

On Time at the Right Time

Active Wait List Management in an Ambulatory Service

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Our Story

A complete service redesign has occurred at Mater's Ambulatory and Outpatient Department.

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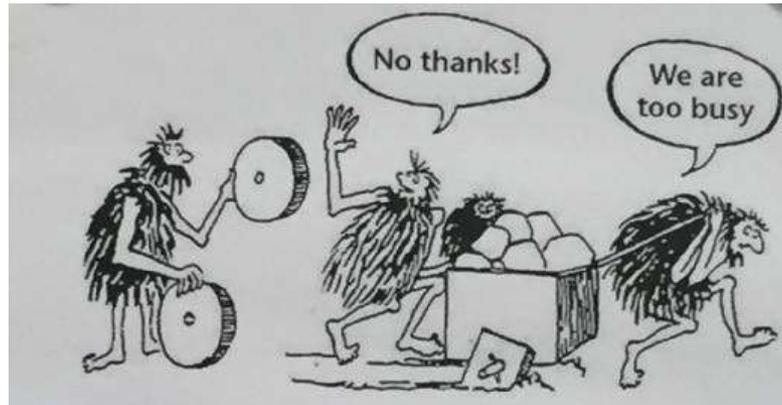
This has been a necessary response to increasing demand on limited clinical resources, growing expectations around business performance and our values based commitment to patient centred care.



We are committed to real change.
No more band aids!

Defining our Problem

Our first steps were to go deep into the business – exploring the systems in place. We revealed disjointed and misaligned processes; a significant amount of waste; a lack of meaningful indicators to assess and monitor our performance.



Defining our Problem

A complete review of all the outpatient clinics revealed inconsistencies in data, counting, reporting and capture of information. Our methods even resulted in a number of unfunded services being provided.

Data Quality

We worked hard at immediate improvements to our data quality.

A service wide response realised the development of an integrated architecture system via the Mater Clinical Data Repository (MCDR).

A new visibility and transparency about the service was now accessible.

With this insight we could address specific issues.

Where to now?

Our data now told us a more complete story. We were experiencing:

- Long waits for service access
- Variance in business process across the service
- Ad-hoc and person dependent practice in staff
- Inconsistent partnership development with referring practitioners
- Low levels of engagement for change improvement

Our next collective efforts...

Waiting Times for AOPS Appointment

In June 2014, 48% of patients referred for a specialist outpatient appointment were waiting longer than the clinically recommended timeframes for their first consultation.

Our KPIs for this measure are >90% within time.

This was not a pretty picture

Waiting Times for AOPS Appointment



Addressing a Priority – Wait List Management

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“We think this is what is happening”



Strategy

- A team was formed to cleanse the existing wait lists through thorough auditing
- Primarily seen as an administrative task
- Process mapped and work instructions, peripheral resources and tools developed for staff to safely and effectively validate patients waiting status
- Strong engagement and direct communication with both patients and, as required, their referring practitioners

Impacts

- Immediate improvements in service performance were achieved with a reduction in ‘long waits’ .
- It was quickly identified that this issue was broader than an administrative process.
- Wait list management needed to be reframed as a service wide effort to safely monitoring a patient’s journey.
- This meant a collaborative response to improving access.

Sustainable Practice

- Revised process from ‘reactionary’ appointment scheduling, confirmation and auditing to Active Wait List Management
- Service wide engagement on the process development and implementation – this included: Administration, Medical, Nursing, IT, Marketing, Finance
- Clear and consistent documentation and communication
- Staff training and support
- Quality assurance monitoring

