

Project Title

Complying To Safe Distancing Measures Through Drop And Go Counters

Project Lead and Members

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Organisation(s) Involved

Polyclinics SingHealth

Healthcare Family Group Involved in this Project

Ancillary Care

Applicable Specialty or Discipline

Polyclinic Care Coordinator

Project Period

Start date: Oct 2019

Completed date: June 2021

Aims

Reduce patient's wait time by 20% at CC counters to adhere to safe distancing measures.

Background

See poster appended/ below

Methods

See poster appended/ below

Results

See poster appended/ below

Conclusion

See poster appended/ below

Project Category

Care & Process Redesign

Access to Care, Waiting Time

Quality Improvement, Workflow Redesign

Keywords

Polyclinic: Drop and Go Workflow

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INTRODUCTION

Prior to COVID19, a SingHealth Polyclinic patient's journey will typically include proceeding to Care Coordinator (CC) counters to have their appointment(s) and referral(s) booked on the spot. This entails a wait time of approximately 20-45minutes during peak period.

PROBLEM

Patient load started normalizing with the easing of Circuit Breaker but compliance to Safe Distancing Measures was a challenge, given the space constraints at Marine Parade Polyclinic. To ensure adherence, it was critical to change one of the processes within a patient's journey at the polyclinic and CC counters was identified.

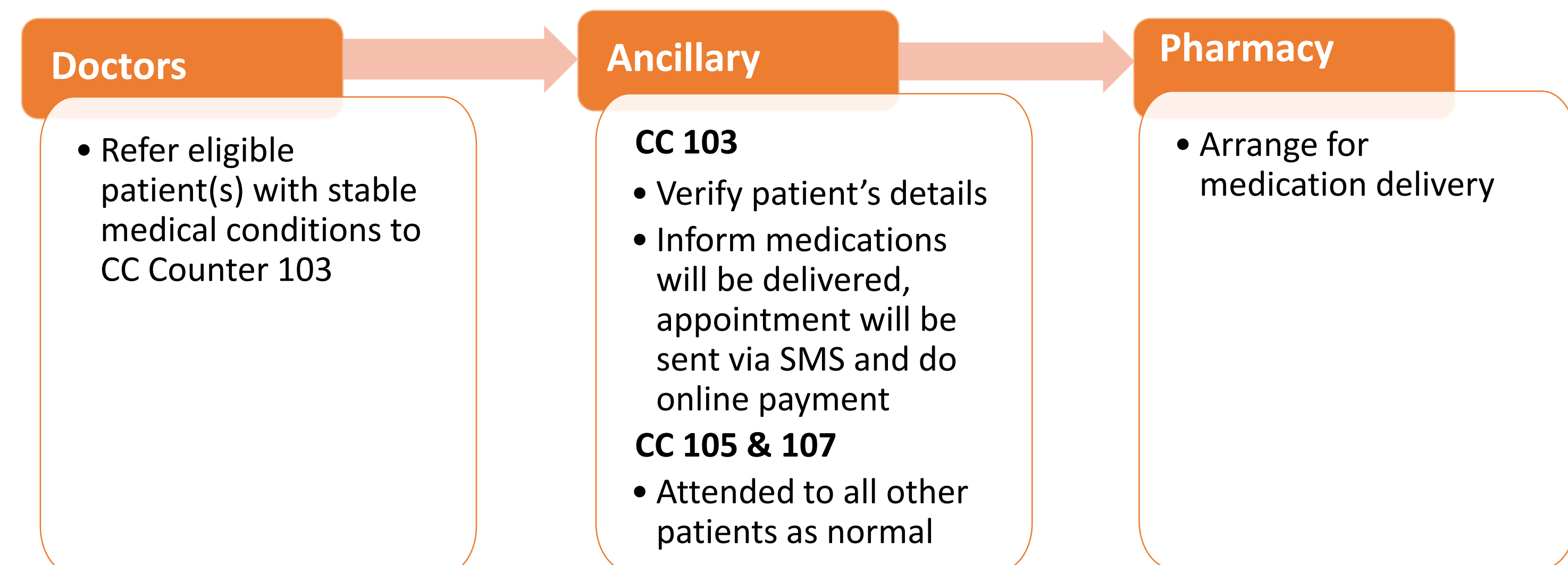
OBJECTIVES

Reduce patient's wait time by 20% at CC counters to adhere to safe distancing measures.

