

Project Title

Improving Oncology Patients' Access And Attendance To Dietetics Services By
Introducing A Dietetics Clinic In The Chemotherapy Unit And Oncology Clinic

Project Lead and Members

Project lead: Yeo Mei En Joy

Project members: Lim Ruey Jiun, Pong Lee Yeng, Elene Tan

Organisation(s) Involved

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital

Healthcare Family Group Involved in this Project

Nursing, Allied Health

Applicable Specialty or Discipline

Oncology, Dietetics

Project Period

Start date: May-2018

Completed date: Jul-2018

Aims

To improve the percentage of FV oncology patients referred to dietetics from 5% to 25% and to maintain average actualisation rate at 75% by introducing a dietetics and nutrition clinic in the chemotherapy unit and oncology clinic by July 2018.

Background

See poster appended / below

Methods

See poster appended / below

Results

See poster appended / below

Lessons Learnt

Interdisciplinary collaboration and teamwork are required to ensure successful implementation of new services. Constant monitoring and evaluation of current services is needed to understand the needs of our patient and improving quality of care.

Conclusion

See poster appended / below

Project Category

Care & Process Redesign, Quality Improvement, Workflow Redesign, Access to Care, Value Based Care, Utilisation, Training & Education, Learning Approach, Inter-Professional Education

Keywords

Interdisciplinary Collaboration, Patient Convenience

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IMPROVING ONCOLOGY PATIENTS' ACCESS AND ATTENDANCE TO DIETETICS SERVICES BY INTRODUCING A DIETETICS CLINIC IN THE CHEMOTHERAPY UNIT AND ONCOLOGY CLINIC

