

National Quality Improvement Conference

Improving the Actualisation Rate of Foot Surveillance Programme in Toa Payoh Polyclinic

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Problem Statement

National Health Group Polyclinics Foot surveillance (FS) service is a programme that targets patients at moderate to high risks of Diabetes Mellitus foot complications, by providing education and early treatment to foot conditions. But many patients fail to understand the importance of FS requiring frequent 4 to 6-monthly reviews and default appointments.

Average foot surveillance appointment actualisation rate in the 6 months prior to start of project was 72.4%. Defaulters tend to be: 1) aged 85 and above; 2) attending first visit appointments; 3) attending FS appointment that is not paired with any other appointment

Project Aim

Our project aims to improve the appointment actualisation rate of Foot Surveillance programme from 72.4% to 100% over 6 months from June 2022 to November 2022 in Toa Payoh Polyclinic.

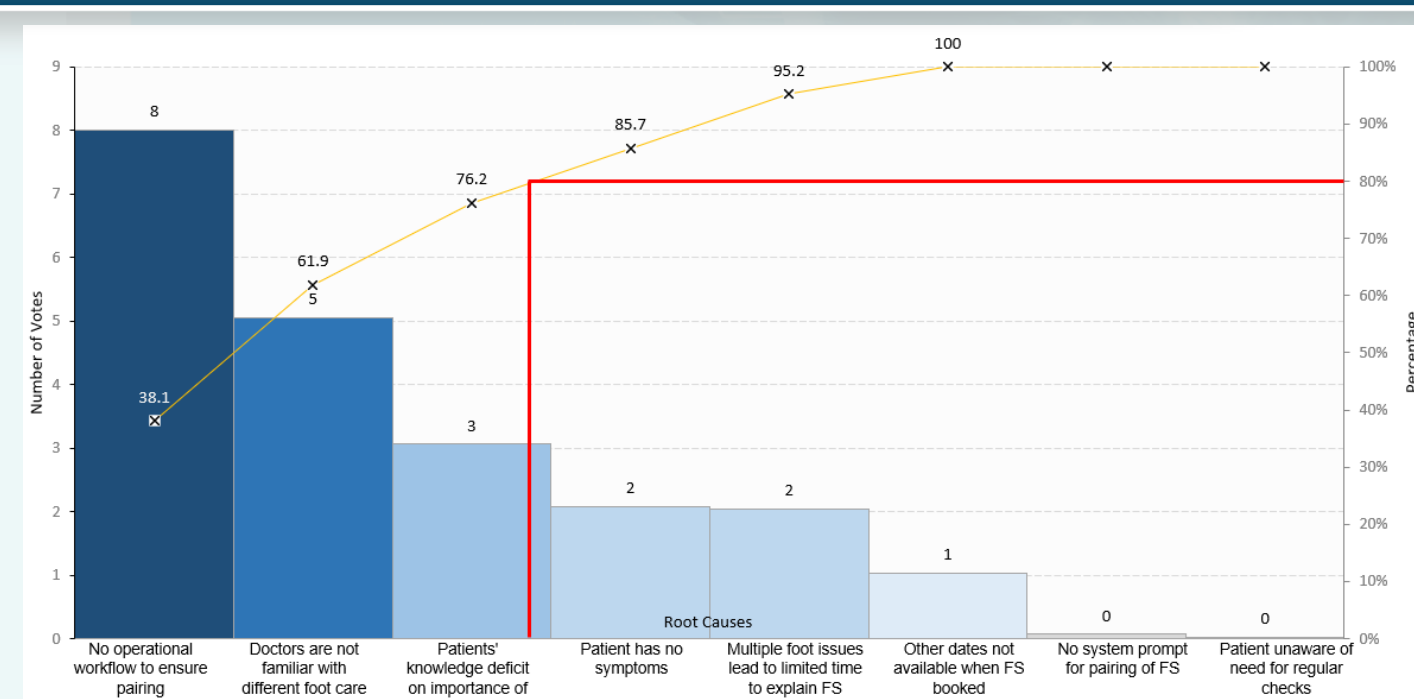
Lessons Learnt

1) In our 1st intervention, interviews with operation staff found an obstacle to pairing of appointment as each patient could only be booked into either first visit or repeat visit appointment slots. Decision was made to remove such restriction and allow free booking of appointments.

