Project Title

Streamlining Secretariat Process

Project Lead and Members

Project lead: Mildred Chui

Project members: Kelvin Lew, Siti Rohaini, Alton Loo

Organisation(s) Involved

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital

Healthcare Family Group Involved in this Project

Healthcare Administration,

Applicable Specialty or Discipline

Quality, Innovation & Improvement

Aims

The secretariat team intend to reduce the number of hours taken to complete the secretariat process from 35hrs as of Sep 2020 to 25hrs by Feb 2021.

Background

See poster appended/ below

Methods

See poster appended/ below

Results

See poster appended/ below

Lessons Learnt

Observation – To understand and observe the whole process.

Questioning – Ask questions if uncertain.

'What if' – Provide suggestions.

Theory - Provide reasons to back your suggestions.

Experiment - TRY IT OUT!

Lastly, Let's do it again! Nothing is perfect, nothing cannot be changed. When surrounding and expectations changes, be prepared for changes and probably improvement!

Conclusion

See poster appended/ below

Project Category

Care & Process Redesign

Quality Improvement, Workflow Redesign, Lean Methodology, Job Effectiveness, Design Thinking, Value Based Care Productivity, Time Saving, Cost Saving, Man Hour Saving

Keywords

Secretariat Process Design

Name and Email of Project Contact Person(s)

Name: Mildred Chui

Email: mildred_chui@nuhs.edu.sg

STREAMLINING SECRETARIAT PROCESS

DR HWANG CHI HONG, MR KELVIN LEW,
MS MILDRED CHUI, MR ALTON LOO, MS SITI ROHAINI

- ☐ SAFETY
- ✓ QUALITY
- ✓ PRODUCTIVITY
- ☐ COST
- ☐ PATIENT EXPERIENCE

DEFINE PROBLEM, SET AIM

PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY FOR IMPROVEMENT

There are many steps involved in the planning of the end to end process for management meeting, while there is set of standardised process. As of Sep 2020, it takes approximately 35hrs/month for 1 secretariat cycle.

AIM

The secretariat team intend to reduce the number of hours taken to complete the secretariat process from 35hrs as of Sep 2020 to 25hrs by Feb 2021.

ESTABLISH MEASURES

Measures	Actions
Outcome	Total number of hours/cycle for the entire meeting process
Process	a. Number of touch points with secretaries (via number of emails) b. Number of internal review sessions c. Number of steps/cycle

ANALYSE PROBLEM

PROCESS BEFORE INTERVENTIONS?

Over 40 line items!

WHAT ARE THE PROBABLE ROOT CAUSES?

LEAN Waste Management

1. **Extra Processing** (doing more work then required)
a. Multiple checking of attendance (up to 4 times/ cycle)
b. Multiple emails from QSC, difficult to keep track and manage priority (Feedback from internal customers – secretary)
c. Not just replying to emails from QSC, need to manage availability for other meetings too (Feedback from internal customers – secretary)

2. **Waiting** (waiting waste, waiting time)
a. Multiple waiting time (waiting for replies)
b. Common task objective that is broken up into different steps and spread across multiple timing
c. Slower response rate to RSVP of meeting attendee from the secretaries

3. **Over Production** ('Just in case' way of working)
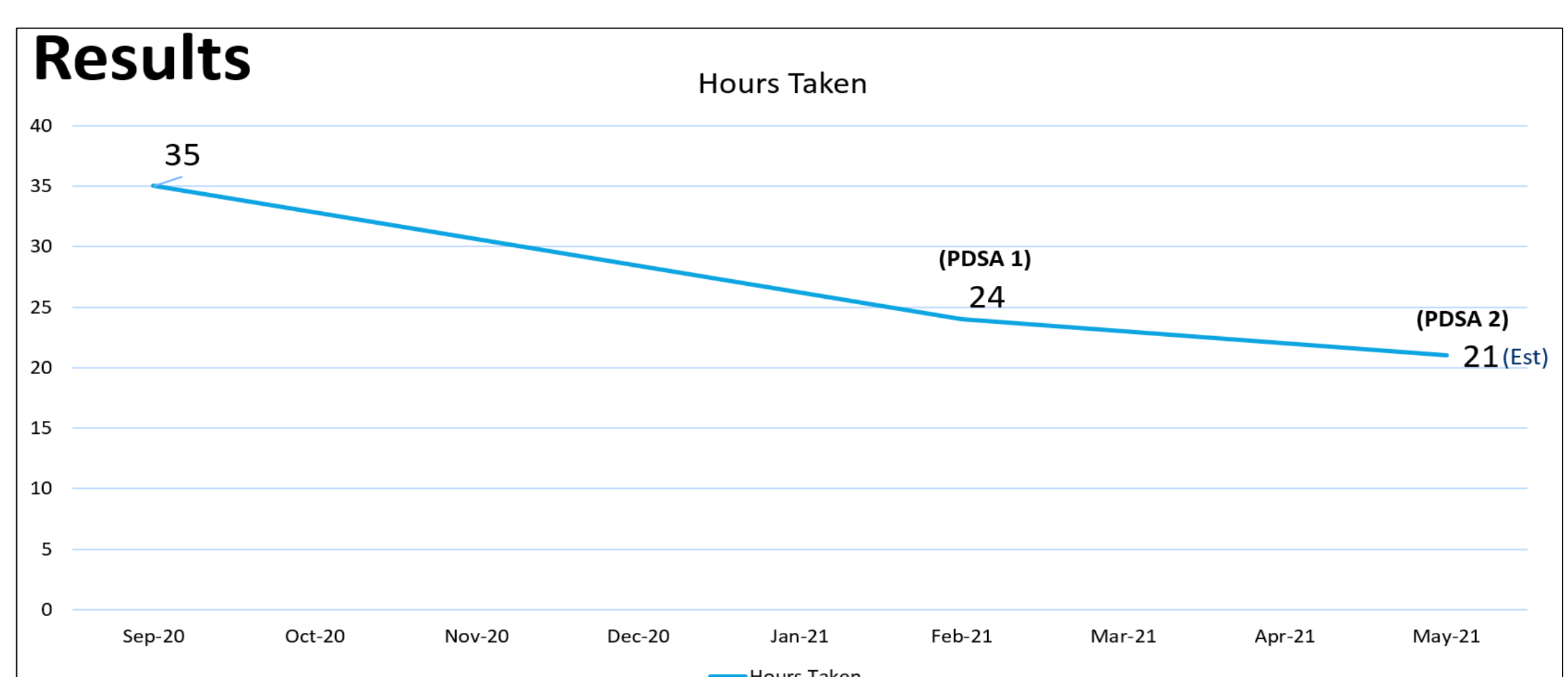a. Too many single line-item processes to keep track (multiple checking and reminders)

