Appointment-Making for 4-Layer Dressing (4LD) Made Easy!

Tai Jia Yi, Singapore General Hospital
Liu Zhanhong, Singapore General Hospital
Susheela D/O Periak Aruppan, Singapore General Hospital
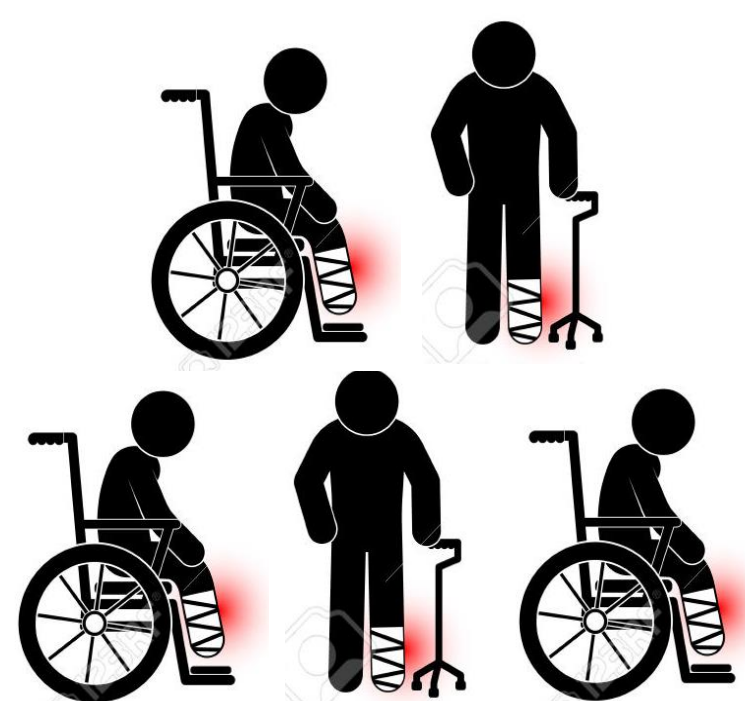
BACKGROUND

Vascular patients visit clinic weekly to change their 4-layer dressing

Treatment nurses manually book follow-up appointments for patients after each dressing
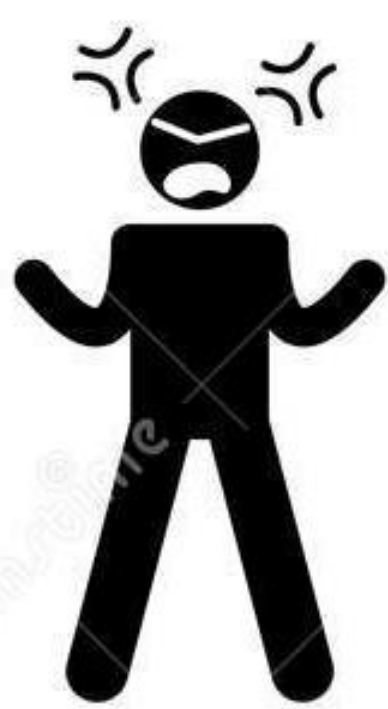
PROBLEM! ☹

Due to manual booking, there is no tracking and overview of appointments made, which may lead to overbooking.

Problem:
- ✗ Long waiting time for dressing, of up to 45mins
- ✗ Low staff satisfaction due to not being able to cope with workload
- ✗ Patients unable to self-register, resulting in higher workload at registration counters
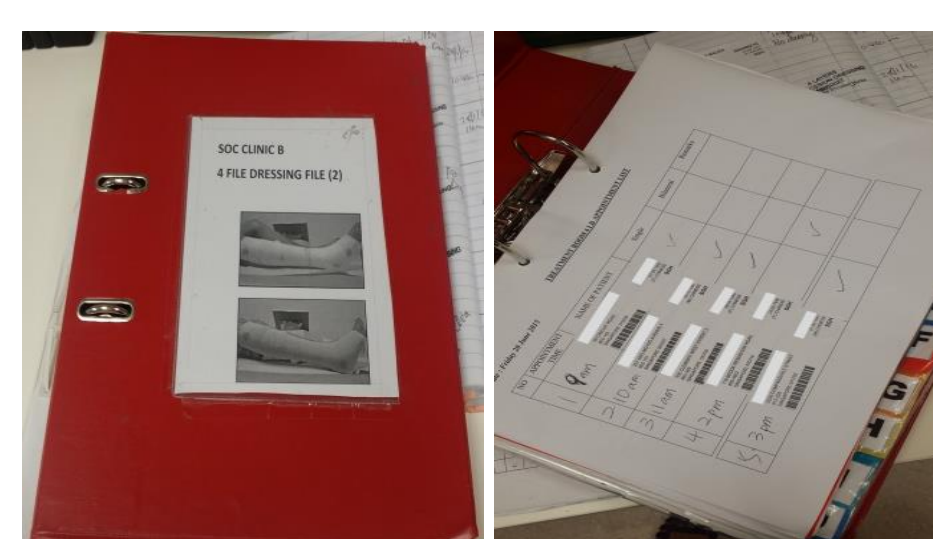- ✗ Patients unable to receive SMS reminders for their appointments

METHODOLOGY

The **cross-functional team** engaged various groups of staff to understand the current situation and analyzed the problem using the **5-WHYs** approach:

WHY?	• Patients are unhappy with 4LD appointment
WHY?	• Long waiting time for 4LD treatment
WHY?	• Too many patients booked for 4LD
WHY?	• Overbooking of Treatment Room resources
WHY?	• Manual booking of appointments, there is no tracking and overview of the appointments booked

The team brainstormed and proposed to set-up resource for 4LD in the appointment system to systemize appointment bookings.

