

Project Title

Empowering Patients Enhances their Journey at the Specialist Outpatient Clinics (SOCs)

Project Lead and Members

- Jane Chong, Operations (Surgery), Manager
- Neo Chee Szu, Operations (Pearl), Assistant Manager
- Soo Beng Beng, Operations (Pearl), Executive
- Wendy Ho, Clinic 4B, Manager

Organisation(s) Involved

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Project Period

Start date: Sept 2012

Project Category

Process Improvement, Technology, Care Redesign, Process Redesign, Quality Improvement, Productivity

Keywords

Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Operations, Process Improvement, Process Redesign, Care Redesign, Quality Improvement, Productivity, Patient-centric Care, Patient Experience, Patient Empowerment, Patient's Self Dependency, Cost Effectiveness, Improved Satisfaction, Efficient Care, Coordinated Care, Technology, Self-Registration Kiosk, Self-assist Blood Pressure Monitor, Electronic Billing, Pictorial Instructions, , One-time Authorised Payment, Shorter Waiting Time, Reduced Manpower Cost, Standardised Work Processes, Specialist Outpatient Clinics

Name and Email of Project Contact Person(s)

Name: Jane Chong, Operations (Surgery), Manager

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**HOSPITAL
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ENTRY FORM FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE CATEGORY

A customer service project that responded well to the needs of its clientele, **drew praise from them**, and **positively projected the hospital** as a quality service provider. The judges favor entries that also **reduced costs**, and did not **require major capital expenditure**. More weight is given to projects that are **innovative** (in relation to where the hospital is located). Is it a meaningful improvement of its service considering the environment in which it operates?

INSTRUCTIONS

- a. Please fill out all the sections below and abide strictly by the word count. Words exceeding the maximum word count will be cut off automatically/truncated.
- b. IMPORTANT: It is necessary that the CEO certifies that all information you provide is true and correct by signing the form indicated in the last page.
- c. By submitting an entry, you agree that HMA will share relevant aspects of the Entry submitted on the HMA or related Resource Center website.

Background Information

Project Title **Empowering Patients Enhances their Journey at the Specialist Outpatient Clinics**

Date Project Started **Sep 2012**

Enhancements made (for projects that did not start operations between Jan 2013 to May 2014)

Key staff involved in the project

1. Name Jane Chong

Department/Function Operations (Surgery), Manager

2. Name Neo Chee Szu

Department/Function Operations (Pearl), Assistant Manager

for better care coordination, accessibility to information and public transportation, and cleanliness.

Word count: 348/ 350

2. Please describe how the project was beneficial from the patient's perspective and experience, and how it improved patient care, patient safety or service. Preferably please present quantifiable information such as "before and after" measurements if any. Did it meet and exceed expectations? **MAX 200 WORDS.**

Overall, these improved initiatives have shortened patient visit by over 20mins. It translates to >15,000 hours saved yearly. For a busy hospital like TTSH, every minute saved counts in terms of attending to more patients.

The step-by-step pictorial guide at the **Self-Registration Kiosks**, has helped patients better manage their registration without having to seek help from frontline staff. Frontline staff can spend more time and effort working on other patient-centric services.

The use of **Self-Assist Blood Pressure Monitors** has empowered patients to measure their own blood pressure without needing nurses' assistance. This has significantly reduced the waiting time for the nurse. The increased usage by 40% also shows that patients are receptive.

The **Electronic Billing Function** that replaces the Service Charge Forms has enabled a seamless flow of information which ensured all charges are captured for accurate processing.

"Zoom" billing has given patients greater convenience as they now receive the bill through mail. It has prevented the patients from waiting and reduced payment hassle, especially if it involved different types of services at different locations.

These seamless processes and the effective deployment of manpower resources allow us to be more patient-centric in care, which ultimately enhances patient experience.

Word count: 198/ 200

3. Please tell us how you have engaged your whole team in a culture of customer service excellence and how the project positively projected the hospital as a quality service provider. **MAX 200 WORDS.**

Different project teams comprising managers, executives, nurses and frontline staff were formed to review and develop better ways to improve patient experience at the SOCs. Frontline staff are Patient Service Associates (PSAs) who are well-versed with patient service relations skills. Prior to the process implementation, our PSAs and nurses have engaged patients and sought their feedback about our service to better understand their needs.

Stakeholders' concerns opinions about the accuracy and efficient use of Self-Assist Blood Pressure Monitors during the development phase were addressed by the Health Sciences Authority.

Regular observations, patient surveys and review sessions were conducted to ensure the understanding of patient needs, relevance and to find better ways to encourage patient's self dependency. Work processes were also standardised to ensure the consistency in service delivery.

These enhanced processes were presented at managerial platforms, at the SOCs and showcased to Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health (MOH) Singapore, Mrs Tan Ching Yee, during her recent visit to our hospital. It's recognition by MOH Singapore to be cost effective, productive and patient centric has also led to the obtaining of a grant that constitutes 50% of the project cost.

Word count: 191/ 200

4. Please explain if the project utilized capital and how much was utilized. Or in fact did it also reduce costs? To what extent was the project prevention oriented, and how well it will reduce or eliminate the service defect, or reduce waste, or improve communication. Will the benefits be long lasting? **MAX 150 WORDS.**

Despite incurring \$29,725 on purchasing new equipments, these improved processes and automated services have helped the SOCs achieved \$415,840 in savings, largely from manpower cost.

It has also improved manpower planning with better redeployment of frontline staff to deliver better service and care to patients.

The SRKs and Self-Assist Blood Pressure Monitors has empowered our patients by empowering them with new knowledge in using the machines and enhanced their experience. It has enabled the nurses to prioritise on delivery patient centric services.

With the electronic billing function and the introduction of "Zoom" billing, these processes have not only complemented the hospital's environmental friendly goal but also reduced waste, time and cost. Patients no longer e need to complete the service forms and wait for payment. PSAs can focus on attending to more urgent tasks.

Word count: 134 / 150

5. Please give some background of the project team that originated, studied and developed the project or program. **MAX 200 WORDS.**

Different initiatives were led by different project teams comprising managers, executives, nurses and PSAs. However, PSAs and nurses have contributed the most in providing practical solutions, valuable inputs related to their experience and observations on the ground since they have more interaction opportunities with patients. They also reviewed work periodically, sought better ways to improve service standards and increased work efficiency following the standardised work processes.

Word count: 65 / 200

6. Please give any other information, including third party testimonial regarding your project which you think would help convince the judges that this project (or program) should win this category. **MAX 200 WORDS.**

By building a service culture of improvement, we see tangible savings as less time is spent on resolving patient complaints and providing service recovery.

Compliments from Patients

"The Self-Registration Kiosk is now so much easier to use... "

"Noticed that the sms page is removed - registration is more convenient now"

"Now I can take my own blood pressure anytime I want. I like that it is easy to use."

"It saves me so much time now that I do not have to queue for payment."

Compliments from Staff

"I now spend less time doing payment and more time interacting and caring for my patients."

Word count: 116 / 200