YEO MEI EN JOY, LIM RUEY JIUN, PONG LEE YENG, ELENE TAN

- SAFETY
- PRODUCTIVITY
- PATIENT EXPERIENCE
- QUALITY
- VALUE

Define Problem, Set Aim

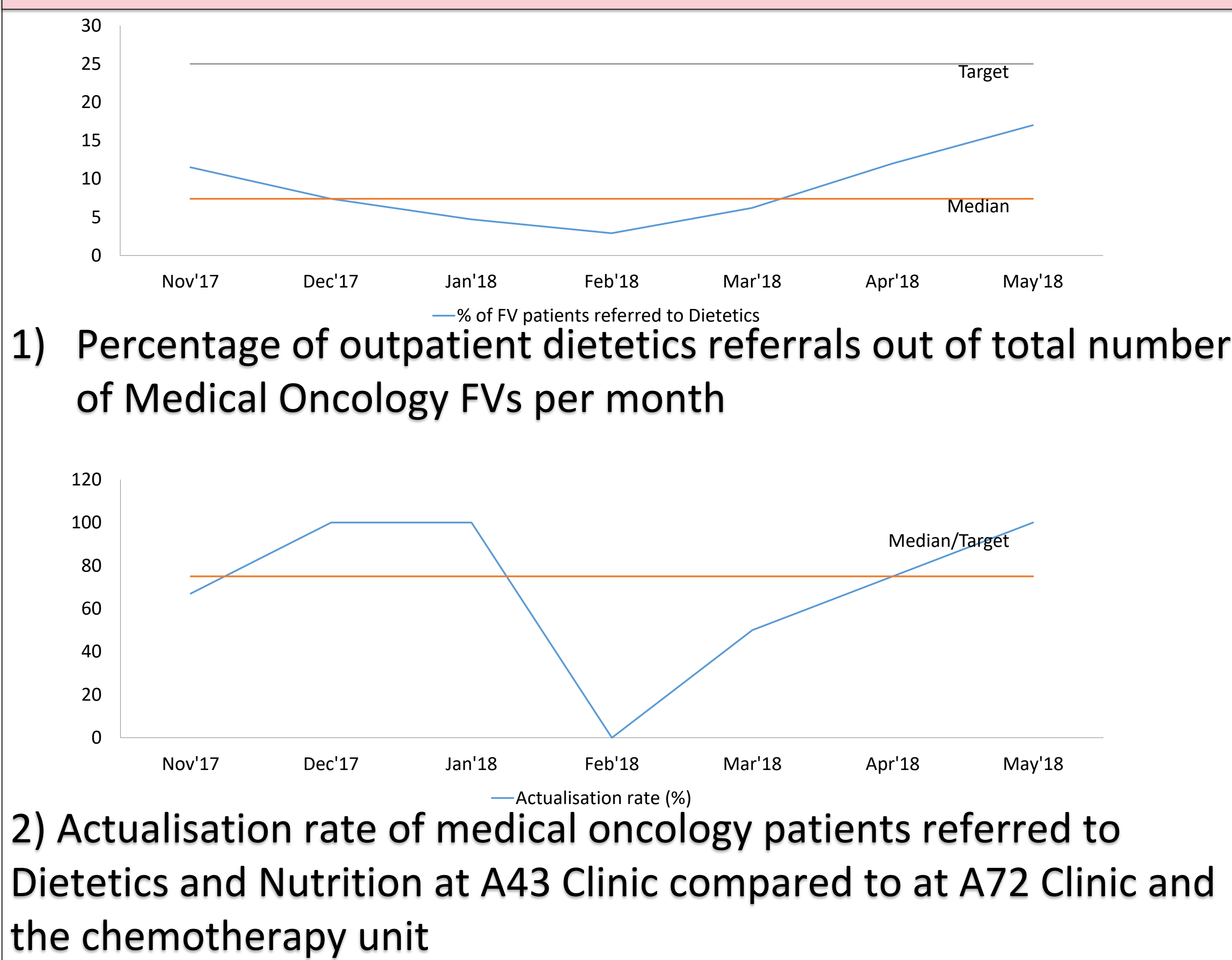
Opportunity for Improvement

Traditionally, nutrition care provided to outpatient oncology patients at our hospital has been managed in a general dietitian outpatient clinic at A43. Prior to May 2018, the average number of Medical Oncology patients referred to outpatient dietetics services has been 0-4 patients per month which is 2.9-17% of the total number of oncology patients seen at our A71/A72 Medical Oncology Clinic monthly for their first visit (FV) consultation. This reflects a low dietetics referral rate as compared to evidence which shows that approximately 51% of FV oncology patients are malnourished or at risk of malnutrition¹. The common barriers our patients and their caregivers faced were inconvenience, fatigue and time constraints which led to the reluctance to attend a dietetics consultation at a separate time and location.

Aim

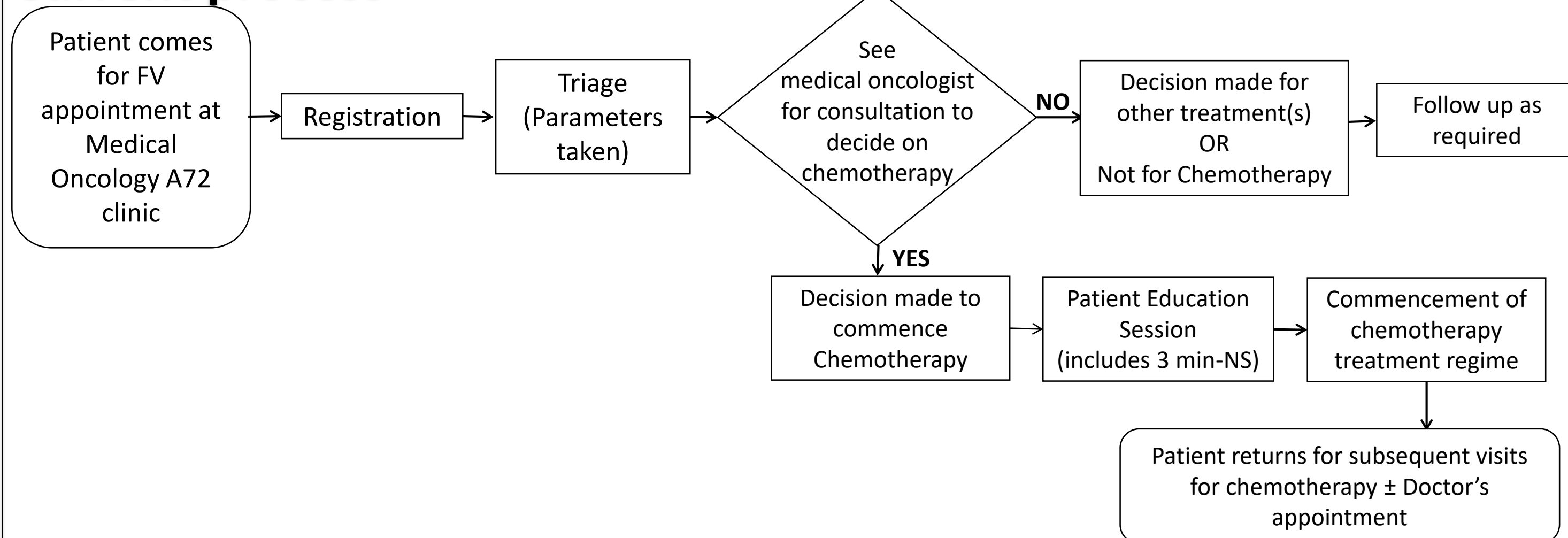
We aim to improve the percentage of FV oncology patients referred to dietetics from 5% to 25% and to maintain average actualisation rate at 75% by introducing a dietetics and nutrition clinic in the chemotherapy unit and oncology clinic by July 2018.

