

National Quality Improvement Conference

To reduce time taken in processing Interim Caregiver Service (ICS) referrals by 50% within 6 months.

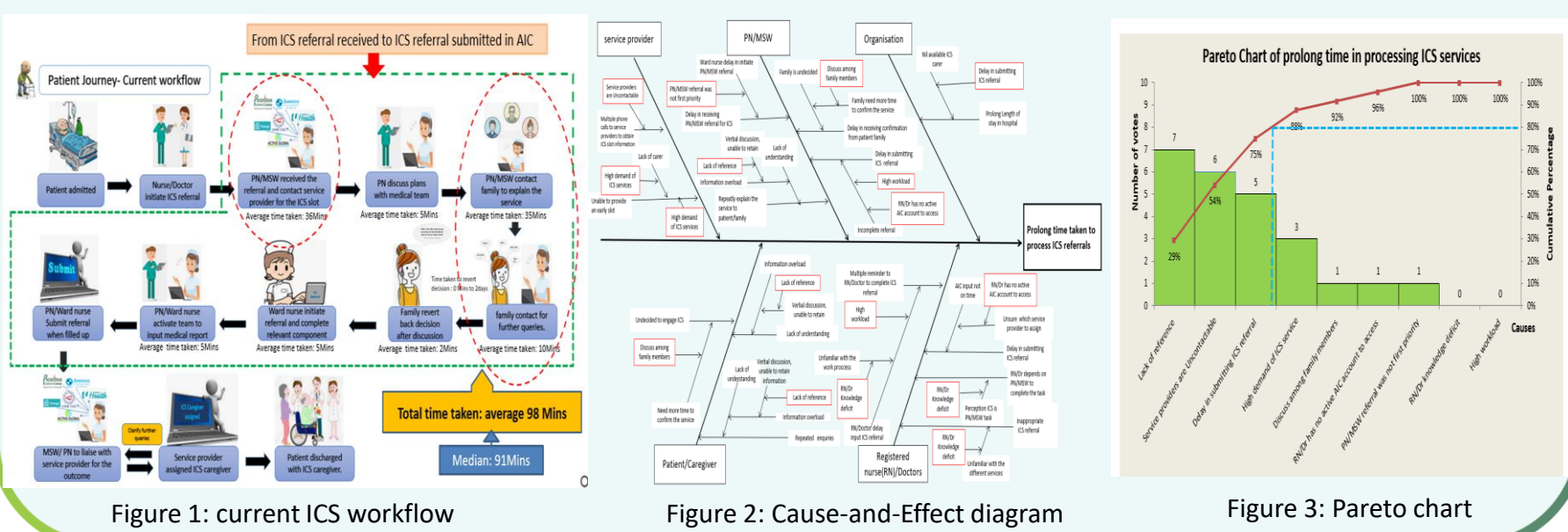


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Problem Statement

The Interim Caregiver Service (ICS) is widely used in both Singapore Restructure Hospitals and Community Hospitals to support discharge planning. However, due to the strict criteria for ICS referrals, we have observed that there is a significant delay in processing referrals when utilizing the ICS service (Figure 1). In response, our team has used a Cause-and-Effect diagram to generate ideas for potential causes (Figure 2), and a Pareto chart to identify the primary root causes to work on (Figure 3).



Potential Solutions

Step 1: Establishing a shared communication platform to enhance information delivery and dissemination (Figure 4).

