

eBills – A Paradigm Shift

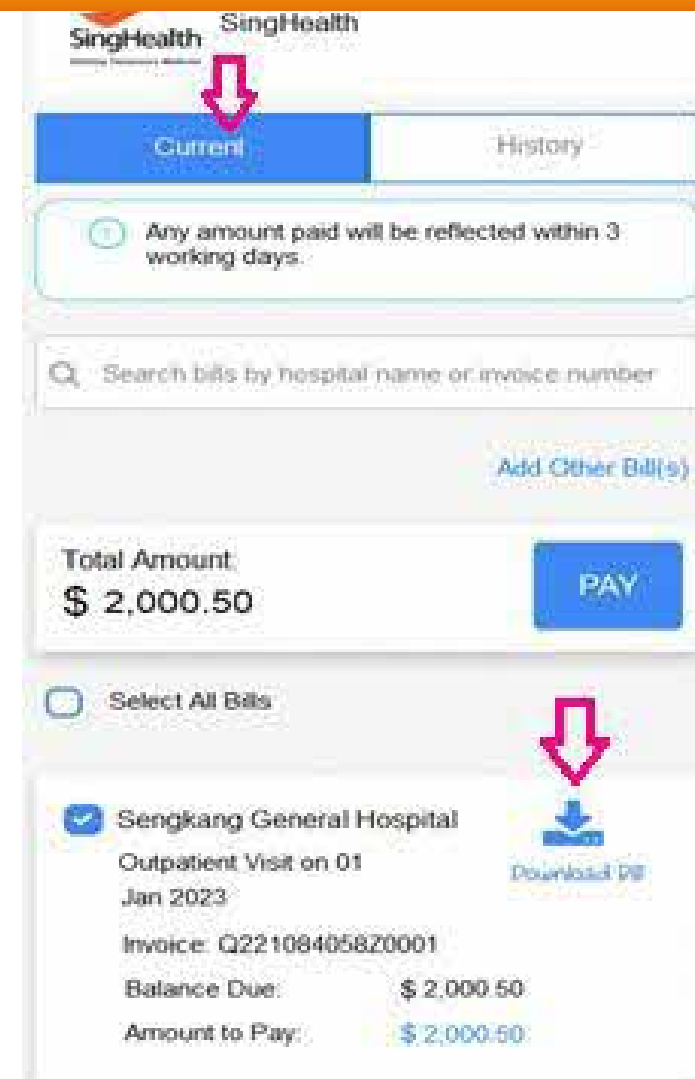
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Business Office

BACKGROUND

- Moving on to eBill will mean that patients are no longer receiving hardcopy bills from Sengkang General Hospital (SKH).
- Patients with SingPass access can conveniently view and retrieve their hospital bills (outstanding and fully paid) from SingHealth's Health Buddy App.
- Effective from 1 January 2023, Health Buddy App increases the availability period of fully paid bills from 185 days to 365 days (1 year).



AIM

Healthcare industry is rapidly moving towards digitisation. In alignment with patients' expectations as well, to have greater ease of accessibility and mobility, SKH Business Office (SKH BO) mapped out the eBill strategy for Inpatient and Day Surgery to onboard eBill on 1 February 2023.

Through eBill, the team aims to assimilate patients to using Health Buddy App for e-transactions involving Bills and Payments, while embedding a sustainability mindset in going paper-less.

METHODOLOGY

Foreigners, non-residents and long-term visit pass holders would have limited access to Health Buddy and are unlikely to have SingPass. Hence, these groups of patients is currently excluded from the eBill scope until the e-platform is ready for non-SingPass users.

In view of this limitation, SKH BO leveraged on an existing program OMS-500 (Document Output Management System) in configuring conditions to auto-segregate bills by patient nationality:

- "Print" for Foreigners and Non-Residents
- "No Print" for Singaporeans and Permanent Residents

(For more details, refer to Step 4 below).

1. Empathize

- Understanding 'as-is' billing processes from stakeholders and patient preferences.
- Identify opportunities to streamline billing workflow for eBill.