Guidelines and trainings were conducted to ensure correct booking of appointments by the counter staff.

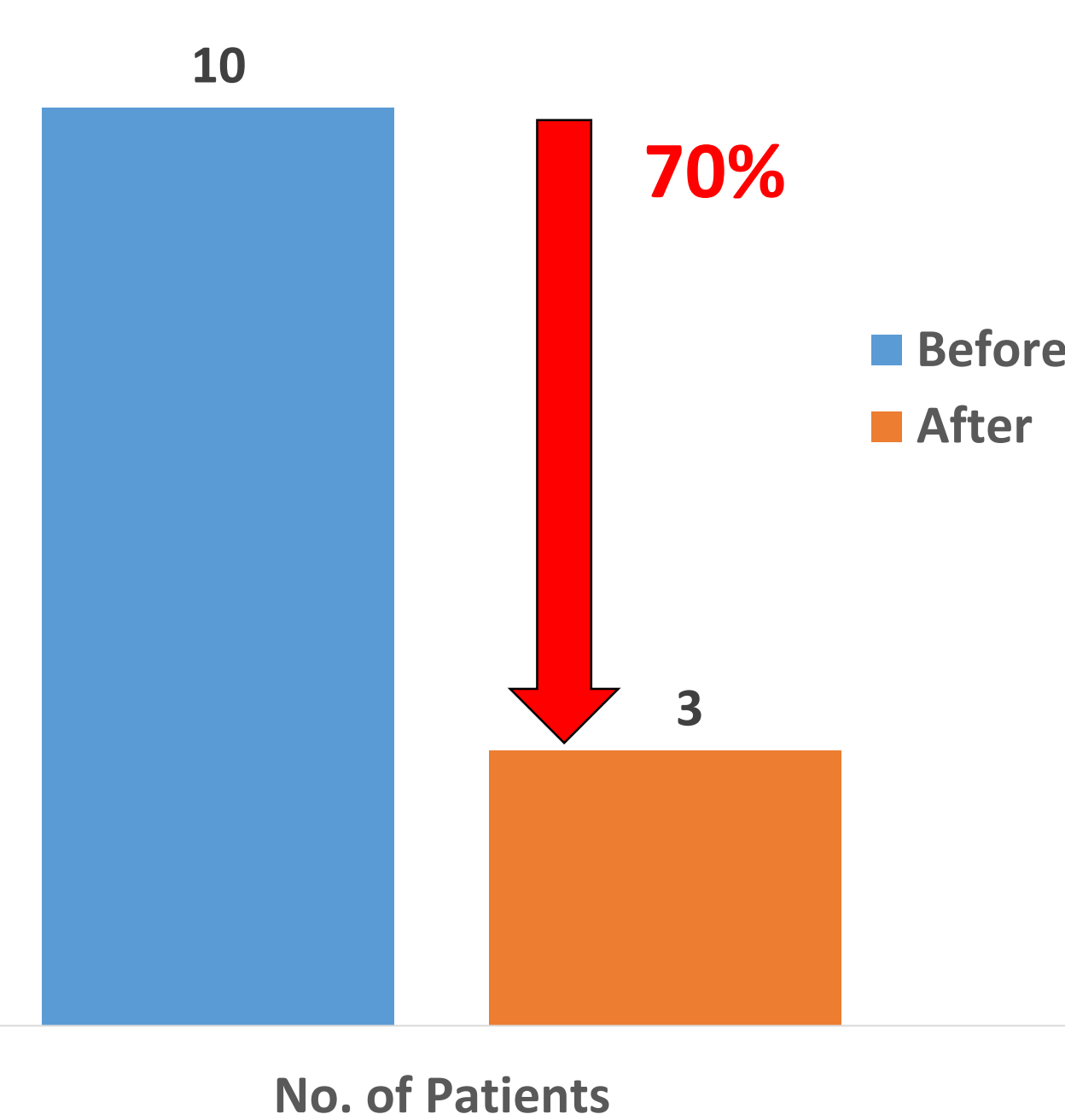Before: Manual recording
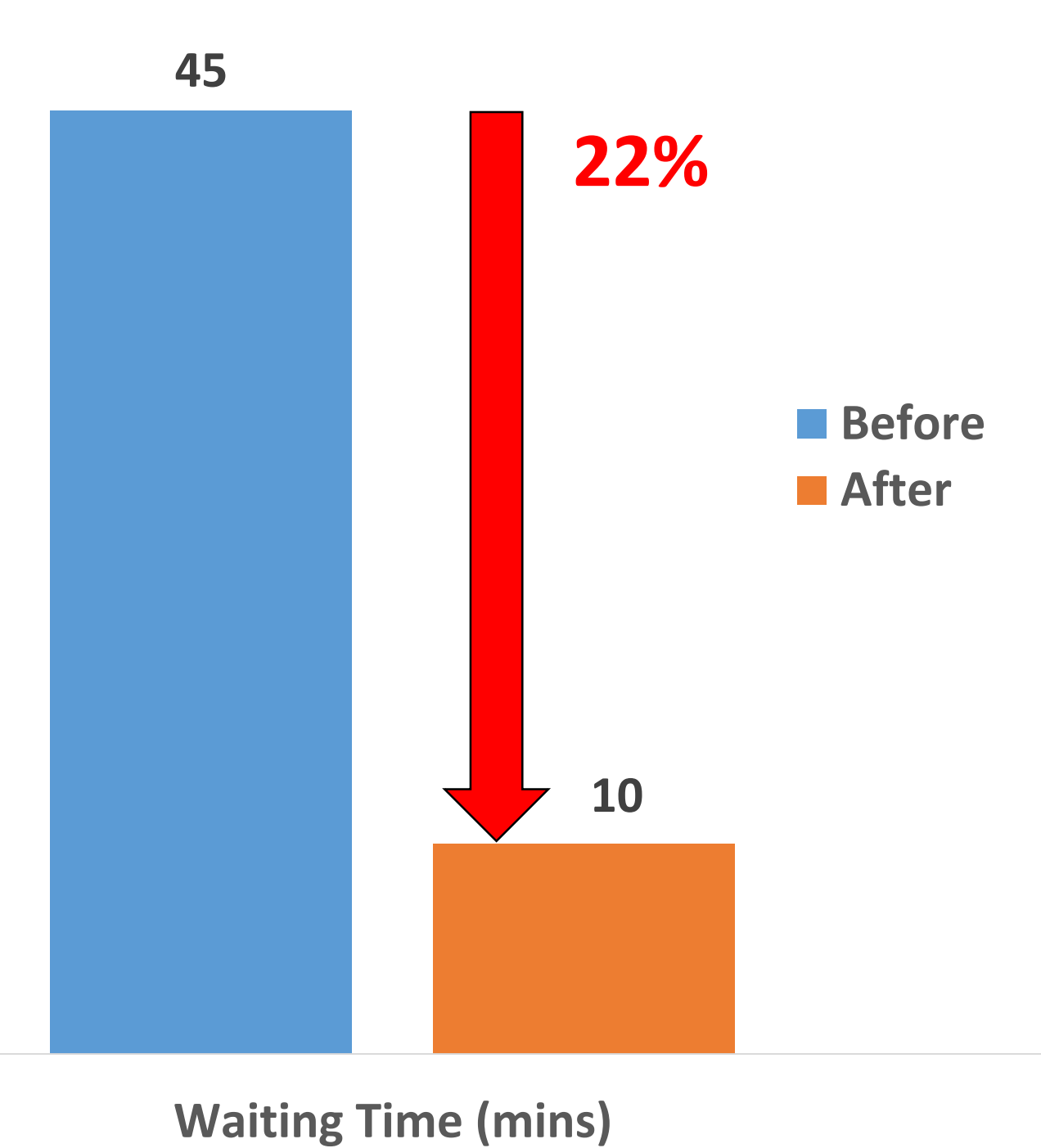After: Systemized appointment slots