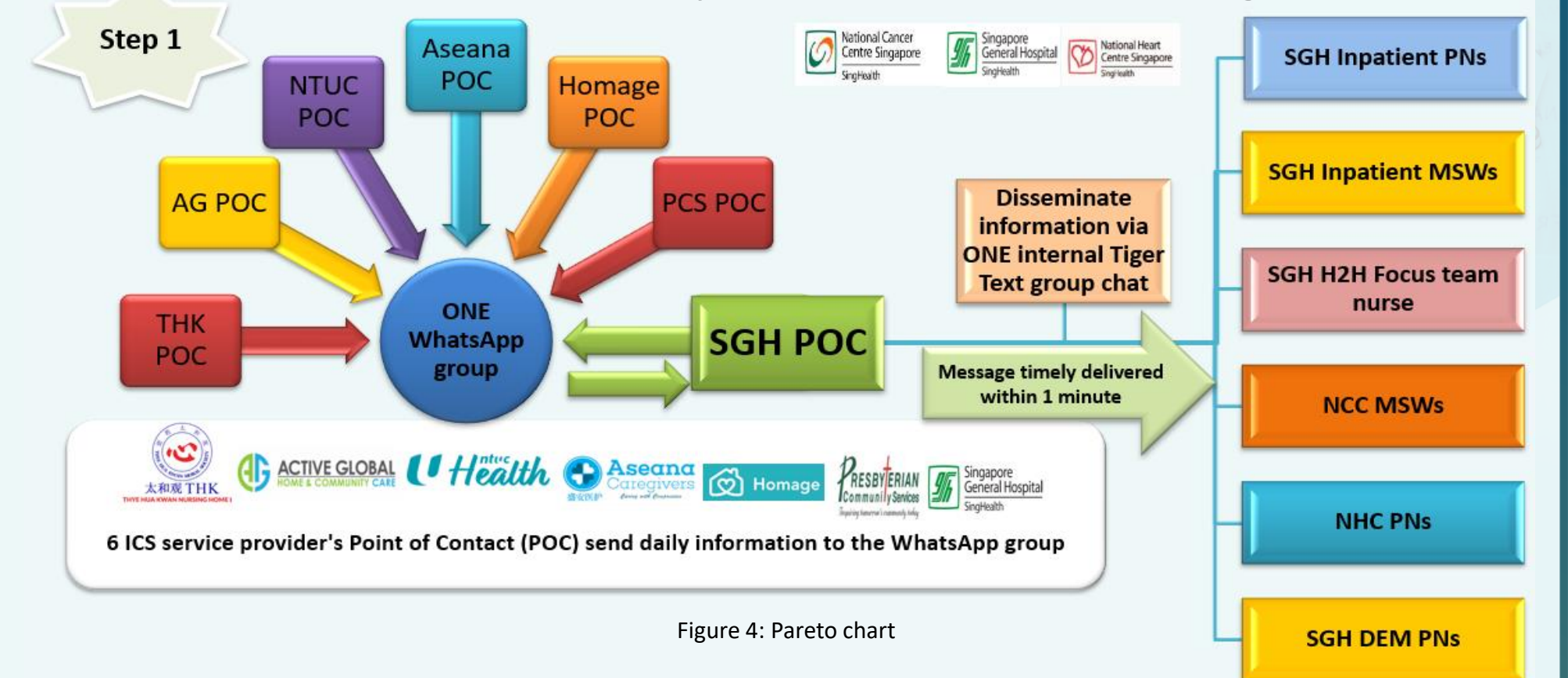
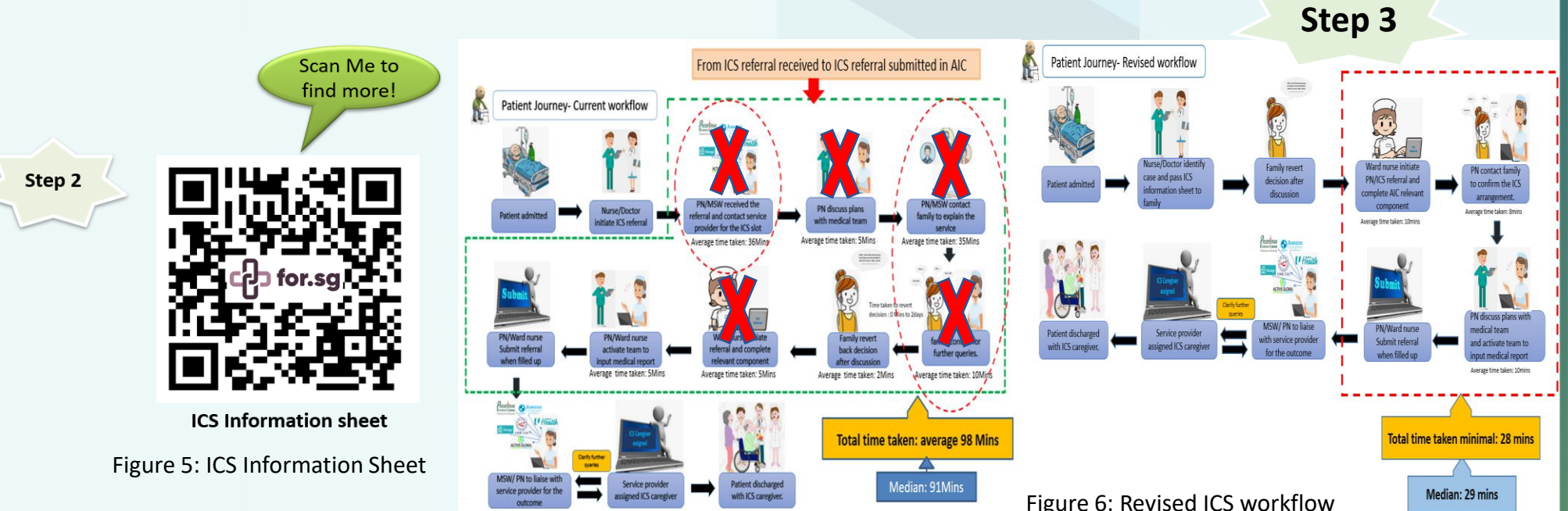


Figure 4: Pareto chart

Step 2: Developing a succinct ICS information sheet for easy reference, accessible through a QR code (Figure 5).



Step 3: Improving the ICS workflow by eliminating unnecessary steps in the current process (Figure 6).

Project Aim

To reduce Patient Navigator (PN)/Medical Social Worker (MSW) time used in processing Interim Caregiver Service (ICS) referrals by 50% from 91 minutes (pre) to 45 minutes (post) within 6 months.

