

Project Title

Discharged Patient Appointments Workflow Enhancements

Project Lead and Members

Project lead: Nurfarina

Project members: Liyana, Sonia, Siti Nor Hidayah

Organisation(s) Involved

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital, Jurong Community Hospital

Healthcare Family Group(s) Involved in this Project

Healthcare Administration

Applicable Specialty or Discipline

Patient Service Centre

Project Period

Start date: Apr 2021

Completed date: Jul 2021

Aims

- To ensure 100% of our discharged patients are aware of their follow-up appointment details.
- To establish a department target - 90% of our discharged patients will receive their appointment letters before they are discharged.

Background

See poster appended / below

Methods

See poster appended / below

Results

See poster appended / below

Lessons Learnt

- Review existing workflows periodically while leveraging on internal resources aids in providing better services to our patients.
- The importance of re-training and staff communication are essential to the implementation of any new or revised workflows.

Conclusion

See poster appended / below

Project Category

Care & Process Redesign, Quality Improvement, Workflow Redesign

Keywords

Patient Discharge, Appointment Letters, Value Based Care, Operational Management

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DISCHARGED PATIENT APPOINTMENTS WORKFLOW ENHANCEMENTS

MEMBERS: NURFARINA, LIYANA, SONIA, SITI NOR HIDAYAH
 FACILITATOR: KEN KAN

✓ SAFETY
 □ QUALITY
 ✓ PATIENT EXPERIENCE

✓ PRODUCTIVITY
 □ COST

Define Problem, Set Aim

Problem/Opportunity for Improvement

Based on our past PES results in 2020, 30% of our readmitted patients mentioned that they did not receive their appointment letters or unaware that they have follow-up appointments after they have discharged. This could have resulted in no-shows for their follow-up SOC appointments and possibly impact our patients' safety.

