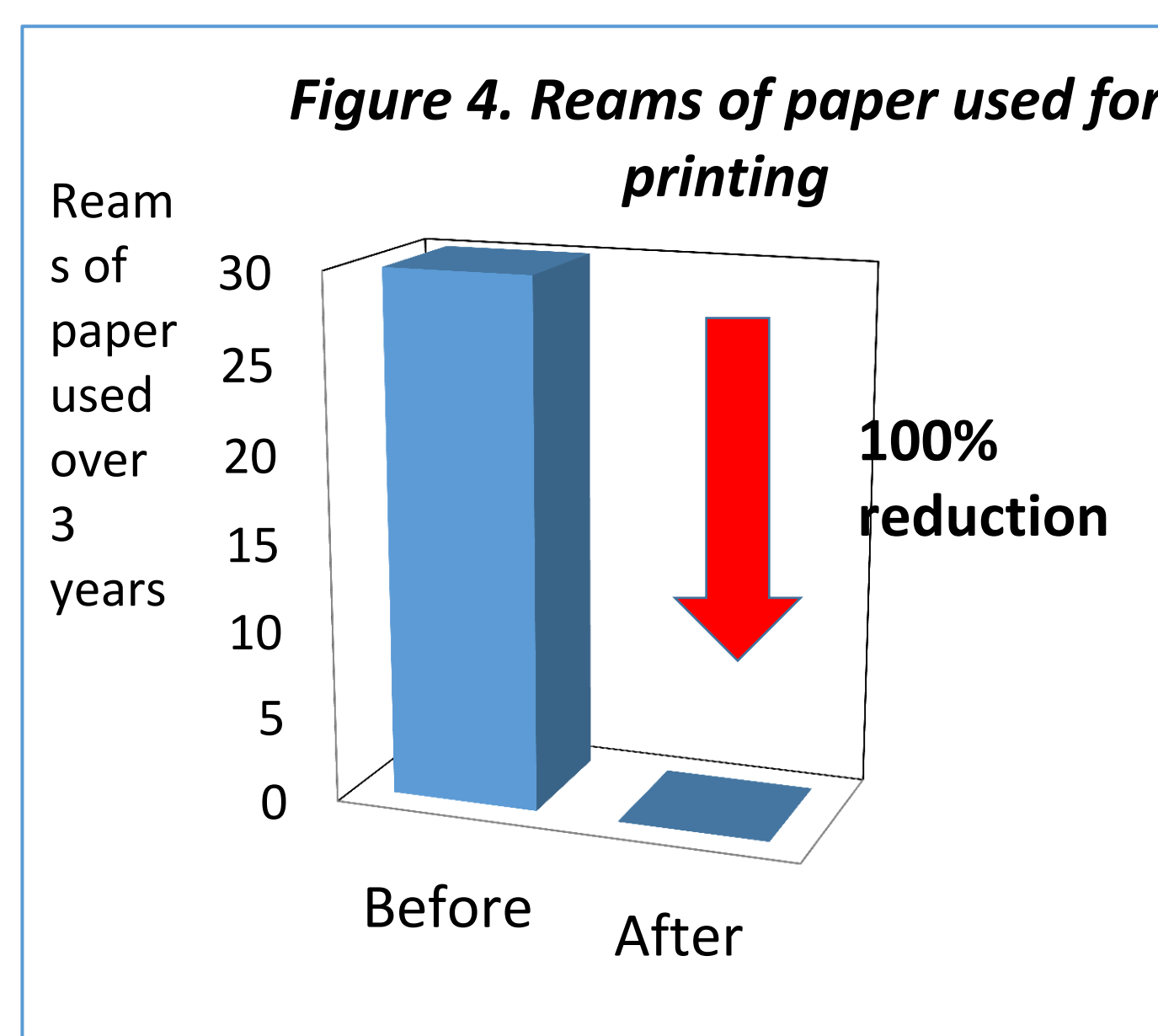

EQA reports are available electronically in the EQA website.

Download the Portable Document Format (PDF) report.

Save it in the 'common drive' of computer.

SMT, PMT and Chemical Pathologist will review them in the common drive and insert comment on the PDF file.

Figure 2. Electronic review of EQA report

RESULT

1. All electronic EQA reports can be conveniently access for review in the computer.

2. No more hardcopy printing of the EQA reports. We save about 30 reams of paper and 6 ink cartridges in 3 years. Total cost saving is about $1200 over 3 years.

3. We save the work area by reduction in the storage of EQA reports in the A4 size boxes from 12 boxes to 3 boxes over a period of 3 years. This is to keep the reports which are sent by the other EQA providers and the raw data.

Processes	Before	After
Return of EQA Reports	Print out reports	Save reports electronically in the 'common drive' of computer
Review of report	Hardcopy reports	Electronic reports
Staff viewing of reports	Hardcopy reports	Electronic reports
Storage of reports	Hardcopy reports	Electronic reports

Figure 3. Comparison of Before and After Workflow

Figure 4. Reams of paper used for printing

Reams of paper used over 3 years — **100% reduction** (Before / After)

Figure 5. Storage area for EQA reports

No of A4 boxes stored over 3 years — **75% reduction** (Before / After)

CONCLUSION

We have successfully implemented electronic review of EQA reports and have protected our environment by going paperless.

Save the Trees

GO GREEN GO PAPERLESS