Establish Measures



Analyse Problem

Current process

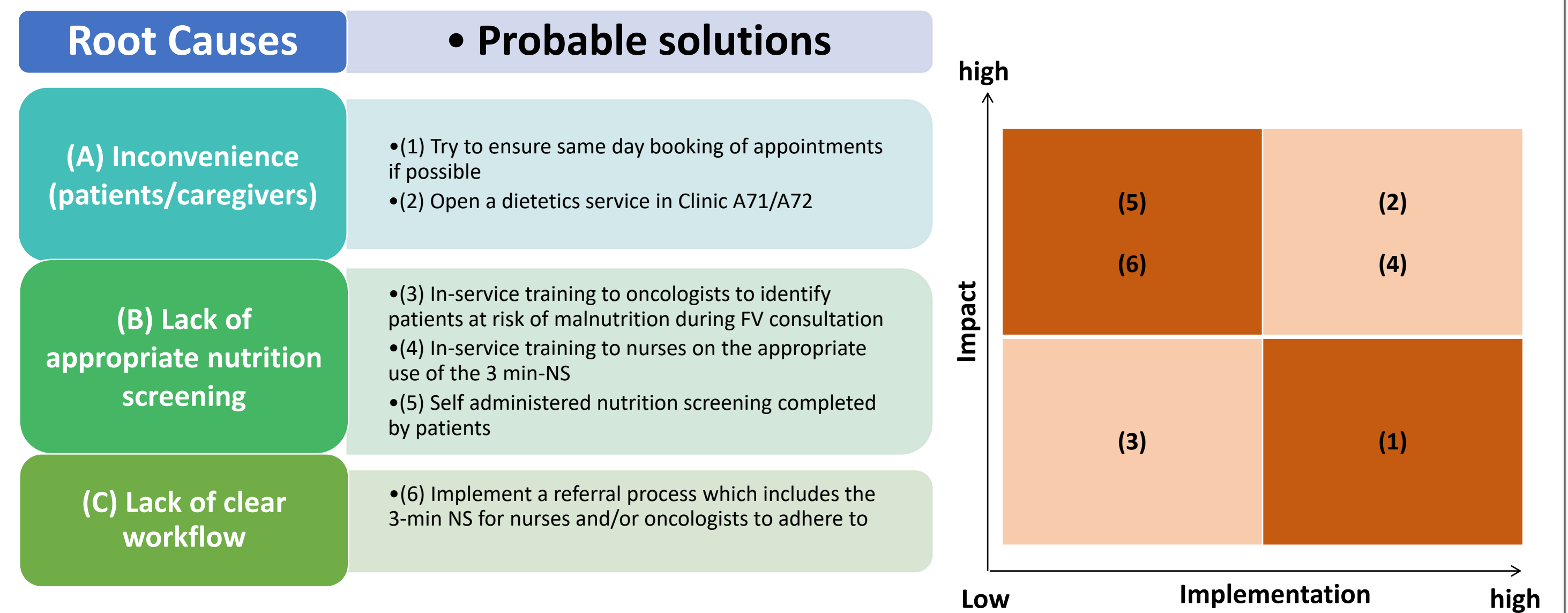


Probable root causes

| System | Patient/Caregivers | Processes | Staff |
|--|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfamiliarity with ordering of dietetics referral on EPIC No available dietetics consultation slots on same day as patient's other appointments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconvenient to travel between clinics Too many medical appointments Dietitian appointment timing clashes with medical appointment or chemotherapy timing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No clear dietetics referral process or workflow in place Inconsistent usage of the 3 minute nutritional screening (3 min-NS) tool available on EPIC flowsheet | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unsure of which healthcare professional should be responsible to make the referral (nurses or doctors or allied health) |