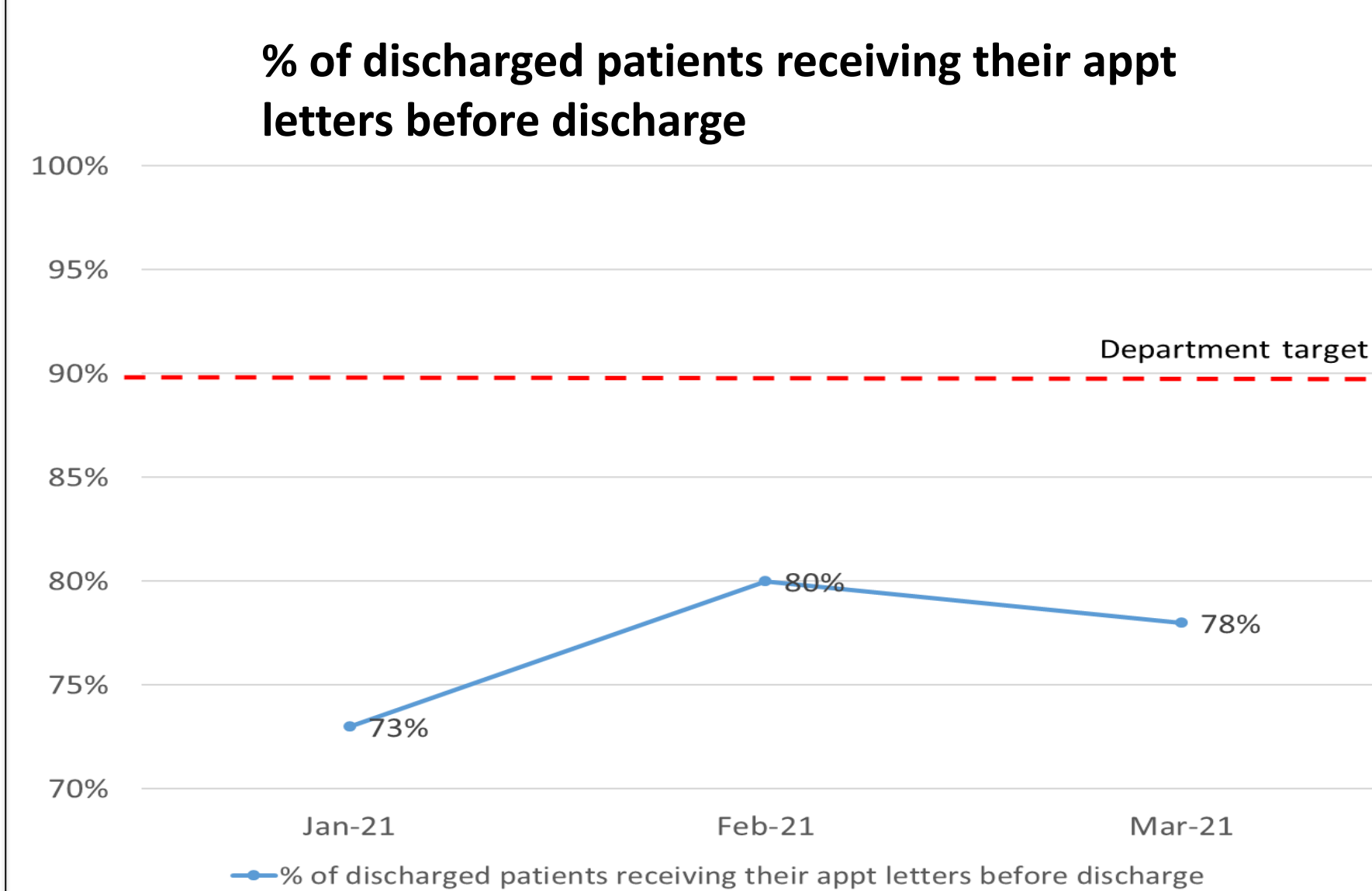
Aim

To ensure 100% of our discharged patients are aware of their follow-up appointment details. To establish a department target - 90% of our discharged patients will receive their appointment letters before they are discharged.

Establish Measures

Measures