Results

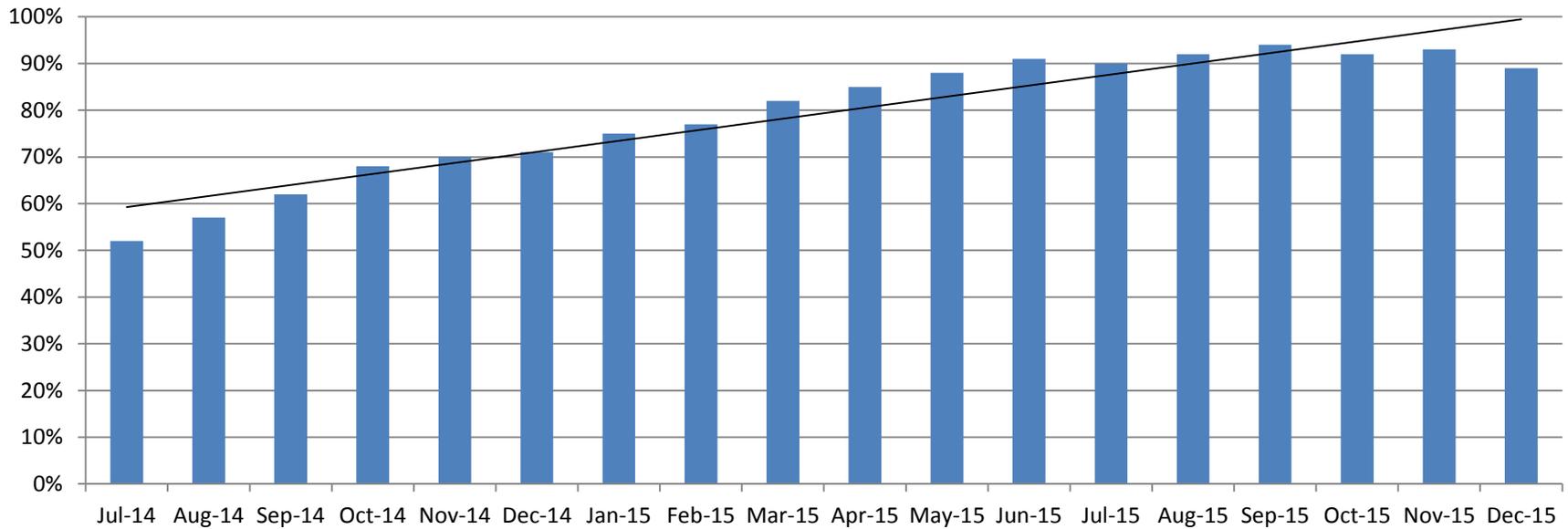
By January 2015, every person on an AOPS wait list was truly accounted for by validating their waiting status.

In January 2016 89% of patients were waiting in clinically recommended timeframe for their first AOPS consultation.

This is a 47% improvement on this KPI measure over that time.

Results – KPI Measure

Patients waiting in time



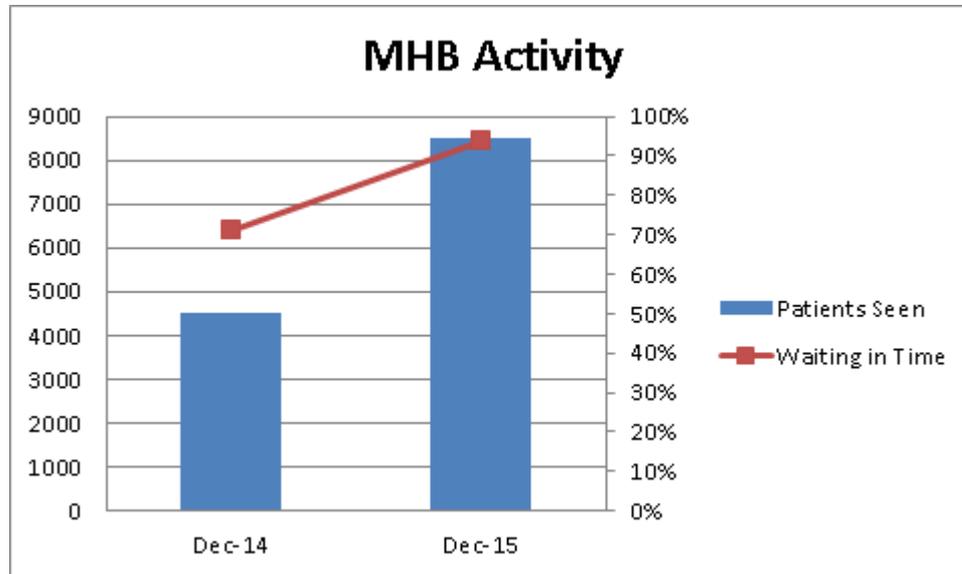
Strength to strength

With this efficiency we have been able to contribute to district wide demand management by supporting other publicly funded facilities to reduce long waiting lists by transferring patients to the Mater. This work has supported access to service for patients who have been waiting several years in most cases.

This means more patients are getting the care they need – faster.
Each new improvement to our process is ensuring safer care.

Strength to strength

We have managed to maintain our service performance to KPIs while also increasing activity.



Lessons Learned

- The importance of data integrity
- Sustainable change requires engagement from all areas of the business – a team effort
- Partnerships with patients and referring practitioners are strengthened with transparency
- Clear processes result in consistent performance
- After this outcome we are more ready and responsive to address the next challenge