2) In our 3rd intervention, nurses feedback that many elderly Chinese patients had difficulty understanding English poster. As such, a Chinese version of poster was rolled out in Nov 2022.

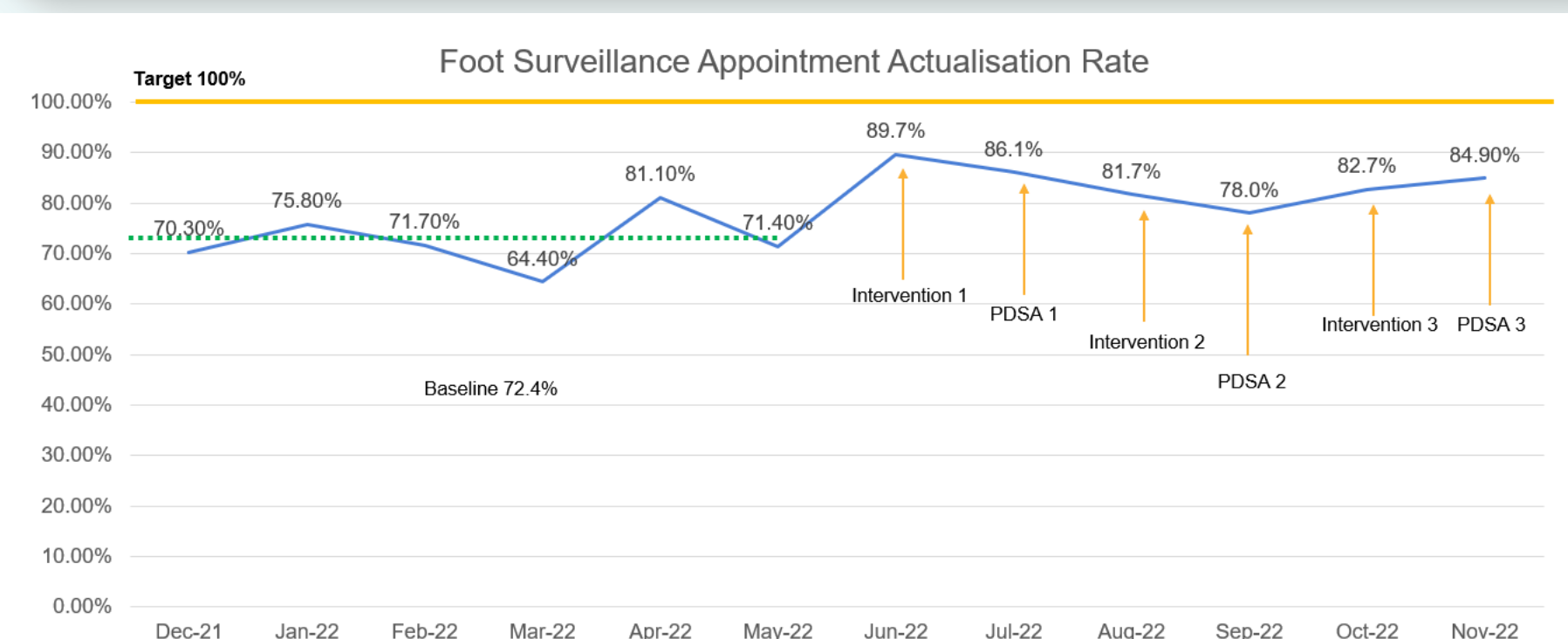


Potential Solutions



Problem	Intervention	Date
No operational workflow to ensure pairing	Manual pairing of FS with other existing appointments that falls within 1 month	Jun 2022
Doctors are not familiar with different foot care services	Clinic-based lunchtime Continuing Medical Education	Aug 2022
Patient's knowledge deficit on FS	Patient education posters on FS service were used by DFS nurses to convince patients who are referred to FS clinic	Oct 2022

Outcomes & Impacts



Overall, this project saw a consistent increase and maintenance in the percentage of FS appointment actualized from baseline of 72.4% to 78.0- 89.7% over 6 months of intervention in Toa Payoh Polyclinic. Strategies to sustain could include:

- 1) Continued education and reminder to healthcare providers to improve their knowledge to allow them to recommend appropriate foot services for DM patients;
- 2) Adding notes to the queue management system to remind staff about FS defaulters, to facilitate counselling and education of importance of foot care to these patients.