Establish a standardised method to track % of discharge patients receiving their appointment letters before and after discharge. This exclude appointments that require force booking.



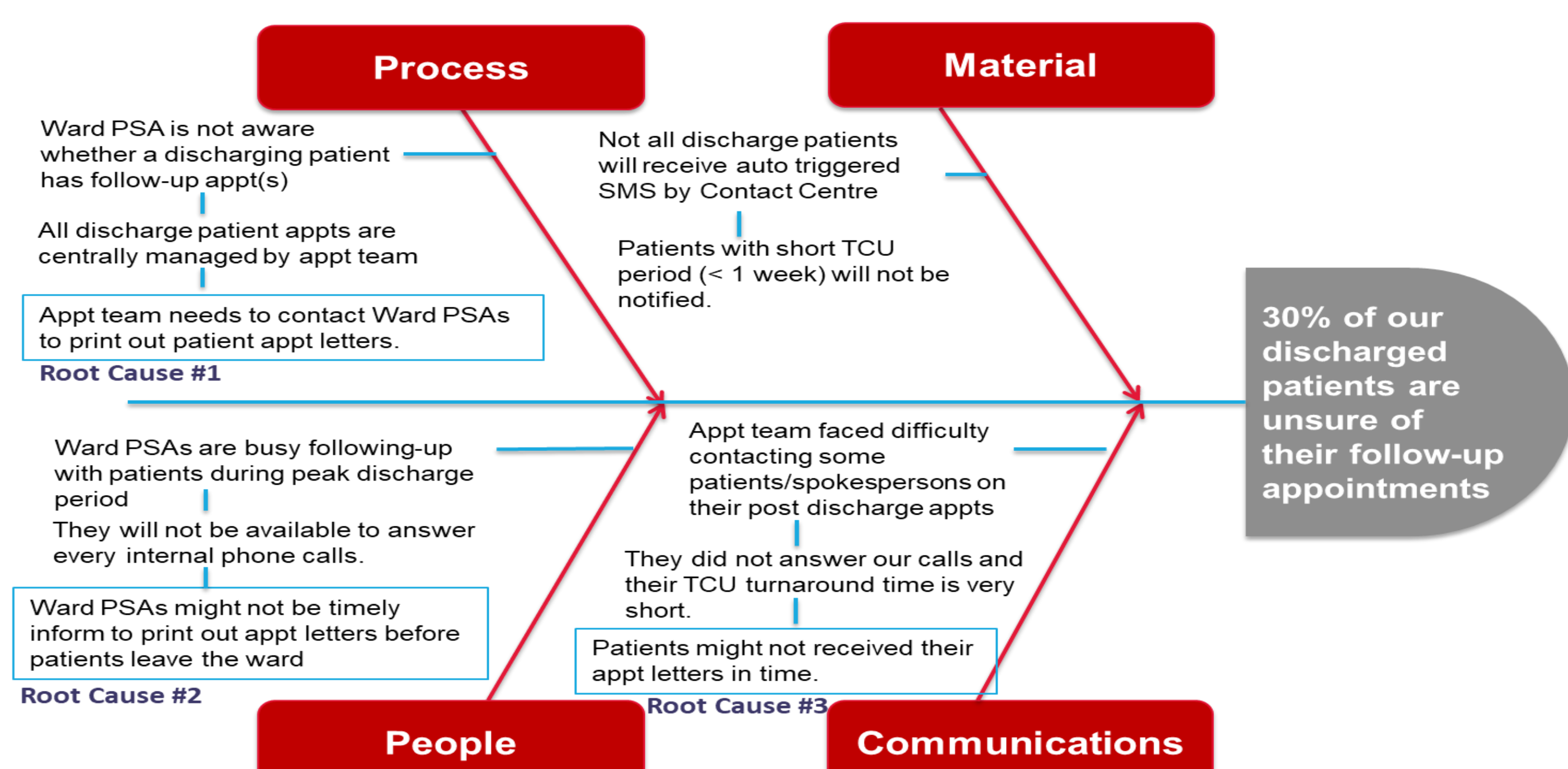
Current Performance
 Based on our department audits between Jan 2021 to Mar 2021, an average of 77% of our discharged patients received their appointment letters before discharge.

