

Project Title

Improving Work Productivity of Post-Discharge Appointment Follow-Ups

Project Lead and Members

Project lead: Nuri Khairani

Project members: Liyana Mohamed Nasir, Sonia Linda D/O Lyndon Johnson, Ken Kan

Organisation(s) Involved

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital

Healthcare Family Group(s) Involved in this Project

Healthcare Administration

Applicable Specialty or Discipline

Healthcare Administrators, Patient Service Associates

Project Period

Start date: Jan 2023

Completed date: Apr 2023

Aims

To reduce time spent following up on patient appointments obtained post-discharge by 30% and reduce cost of postage and SMS by 30%

Background

See poster appended/ below

Methods

See poster appended/ below

Results

See poster appended/ below

Lessons Learnt

Alignment of team goals aids in achieving better results, to leverage on technology to better manage existing processes and save on time and cost.

Conclusion

See poster appended/ below

Project Category

Care & Process Redesign

Productivity, Cost Saving

Technology

Digitalization, System/Platforms, Digital Health, Mobile Health, Digital Apps

Keywords

Post-Discharge, Appointment, Follow up, SMS, Postage

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IMPROVING WORK PRODUCTIVITY OF POST-DISCHARGE APPOINTMENT FOLLOW-UPS

MEMBERS: NURI KHAIRANI, LIYANA MOHAMED NASIR, SONIA LINDA D/O LYNDON JOHNSON
FACILITATOR: KEN KAN

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

Define Problem, Set Aim

Opportunity for Improvement

The process of following-up on patient appointments obtained post-discharge is manual and time consuming as it requires PSA to send a SMS or mail out an appointment letter according to patient's preferred mode of communication. Moreover, there is a cost of \$0.05 per SMS or \$0.40 per appointment letter (postage + envelope + printing).

Aim

- To reduce time spent following up on patient appointments obtained post-discharge by 30%
- To reduce cost of postage and SMS by 30%

Establish Measures

Measures

- Manpower time spent following up on patient appointments obtained post-discharge (i.e. force-booked appointments)
- Average monthly cost on postage and SMS
- Patient's preferred mode of receiving post-discharge appointment information