AIM

To enhance care to patients through improved 4LD appointment scheduling process, allowing greater efficiency for registration at clinic.

RESULTS

4-Layer Dressing Registration @ Counters (for every 10 patients)

- 10 (Before)
- 3 (After)
- 70%

No. of Patients

- ■ Before
- ■ After

Waiting Time for 4LD (mins)

- 45 (Before)
- 10 (After)
- 22%

Waiting Time (mins)

- ■ Before
- ■ After

Tangible Results
- ✓ Reduced workload at registration counter by **70%** as patients are able to self-register via kiosk
- ✓ Reduced waiting time for 4LD by **22%** as appointments are better organized and monitored
- ✓ No-show rate decreased by **10%** as a result of appointment reminders sent

Intangible Results
- ✓ Improved productivity for registration, resulting in staff being able to take on other duties
- ✓ Treatment nurses are able to focus on clinical instead of administrative duties
- ✓ Improved patient satisfaction due to simpler registration processes and the reduced waiting time
- ✓ Patients are able to receive SMS reminders for their appointments
- ✓ More timely and accurate patient care can be provided
- ✓ Treatment Room nurses are happier as the workload for 4LD is evenly distributed, reducing their stress and anxiety level
- ✓ Patients feedback the waiting time feels shorter as they can proceed directly to the Treatment Room instead of waiting at counter

CONCLUSION

With the introduction of 4LD resource in the appointment system, nurses are relieved of administrative tasks to enable them to **focus on patient care and practice at the top of their licence**.

Appointments are better scheduled which **reduces waiting time** and **clinic resources are optimised**. Patients receive reminders which assure timely follow up and help improve patient outcomes.

Overall, patient care and satisfaction for both internal and external stakeholders are enhanced.