

One Triage Point – Streamlining Referrals, Maximizing Care Provider Efficiency

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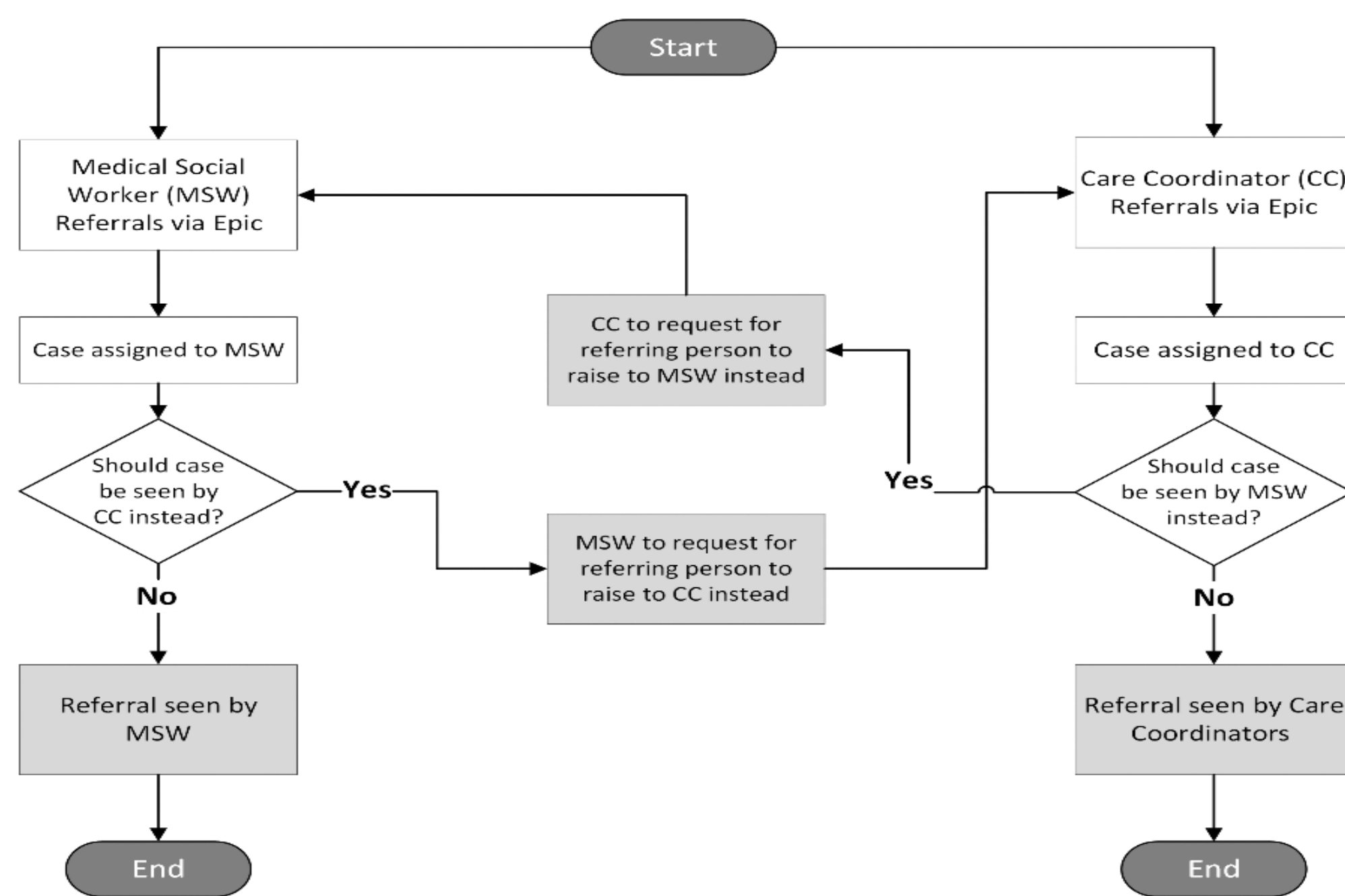
Aim

This project aims to streamline the case assignment workflow following the integration of the Case Management Department (CMD) and Medical Social Services (MSS). It seeks to reduce duplicate referrals, strengthened role clarity and enhancing overall efficiency.