Current performance

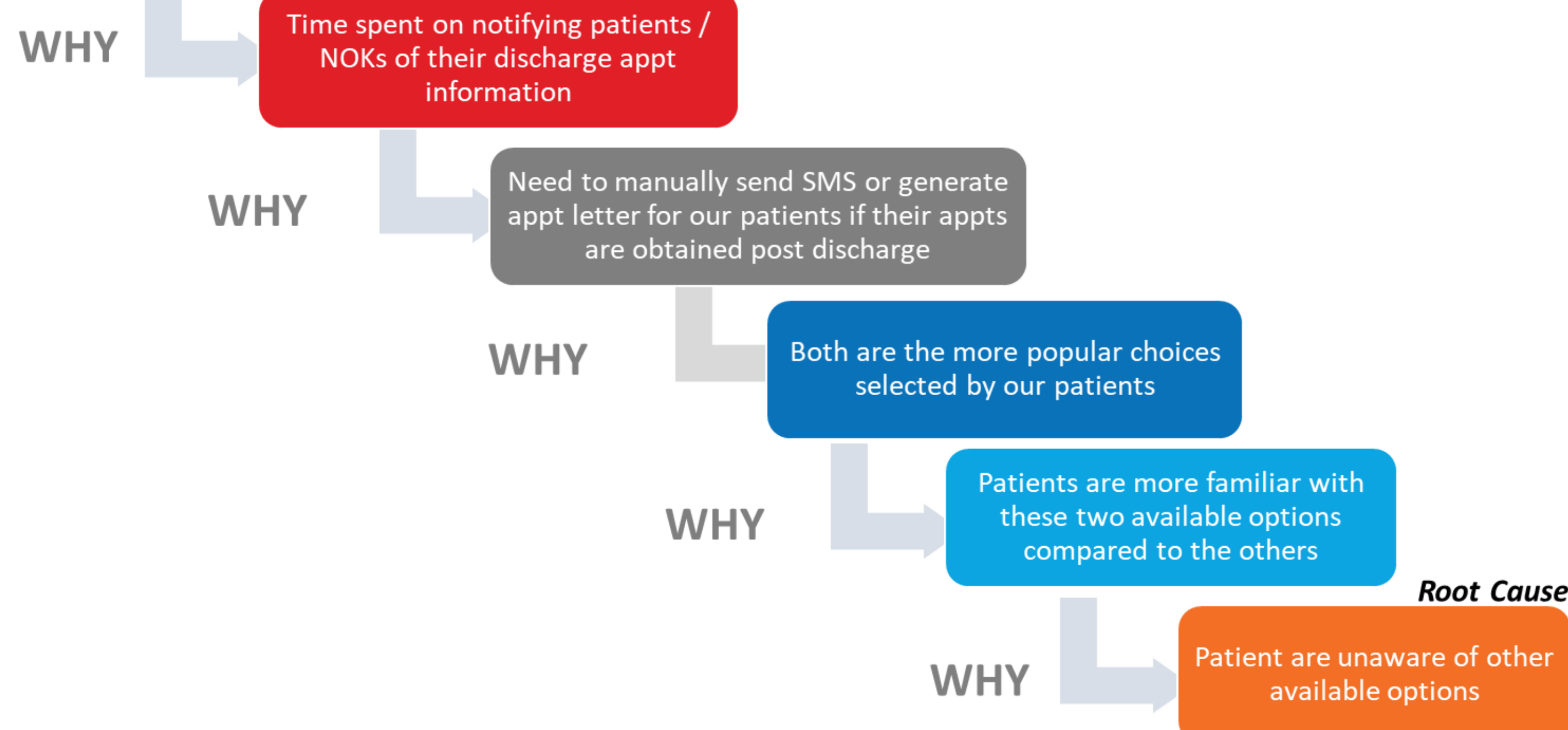
- An average of 10 mins is required for per post-discharge appointment follow-up.
- The average monthly man-hours spent on post-discharge appointments = 850 force-booked appointment x 10min = **142 man-hrs**
- Average monthly postage (\$85) and SMS cost (\$30) = **\$115**.
- 69% of patients opt for SMS and 25% of patients opt for post as their preferred mode of receiving their post-discharge appointment information.