METHODOLOGY

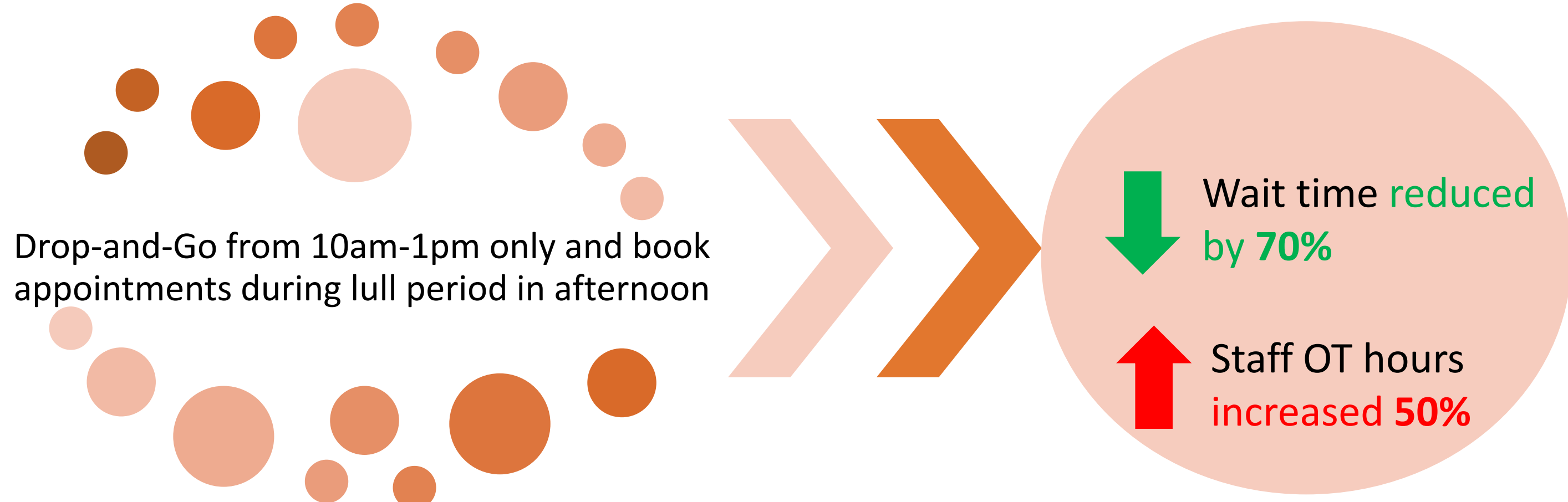
The team analysed patients' wait time at various service stations and there were 2 stations that were of interest: Pharmacy and CC. 3 PDSA cycles were carried out.

PDSA1: Collaborated with Pharmacy and doctors to facilitate Drop-and-Go at CC counter 103.



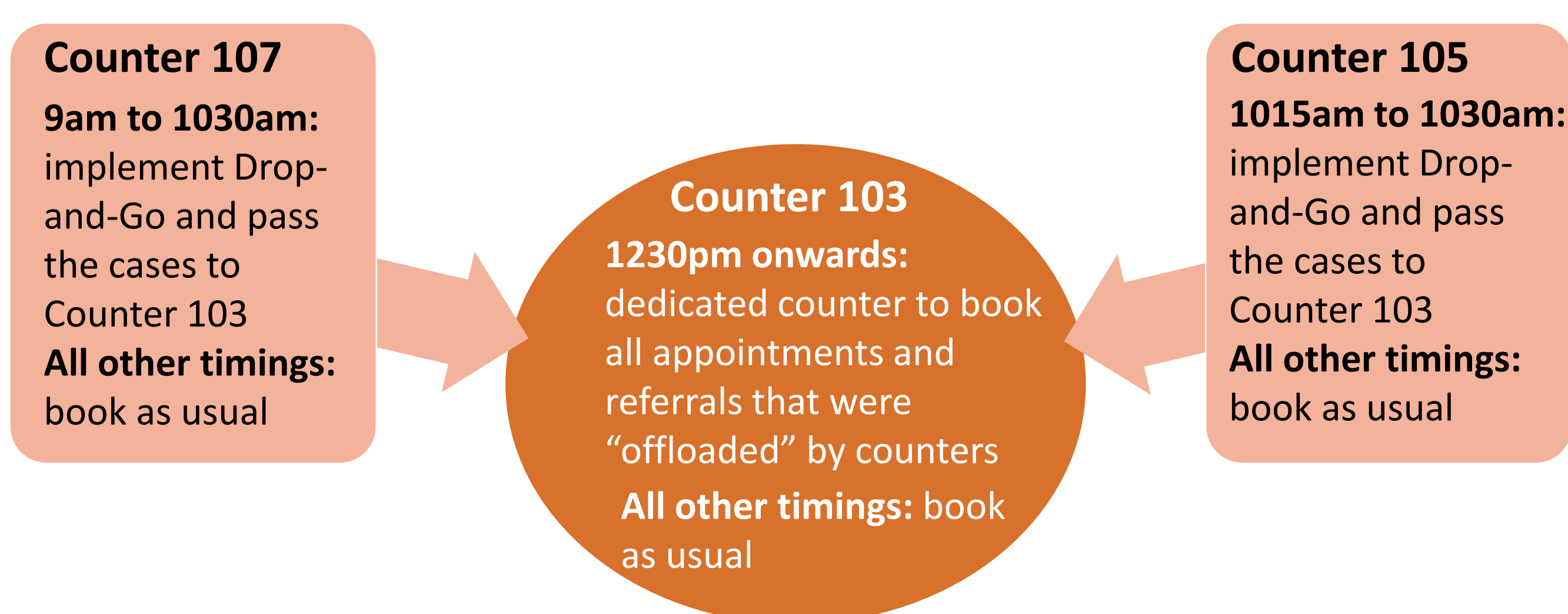
Results: ballooning effect for Pharmacy as 32% of referred patients were ineligible