Background

Data from February 2023 to July 2023, prior to the integration of the two departments, revealed that 30.1% of referrals to CMD and MSS were duplicates. These duplicates were caused by overlapping roles between two departments. The previous case assignment workflow lacked a clear system to address these redundancies, leading Medical Social Workers (MSWs) and Care Co-ordinators (CCs) to spend unnecessary time resolving overlaps ultimately affecting productivity and efficiency.

Month	% of Duplicate Referrals
Feb-23	27.1
Mar-23	36.7
Apr-23	25.9
May-23	36.4
Jun-23	29.1
Jul-23	28.2
Avg	30.1



Team Members

Name	Designation	Department
Chua Ee Cheng	Manager/Principal Medical Social Worker	Medical Social Services
Ismawanty Abdul Razak	Senior Medical Social Worker	Medical Social Services
Ethel Koh Rui Li	Senior Medical Social Worker	Medical Social Services
Ho Chia Yen	Senior Executive Assistant	Medical Social Services

Interventions / Implementation

Optimizing Case Assignment

- Consolidated referrals into a single triaging point and closed CMD referrals via NGEMR system
- Introduced stratification guiding principles to assign complex cases to MSWs and non-complex cases to CMOs, improving efficiency

Competency Development

- Upskilling initiatives were introduced, equipping MSWs to handle socially complex and crisis related referrals while CMOs enhanced knowledge of community resources and psychosocial frameworks for better care co-ordination

System Integration & Process Execution

- Implemented a new case assignment method trialed across initial four wards were triaged using the stratification guiding tool. The results were highly positive, leading to the full implementation of this initiative

Continuous Monitoring & Feedback

- A structured monitoring process was established to assess accuracy and effectiveness of the new case assignment workflow

Onward 2026

Assigning Patients into Care Streams

The stratification guide ensures patients are assigned to the right care provider based on case complexity, improving care co-ordination and outcomes

Quality & Patient Safety

Streamlined referral processes ensure patients receive timely and appropriate care, reducing delays and duplication

Operational Resilience

Optimized workflow enhances efficiency minimizes resource wastage and strengthens workforce capacity to handle complex cases

Results & Outcomes

Trial Period Results

Improved Workflow Productivity

Impact of trials across four wards were immediate with duplication referrals reduced to **0%** with the new case assignment workflow

Strengthened Role Clarity

The results utilizing stratification guiding tool were remarkable with only **2.85%** (3 out of 107 referrals) required reassignment to MSW due to increase complexity during the trial period

Full Implementation –One Triage Point Workflow

Improved Workflow Productivity

The duplication rate was successfully reduced to **0%**, maintaining the improvement observed during the trial period

Continuous Improvement & Validation

A screening of 164 inpatient cases (November 2023 to January 2024) was conducted to assess tool's effectiveness, revealing that **95.3%** of the cases were assigned to the appropriate care provider **88%** of these cases remained with the initial care provider while the remaining cases had to be escalated to MSWs due to increase case complexity

Short Survey to Care Providers

Optimized Manpower Efficiency

90% of the respondents agreed most referrals assigned after One Triage Point were appropriate as compared to only **40%** prior to its implementation

Improved Workflow Productivity

70% of the respondents perceived an increase in bandwidth to manage complex referrals

Cost Savings

Role overlap led to duplicate case assessments, doubling manpower effort. This inefficiency incurred an estimated cost of **\$9896**

Conclusion

One Triage Point – the integration of a structured case assignment workflow has significantly improved efficiency, reduced duplicate referrals, enhanced role clarity among care providers. By leveraging on a stratification guiding principles, patients are now systematically assigned to the most appropriate care provider ensuring timely and effective interventions. With sustained monitoring and refinement, this workflow transformation sets the foundation for a more efficient, resilient and patient centered system.