



Singapore Healthcare Management 2016

Time reduced to process the monthly Health Endowment Fund Accounts Receivables (HEF AR)

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Introduction

Upon agreeing to assist patients financially under HEF, MSWs will provide a hard copy financial memo with 3rd party codes to inform the KKH cashiers that items stated in the memo should be tagged to the corresponding 3rd party code (in other words, the bill will be tagged and pending disbursement from HEF) and not charged to the patient.

The list of bills tagged with the 3rd party code will be sent to the MSW Department by Business Office on a monthly basis. Our staff will then check through every bill in the list, also known as AR, to ensure that there is a corresponding approved application put up by an MSW.

For bills with approved applications, these bills will be submitted to Finance to release the HEF funds to pay these bills.

Problem

The process of checking through each bill for a corresponding approved application involves:

1. Toggling between at least 3 different system applications
2. Verifying information such as date of bill, type of bill incurred, amount incurred etc.

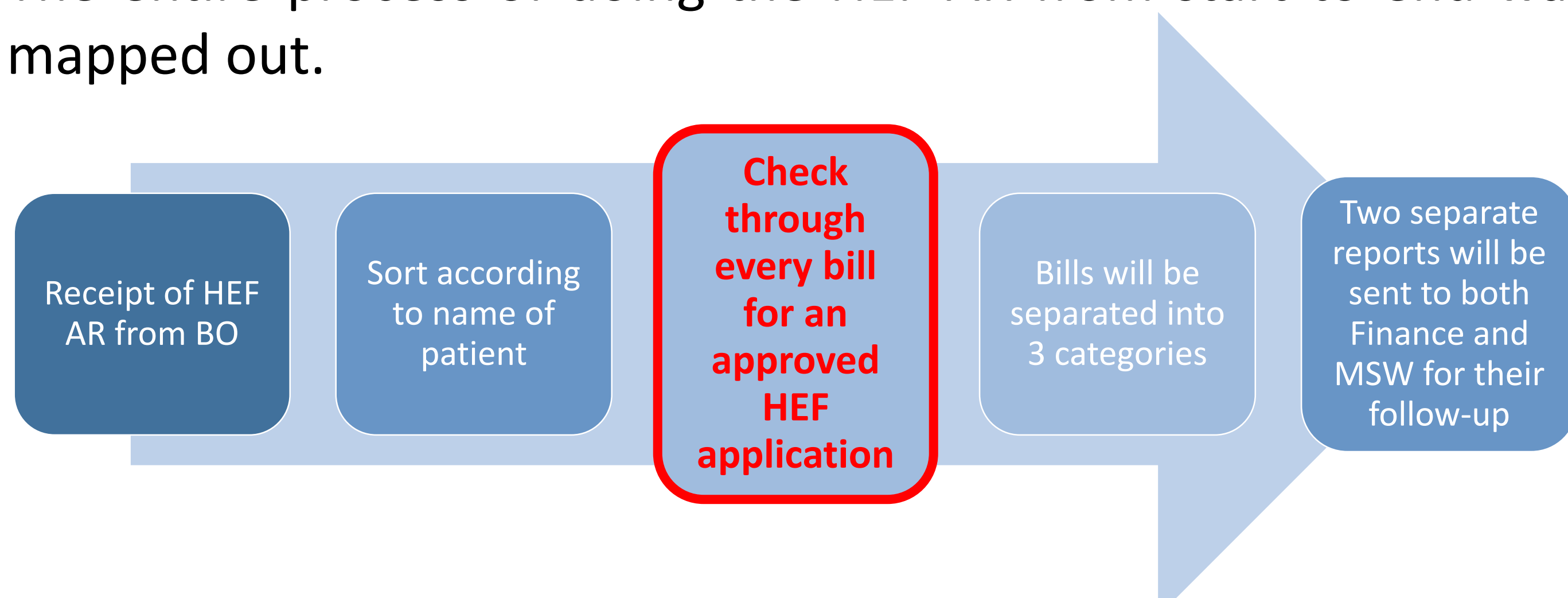
The task is time-consuming and very repetitive. The average number of bills in the HEF AR sent per month is 1000.

Aims of the Project

1. To reduce the amount of time taken to process the monthly HEF AR
2. To optimise manpower utilisation by reducing redundant steps

Methodology

The entire process of doing the HEF AR from start to end was mapped out.



The team identified this step (highlighted in red) as:

1. This is the most time-consuming step.
2. It is very repetitive by nature.
3. It is easy for the transfer of data as both HEF Database and HEF AR are already using the same PC software i.e. Microsoft Excel.

Conclusion

By leveraging on existing resources and without incurring extra cost, a system, based in Excel, was created to reduce the repetitive work resulting in a 4.5% manpower savings in a year. Staff satisfaction has greatly increased due to the reduction in repetitive work and lesser pressure to achieve the tight schedule to disburse HEF's payment to KKH.

Results

Time Saved per Year
= 79.1 hours = **4.5% of FTE saved**

Average **reduction of 64.6%** of time spent

	Outcomes of the HEF AR Bills			Total Time Taken (hr)	Time Saved (hr) <i>(Eliminate the "Pending HEF Payment" step)</i>	% of Time Saved
	Pending HEF Payment (100 sec)	Wrong Tagging (150 sec)	Pending MSW Application (30 sec)			
Jan-15	294	7	355	10.6	8.2	69.3%
Feb-15	249	0	384	9.4	6.9	66.0%
Mar-15	210	4	446	9.1	5.8	57.5%
Apr-15	253	1	508	10.6	7.0	59.7%
Jun-15	484	4	520	16.6	13.4	72.9%
Jul-15	186	8	560	9.7	5.2	48.2%
Aug-15	215	4	568	10.3	6.0	52.3%
Sep-15	245	10	519	10.9	6.8	56.4%
Oct-15	285	2	431	10.8	7.9	66.0%
Dec-15	427	3	427	14.4	11.9	74.3%
Total:					79.1	

Staff Feedback:

"This HEF AR system really helps to save a lot of time, I'm so happy that I don't need to copy and paste the application amount, POA since the system automatically pulls out all the info I need."

- Santhi Anbalagan, Social Work Coordinator

Zero cost incurred

Information required to be checked in this step are:

1. Whether there is a HEF application under patient's NRIC put up in the HEF database
2. Check the bill date against the period of assistance in the application
3. If the application put up is for a once-off item / expense, staff will check the bill item against the item details stated in the HEF application
4. Check that the application amount left to disburse is sufficient
5. Staff will then copy the information in the HEF database into the HEF AR

All the above steps (except for (3)) were then translated into Visual Basic language to automate and get Microsoft Excel to do the checking instead.