SELECT CHANGES

WHAT ARE ALL THE PROBABLE SOLUTIONS

1. **Process Redesign** – Combining steps that can be done concurrently instead of sequentially
2. **Standard Work** – Establishing a robust communication process
3. **Process Redesign** – Re-designing an end-to-end secretariat process to facilitate Senior Management Meetings

TEST & IMPLEMENT CHANGES

Cycle	Plan	Do	Study	Act
1a	Reduce the total of 4 attendance (D-19, D-7, D-2, D-day) check to 2 attendance checks (D-19 and D-day) if they reply upon the first call. **Prediction:** Secretaries might only reply to the final email call, thus the need to continue sending multiple reminder.	The plan was carried out in Feb 2021. As expected, not all secretaries came back with a reply on the availability of their bosses. Will send a reminder to those who have yet to reply.	As predicted, most secretaries provided their update on the bosses' availability only during D-7. Will proceed to stop sending the attendance check to those who have replied to the initial emails.	Will **adopt** the change and continue at the next cycle. The change will decrease the number of email correspondence from 4 to 2 if an update had been provided at D-19.
1b	Combine steps that requires inputs/update from the members. **Prediction:** Members might felt that there are too much information provided in a day.	The plan was carried out in Feb 2021. No comment on the emails sent out per day, but noticed that there had been instances where members misread the meeting date.	Initial Emails sent out could have been clearer in terms of the purpose and the meeting administrative details.	Will **adopt** the change and continue at the next cycle. To avoid confusion, will look into ways to improve how information had been provided to the members.
2a	Reduce the number of internal review with D, QII from 4 sessions (Post PDSA Cycle 1: D-22, D-16, D-5, D-3) to 3 sessions (Post PDSA Cycle 2: D-34, D-21, D-16) by combining some of the agendas. **Prediction:** First session might be slightly longer as more information need to be presented after the reduction of 1 session.	The plan was carried out in Jun 2021. No difference in the total duration required. Total duration per session is still kept within an hour.	Expected the duration to extend due to the reduction of 1 session. But session could be kept within the scheduled duration if agenda of the meeting had been properly planned. There need to be a clear agenda for each meeting so that all involve parties would know what exactly to expect during the meeting.	Will **adopt** the change and continue at the next cycle. To always clearly state the meeting agenda for all parties to know what is expected during the meeting. To always prepare the presentation slides with a clear intent of what the message is to each slide.
2b	Standardise all submission and circulation timing. **Prediction:** External stakeholders might not care about our internal timelines and timing. Thus only providing us the required information at their preferred time.	The plan was carried out in Jun 2021. Emails to all stakeholders had been sent out in accordance to the 'circulation' timing of 5pm. Have also request that all submission from stakeholders to be provided in accordance to the 'submission' timing of 12pm.	As predicted, most submission came in after the provided submission timing of 12pm.	Will **adopt** the change and continue at the next cycle. To remind all stakeholders to probably provide us with their submission by the stated timing so that other preparation work could be done.

Results

Hours Taken

35 (Sep-20) — 24 (PDSA 1) — 21 (Est) (PDSA 2)

LEARNING POINTS

WHAT ARE THE KEY LEARNINGS FROM THIS PROJECT?

1. Observation – To understand and observe the whole process.
2. Questioning – Ask questions if uncertain.
3. 'What if' – Provide suggestions.
4. Theory - Provide reasons to back your suggestions.
5. Experiment - TRY IT OUT!

Lastly, Let's do it again! Nothing is perfect, nothing cannot be changed. When surrounding and expectations changes, be prepared for changes and probably improvement!

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital

Jurong Community Hospital