Project Title

Improving Operational Efficiency in Asian Nursing Scholars (ANS) Administration

Project Lead and Members

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Organisation(s) Involved

SingHealth

Healthcare Family Group(s) Involved in this Project

Healthcare Administration

Applicable Specialty or Discipline

Human Resource

Aims

To improve operational efficiency in Asian Nursing Scholars Administration

Background

See poster appended/ below

Methods

See poster appended/ below

Results

See poster appended/ below

Conclusion

See poster appended/ below

Project Category

Care & Process Redesign

Quality Improvement, Workflow Redesign

Keywords

Nursing Diploma, Scholarship Management

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Improving Operational Efficiency in Asian Nursing Scholars (ANS) Administration

1. BACKGROUND

The Asian Nursing Scholars (ANS) Scholarships are fully funded by MOH Holdings (MOHH) for the studies in nursing diploma in Singapore. Scholars are recruited from China, Myanmar, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam. Scholars are allocated to the clusters by MOHH to serve out their bond obligations and employment in the various institutions.
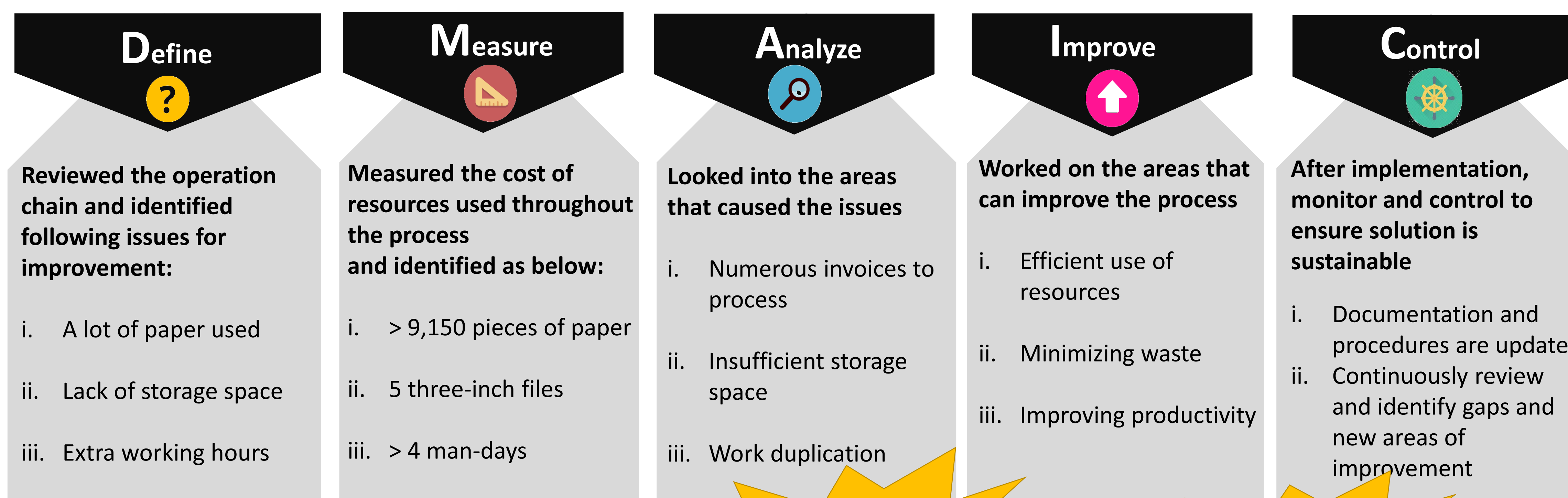
As part of the scholarship benefits, scholars are entitled to a round-trip air ticket to their home country after completion of their studies and before starting employment with institutions. SingHealth HQ – Scholarship Unit manages the funds and reimbursement process, working with the appointed travel agent, for every single air ticket of the 150 scholars.

MOHH provides the scholars' personal file records (P-files) to Scholarship Unit before graduation day to facilitate for scholars' work commencement and bond service. Scholarship Unit had to duplicate all the scholars' P-files for record and safe-keeping in HQ. The original P-files received from MOHH were in turn sent to Institutions for their own action and record keeping. For every year, we needed to duplicate about 150 scholars' P-files.

2. ISSUE

Every year, extra working hours and resources are invested to facilitate the ANS Scholars on-boarding process. Staff were highly stressed by the yearly heavy and mundane workload of photocopying and filing documents. As there are mass amount of invoices raised for necessary levels of approval, they have to constantly keep track to make sure approvals are on time.

3. METHODOLOGY

Define ❓
Reviewed the operation chain and identified following issues for improvement:
i. A lot of paper used
ii. Lack of storage space
iii. Extra working hours

Measure
Measured the cost of resources used throughout the process and identified as below:
i. > 9,150 pieces of paper
ii. 5 three-inch files
iii. > 4 man-days

Analyze
Looked into the areas that caused the issues
i. Numerous invoices to process
ii. Insufficient storage space
iii. Work duplication

Improve ⬆
Worked on the areas that can improve the process
i. Efficient use of resources
ii. Minimizing waste
iii. Improving productivity

Control
After implementation, monitor and control to ensure solution is sustainable
i. Documentation and procedures are updated
ii. Continuously review and identify gaps and new areas of improvement

100% Acceptance Rate

Initiative accepted & supported by Institutions HR colleagues.

We wish to thank all Institutions HR colleagues for their support in the HQ's QI project. Without their support, these QI would not have rolled-out successfully.

4. SOLUTION & RESULT

1. Increased Productivity
2. Reduced Cost
3. Improved Staff Morale

S/N	Solution	Result		Improvement Result
		Before	**After**	
I	**Improved & Streamlined Claims and Reimbursement Approval Process (Scholars' Air-Tickets Claims)**	**Average 150 invoices per cohort** Processed about 150 invoices via Accounts Payable Invoice Management system (APIMS) per year for each cohort ANS scholars cohort	**Average 7 invoices notes per cohort** Processes 1 time reimbursement to respective Institutions. Process only max 7 APIMS invoices instead of 150 per year (up to 7 participating institutions X 1 year)	95%
		1.6 man-days	**0.5 man-day** Reduce manpower cost to process many invoices via APIMS and Save time for different levels of Approvers on APIMS	69%
		2 three-inch files	**1/3 three-inch file**	83%
II	**Kept Scholars P-files at 1 location (Institution) instead of 2 (Institution & HQ).**	**Average 9,000 pieces of paper used** to duplicate identical set of P-files documents	**Zero, No paper used (only E-File)** 1 sample from each country, max 5 countries	100%
		3 man-days	**0.5 man-day** Reduce time and effort to photocopy documents	83%
		3 three-inch files for 150 ANS scholars' P-files	**Zero hard-copy file (only E-File)** (1 sample from each country, max 5 countries) Reduce storage space by 100%	100%

5. CONCLUSION

After the review of the operational chains and the implementation of the new procedures, there has been a significant positive influence on operational, financial and productivity outcomes as shown above. Staff can now focus on other job functions that leads to more quality and value-added outcomes. Eliminating duplicated work also increases staff morale and efficiency level which in turns motivate the team to continuously seek for improvements and greater achievements in each area of work.