2. Define and Ideate

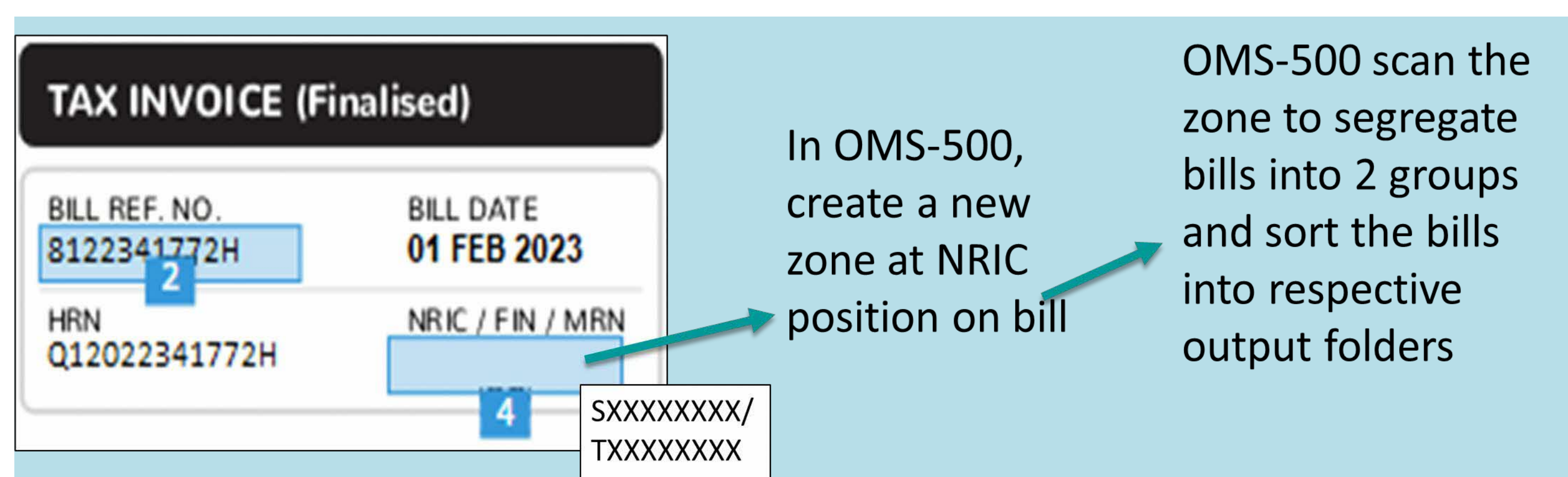
- Define and finalise project objectives, approach, scope and timeline.
- Map 'to-be' workflow supporting eBill.

3. Prototype

- Create and revise action plan – Segregate bills into 2 categories; "Print" and "No Print" categories
- Design solution

4. Build

- Validation check – Ensure accurate filter of bills for the 2 categories



TAX INVOICE (Finalised)

BILL REF. NO. 8122341772H
BILL DATE 01 FEB 2023
HRN Q12022341772H
NRIC / FIN / MRN SXXXXXXXX/TXXXXXXXX

In OMS-500, create a new zone at NRIC position on bill

OMS-500 scan the zone to segregate bills into 2 groups and sort the bills into respective output folders