Analyse Problem

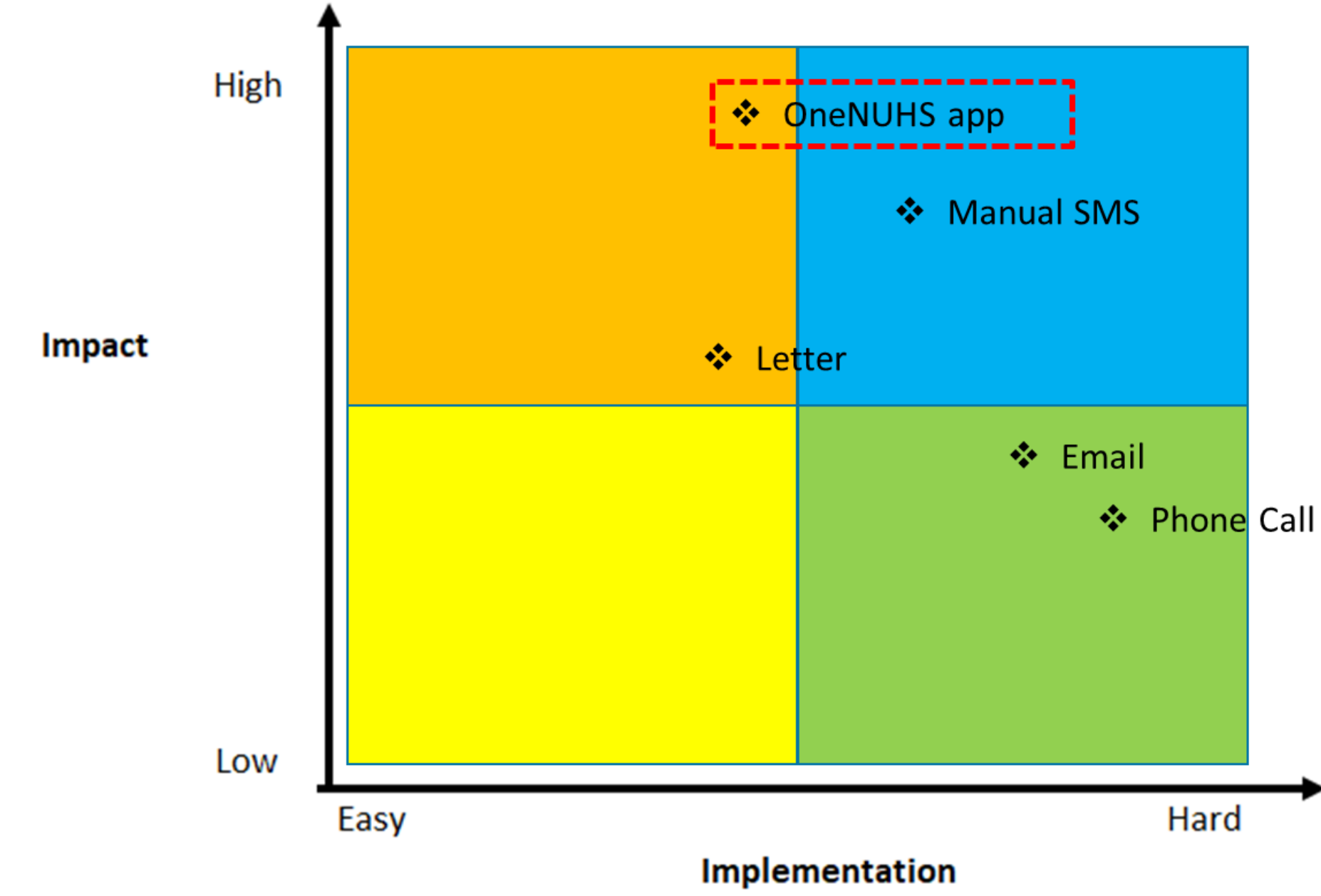
Probable root causes

Problem Statement

Tedious process to follow up on patient appts that are obtained post discharge



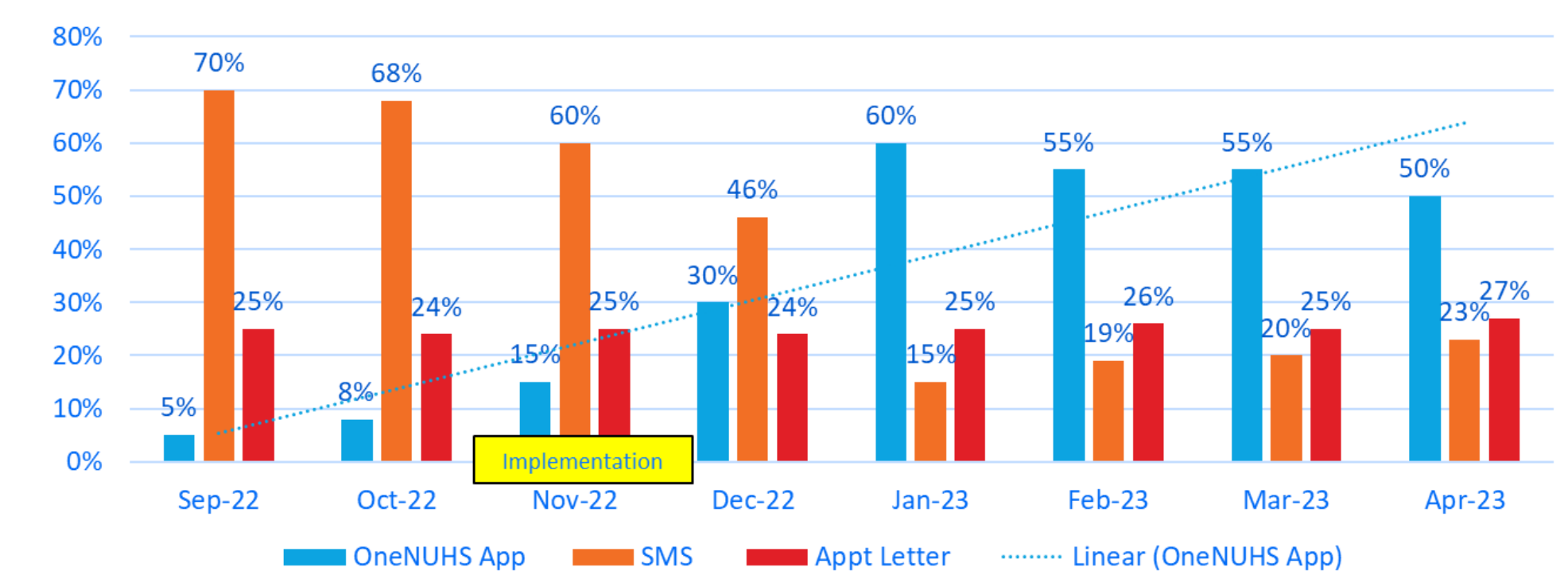
Select Changes



Test & Implement Changes

CYCLE	PLAN	DO	STUDY	ACT
1	<p>Prepare and consolidate marketing materials and develop script to create awareness on the use of OneNUHS app to obtain post-discharge appointment information</p> <p>Hold training sessions to coach ward PSA to better engage and educate our patients about the app's appointment function.</p> <p>Select wards to implement the initiative.</p>	<p>Engage all inflight patients in piloted wards to verify patients' preferred mode of receiving post-discharge appointment information during Financial Counselling or Patient Contact Verification.</p> <p>Script is revised based on ground feedback.</p>	<p>Review post implementation results.</p>	<p>Redirect efforts on patients whose existing preferred mode is SMS.</p> <p>Expand the initiative to all wards.</p>

Preferred mode of communication



- Between January to April 2023, an average of 38% of patients switched their preferred mode of receiving post-discharge appointment information to OneNUHS app. It was observed that the majority of these patients had previously opted for SMS mode.