Analyse Problem

Current process

- Inpatient Ops centralised appointment team contact Ward PSA to print patient appointment letter once an appointment is obtained.
- During peak discharge period (10am to 4pm), Ward PSA might not be timely in printing the appointment letters as they are busy following-up with discharging patients.
- Moreover, discharged patients with short follow-up appointment date(s) might miss their appointments as they will not receive CC triggered SMS or/and their appointment letters in time if they are not given upon discharge.
- Patient may not be aware of their appointment dates & tends to get anxious waiting for an update and spend unnecessary time calling the hospital to find out the details of their appointment.

Probable root cause

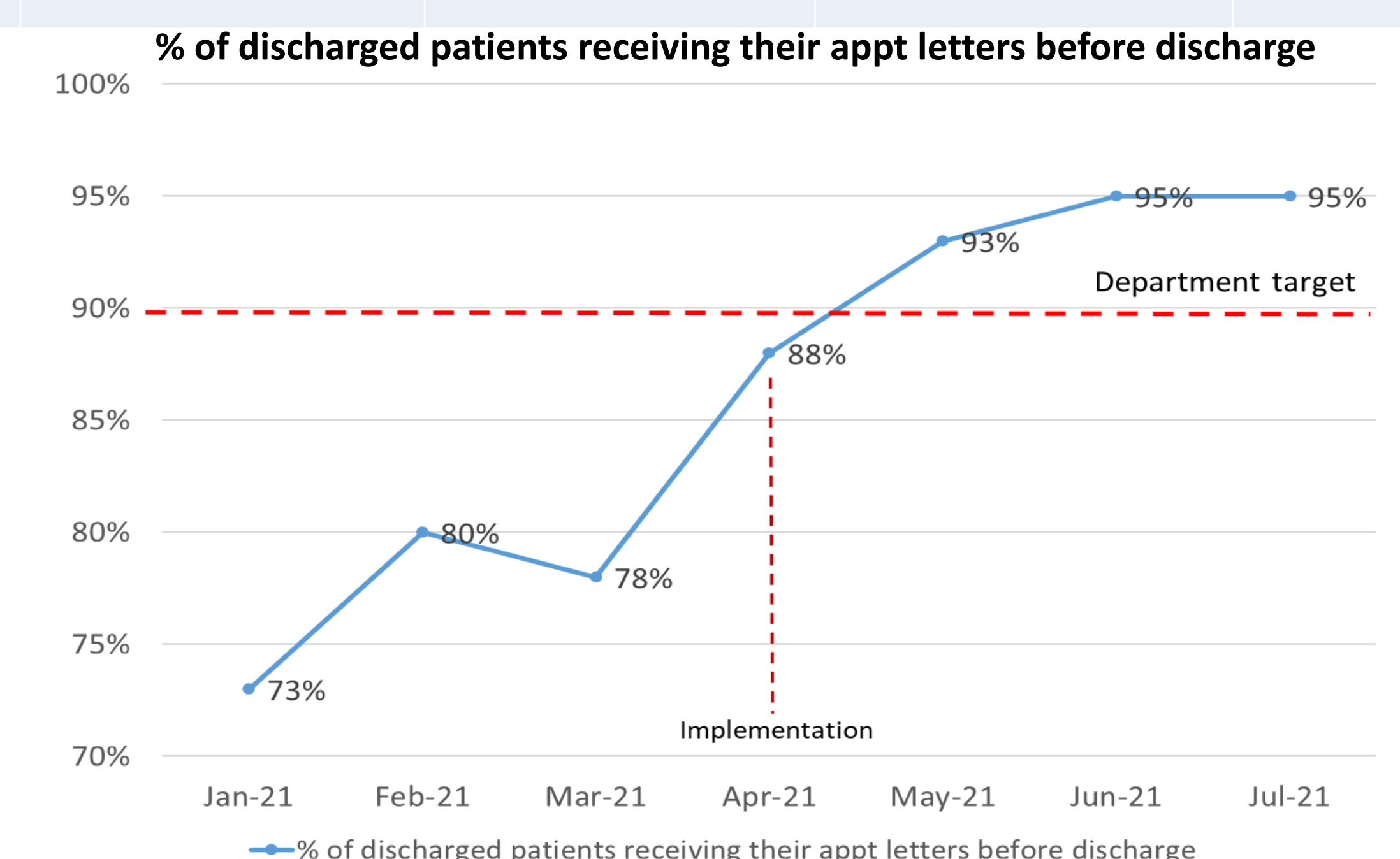


Select Changes

Root causes	Possible Solutions
#1 Appointment team needs to contact Ward PSA to print appointment letter	1 Ward PSAs to take a proactive approach to check and generate appointments letters via EPIC
	2 Respective Team Leads to check and inform ward PSAs to generate the appointment letters
	3 Assign seniors (e.g. SPSAs and above) to do ground walks to remind Ward PSAs to print out appointment letters
	4 Appointment team to remotely print out appointment letters to printer located at main nurse station.
#2 Ward PSAs might not be timely inform to print out appt letters before patients leave the ward	1 Appointment team mails out patient appointment letter if they are unreachable.
	2 Appointment team attempts to contact the discharged patients and send SMS reminders via HMS if they are unreachable.
	3 Appointment team to send email reminders to discharge patients.
	4 Inform discharge patients to contact the discharge ward for their appointment details.
#3 Patients might not received their appt letters in time	1 Appointment team mails out patient appointment letter if they are unreachable.
	2 Appointment team attempts to contact the discharged patients and send SMS reminders via HMS if they are unreachable.
	3 Appointment team to send email reminders to discharge patients.
	4 Inform discharge patients to contact the discharge ward for their appointment details.

Test & Implement Changes

CYCLE	PLAN	DO	STUDY	ACT
1	Establish audit guidelines on the frequency for ward PSAs to check and print of discharge patient appointment letters	Ward PSAs to periodically check and generate patient appointment letters during peak discharge period	Review audit findings and validate findings for non-compliance	Fine tune implemented process for improvement
2	Create predetermined one-way SMS template message in HMS for uncontactable discharge patients. Create a password protected Excel tracking sheet for these group of patients to ensure all discharges patients (100%) are aware of their follow-up appts	Inpatient centralised appointment team to send out SMS via HMS to uncontactable patients. Daily updating of tracking sheet once SMS as been sent.	Tally HMS records against tracking sheet to ensure all outstanding cases are closed.	Work closely with Ward PSAs to ensure patient contact details remains update-to-date.



- Attained an average of 93% of discharged patients received their appt details before discharge (Remaining 7% are primarily due to late or incomplete orders that require clarifications)
- Allows patients/spokesperson(s) to clarify with the clinicians pertaining to the given appts before they leave the hospital
- Aids in reducing patients' anxiety
- Increase in overall work productivity as Ward PSAs check and generate patient appointment letters without the need for reminders
- Reduce the time and cost incurred to send appointment letters after patient discharge.

Spread Changes, Learning Points

What are/were the strategies to spread change after implementation?

- Established regular and systematic audits to sustain high staff compliance to new processes to ensure consistency in service delivery.
- RO held monthly team meetings to gather inputs from the ground and to share results from the piloted project. This promotes effective communication, celebrate success and to solidify the change in the department.
- What are the key learnings from this project?**
- Review existing workflows periodically while leveraging on internal resources aids in providing better services to our patients.
- The importance of re-training and staff communication are essential to the implementation of any new or revised workflows.