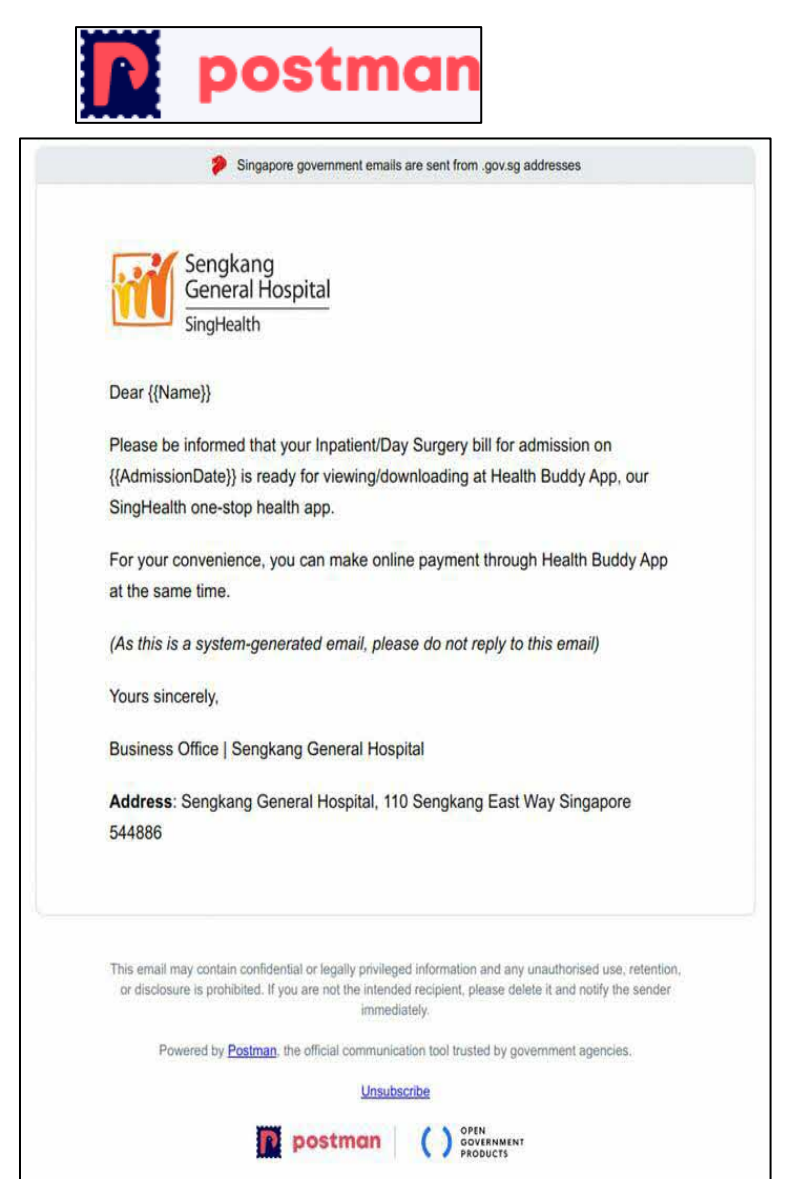
5. Test

- Executed 3 rounds of test on 5-10 sample volume and performed pilot test on 100 sample volume. Then, verify results.

METHODOLOGY (Continued)

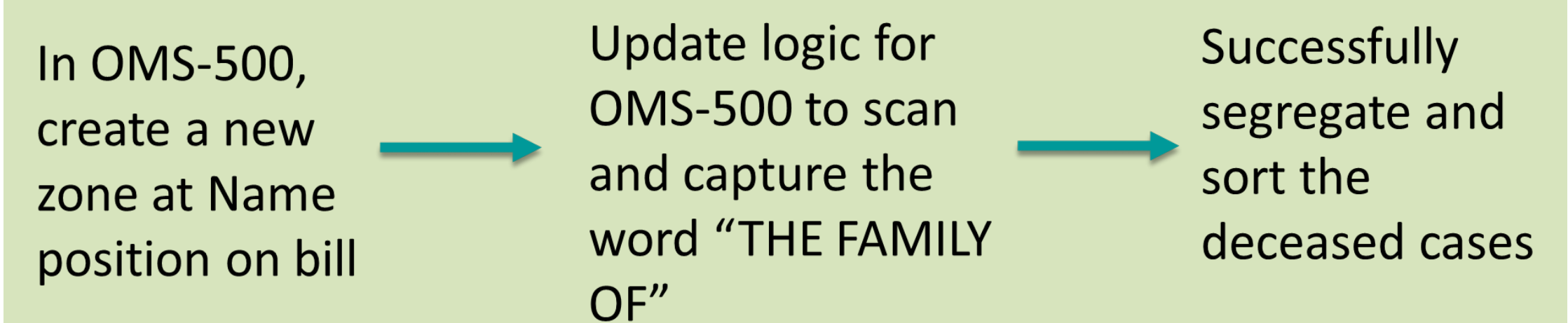
6. Sustain

- Iterative solutioning to make process better
 - Patient who does not require to pay will not receive a bill reminder (payment reminder sent only if there is an outstanding due).
 - Making use of discharge report generated from SAP (consists of patient's email address) and Postman (An Open Government Product Tool developed by GovTech), BO will send a customised email once patient's eBill is ready to be retrieved from Health Buddy.