- 44% less manpower time spent on following up on patient appointments obtained post-discharge as patients would refer to the app instead of receiving an SMS alert.**
 - Average monthly man-hours = Average percentage of follow-up by appointment letter and SMS x average monthly force-book x time spent
 - 56% x 810 x 10mins = 76 man-hours
 - Average monthly man-hours savings = 66 man-hours (142mh - 76mh)**
- 58% monthly savings in SMS costs**
 - Average monthly cost on SMS = Average % of follow-up by SMS x monthly force-book x cost of each SMS = 31% x 810 x \$0.05 = \$12.60
 - Average monthly cost savings = \$17.40 (\$30 - \$12.60)**
- Patients can better manage their appts through the use of OneNUHS app to view, request or reschedule their follow-up appointments timely.

Spread Changes, Learning Points

Strategies to spread change

- Inpatient Ops team has since rolled out the initiative across all wards on 1 March 2023.
- Supervisors held bi-weekly team meetings to share results, gather feedback and address any concerns from the team members. This promotes effective communication, buy-in and solidifies the changes that are implemented.
- Senior frontline staff are engaged weekly to aid in feedback gathering and lead in selected team discussions.

Key learnings

- Alignment of team goals aids in achieving better results
- Leverage on technology to better manage existing processes and save on time and cost.