PDSA2: Changed workflow for all CC counters to implement Drop-and-Go during peak period.



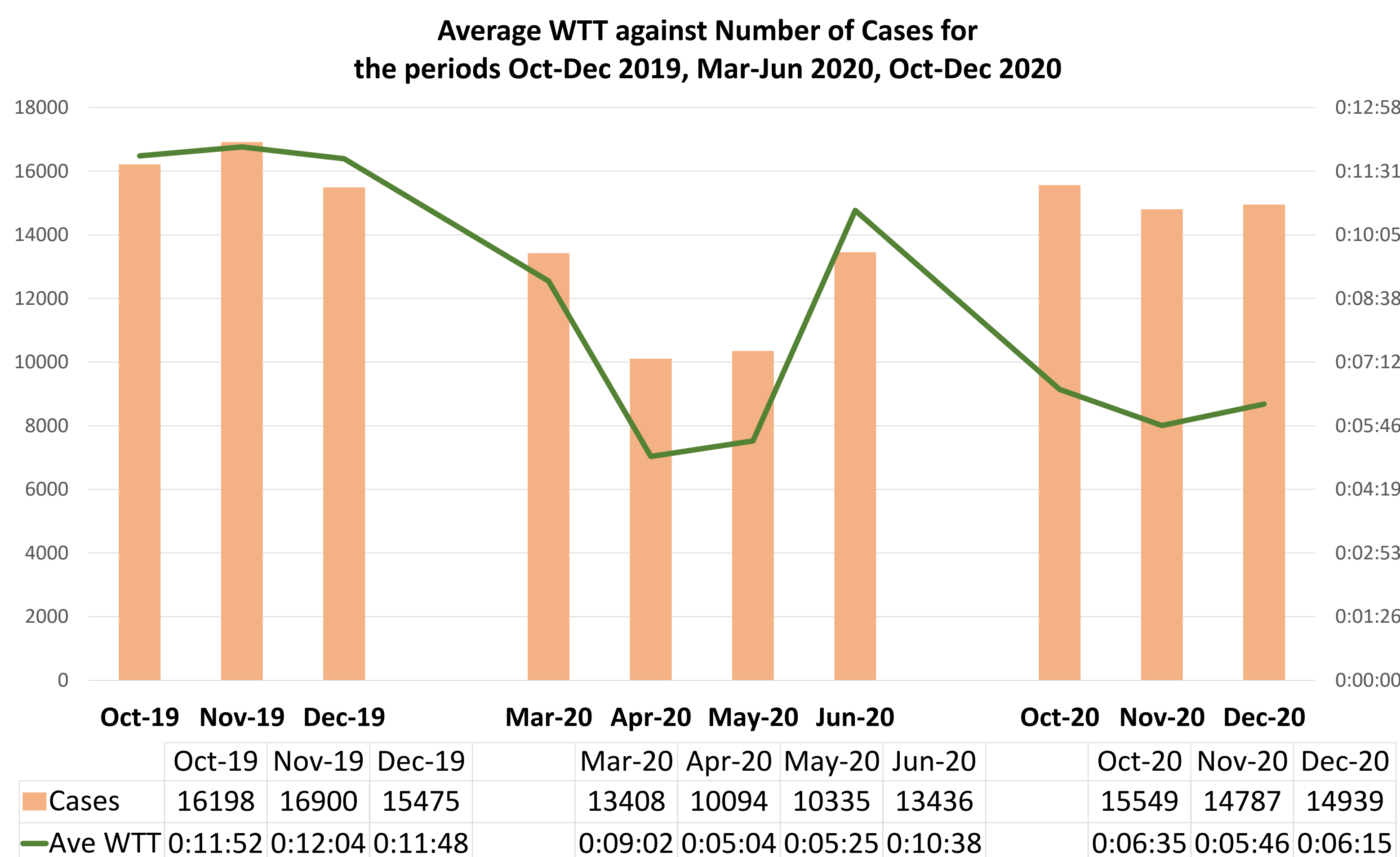
Patients were unfamiliar with the workflow and called Call Centre, which were routed back to CC counters. This caused double work as the CC staff had to call and explain to patients.