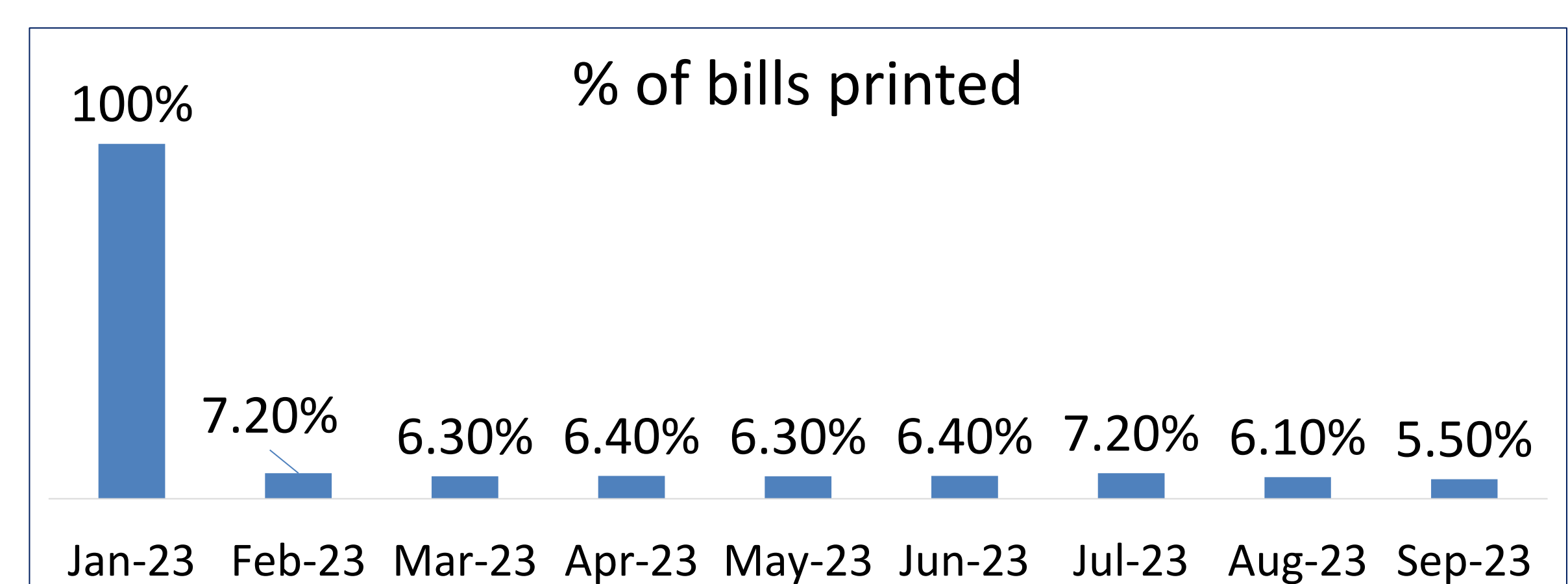
- The team improved from feedback received to tweak the process further.

- Next-of-kin of deceased patients are unable to view bill(s) via Health Buddy if they have not been set as 'Caregiver' prior to the demise. Hence, these cases are to be excluded from eBill.



RESULTS

- Volume of bill printing had greatly reduced from 100% (Jan 2023 reference) to 6.43% (average of 8 months) from February 2023 to September 2023.
- With decreased in bill printing, cost of consumables and maintenance is estimated to reduce by \$22,627 annually.
 - Consumables consists of Postage, Envelope, Toner and Paper
 - Lower priced maintenance plan was opted due to lower reliance of mail sealer machine



- Increased in productivity and operational efficiency with workflow streamlined.
- 390 man-hours saved per year in sorting and enveloping. Potential savings of \$10,998.
- eBill resulted in a spillover effect on Mobile Pay (mPay) in Health Buddy. The take-up rate of patients paying through mPay is now higher with mPay transactions increasing by about 18% from February 2023 to July 2023.

CONCLUSION

- SKH bills can now be retrieved from Health Buddy in a timely and secured manner, in comparison to possible delays via snail mail. 'Loss in transit' of hardcopy bills can be avoided, hence mitigating PDPA risks.
- Carbon footprint is reduced with lesser printing and usage of papers.
- Operational workflow is streamlined along with eBill. Staff can redirect time previously used to manage paper bills to carry out other pertinent tasks.
- With the successful launch for SKH Inpatient and Day Surgery settings, SKH Emergency Department and Specialist Outpatient Clinics onboarded eBill on 19 June 2023.