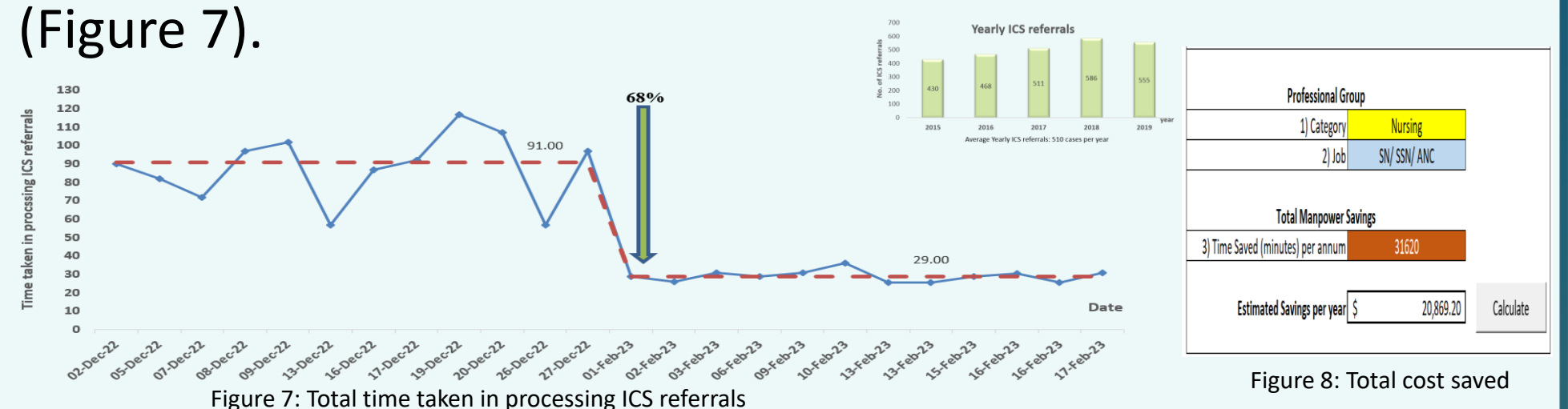
Lessons Learnt

The project has established a new and recommended workflow for the process of ICS referrals. The improved workflow saved time and improved productivity and efficiency. This project was shared in various platforms with other stakeholders and enable them to work within the constraints of manpower while meeting the rising demands of ICS referrals.

We must regularly evaluate our working methods to keep up with the latest technology and practices, in order to optimize our workflow and achieve greater efficiency. In many cases, enhancing communication and sharing information are crucial in minimizing redundant work practices.

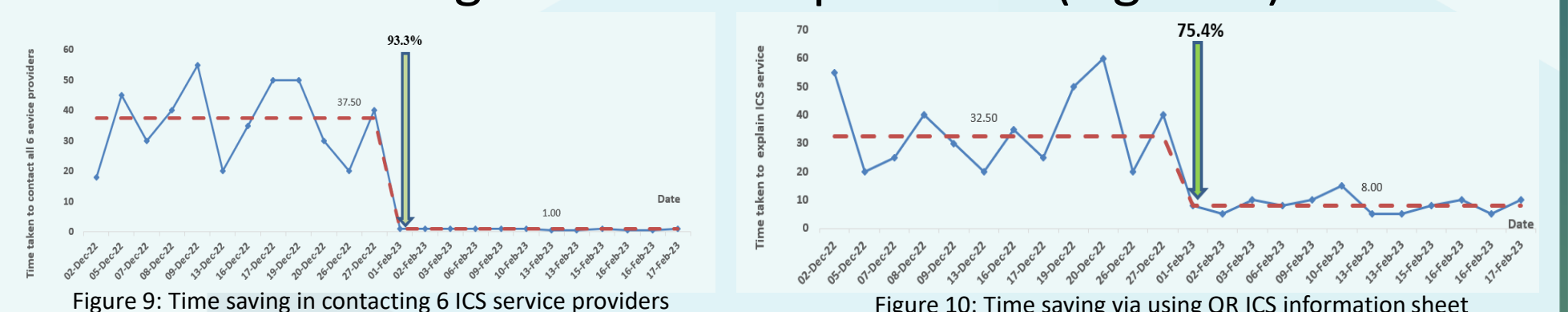
Outcomes & Impacts

1. The median time spent for ICS referral reduced from 91mins to 29mins, achieved 68% time saved in the whole process (Figure 7).



2. Based on an annual average of 510 cases, man-hours saved translated to cost savings amounted to \$20869.20 SGD/year (Figure 8).

3. Through creating a common communication platform to facilitate the information sharing, achieved in 93.3% time saved in contacting 6 ICS service providers (Figure 9).



4. With the information sheet on ICS, there is an improved communication with prevention of wrong referrals and speed up the family communication related to ICS details by 75.4% (Figure 10).