PDSA3: Specific timings were identified for Counter 105 and 107 to verify patient's details and pass to Counter 103.



RESULTS

PDSA3 was implemented in October 2022 and yielded positive results.

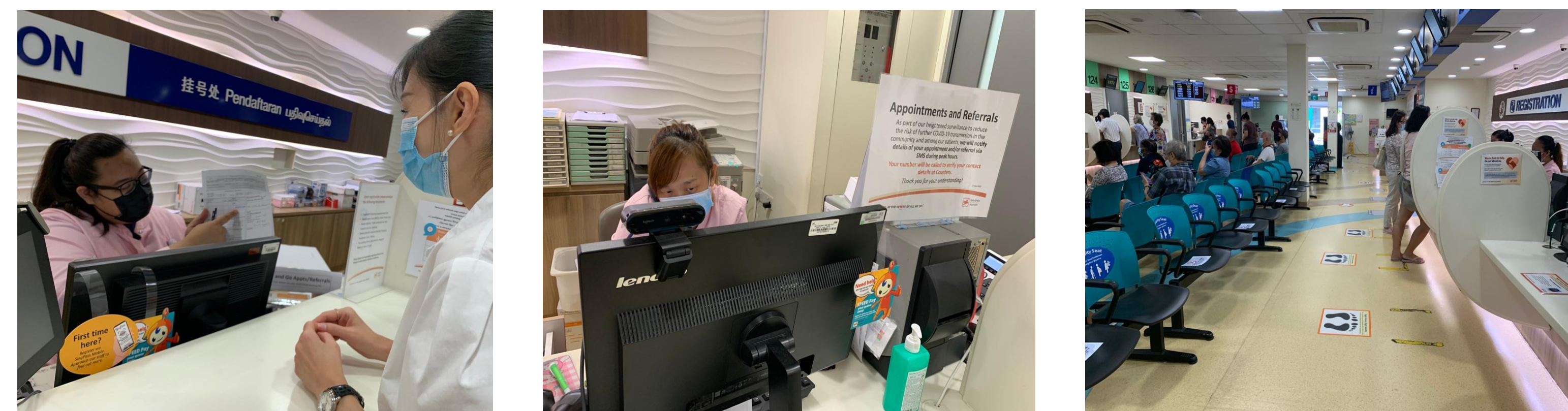


Wait time at CC counters reduced by 40%

- Reduced wait time remained consistent, even on days with high volume of patients such as Mondays and post-holidays
Longest wait time between October 2020 to June 2021: 09 mins 11 seconds
No. of patients with wait time of 6 minutes - 10 minutes: less than 8%
No patient waited more than 10 minutes

This allowed us to comply to the legislated Safe Distancing Measures, even as the number of patients that Marine Parade Polyclinic was serving started to normalize. Other ripple benefits from Drop-and-Go includes:

- Workload levelled across all CC
CC Counter 103 provided mental respite for staff as they had the least disruption as they can focus solely on booking appointment/referrals
Lesser errors and missed cases in appointment bookings and referrals



FUTURE WORKS

The success of the Drop-and-Go counter paved the way to relooking at workflow processes at the CC counters. As the team saw the value of the project and became confident, it became Phase I of the CC counter workflow revamp for Marine Parade Polyclinic. In 2022, Marine Parade Polyclinic embarked on Phase II of the CC counter workflow revamp with the introduction of One Stop Counter.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of Drop-and-Go helped Marine Parade Polyclinic to not only meet Safe Distancing Measures but also reduced the wait time for patients at CC Counters. This, in effect, reduced patient's overall wait time and increased patient's experience and safety. With the successful implementation of Drop-and-Go at Marine Parade Polyclinic, it was implemented at other SingHealth Polyclinics.