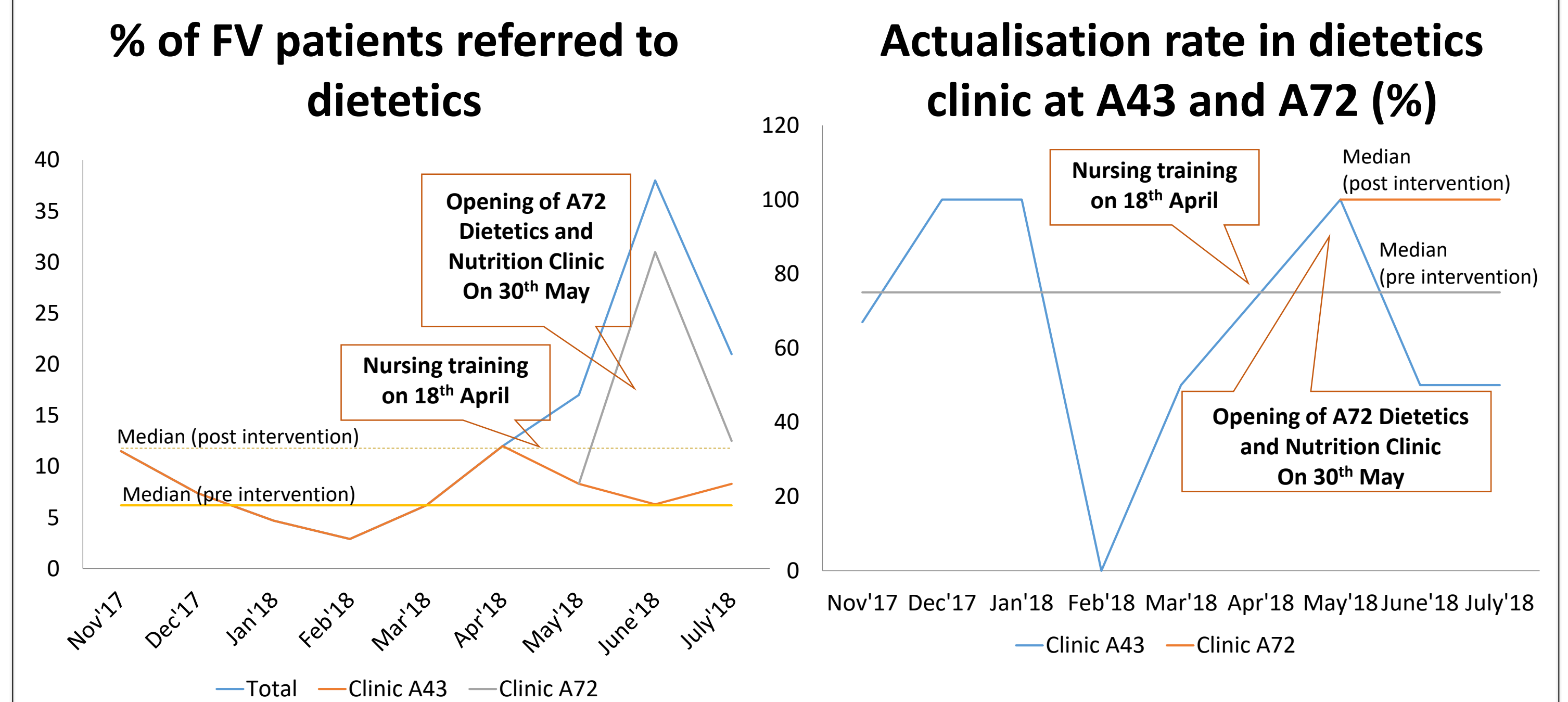
Select Changes

Probable solutions



Test & Implement Changes

- Training was provided to Oncology nurses by the dietitian on 18th April 2018 on the effective use of the 3 min-NS to ensure timely and appropriate dietetics referrals
- After discussions with relevant stakeholders, the new A72 Dietetics and Nutrition Clinic was opened on 30th May 2018, running weekly on Wednesday afternoons
- Dietitian consultations were held in Consult Room 19 or in the chemotherapy unit while patients were undergoing treatments



- There was a marked increase in dietetics referrals from Medical Oncology and a 100% actualisation rate of patients seen in the A72 Clinic
- This was largely due to increased convenience for patients
- Our oncology nurses were also better equipped to identify and refer the appropriate patients in a timely manner



Spread Changes, Learning Points

Strategies to spread change

- This new dietetics service has been communicated to our oncologists, oncology nurses and other allied health professionals assisting in the care of our oncology patients

Key learnings

- Interdisciplinary collaboration and teamwork is required to ensure successful implementation of new services
- Continual monitoring and evaluation of current services is required to understand the needs of our patient and thereby improve quality of care

References:

¹Muscaritoli, M. et.al. (2017). Prevalence of malnutrition in patients at first medical oncology visit: the PreMiO study. *Oncotarget*, 8(45), 79884-79896. <http://doi.org/10.18632/oncotarget.20168>