

CALENDAR FOR APPOINTMENTS

CAROLY WONG YI LIN, TAN WEE CHIEW, PONG LEE YENG

- SAFETY
- PRODUCTIVITY
- PATIENT EXPERIENCE
- QUALITY
- VALUE

Define Problem, Set Aim

Opportunity for Improvement

Patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment at A71 Chemotherapy Unit tended to forget their multi-appointments (2D echo, CT, MRI) easily. Between Jan to Jun 2017, an average of 5-10 patients per month which is 40% of the chemotherapy patients failed to turn up for their Radiology appointments in NTFGH and 25% of the patients failed to turn up for their 2D echo appointment in A34 Cardio Diagnostic Lab. This has resulted in futile doctor's appointment trips as scans/2D echo results were not available for review during their doctor visits, thus, causing a delay to their chemo treatment plan.

Aim

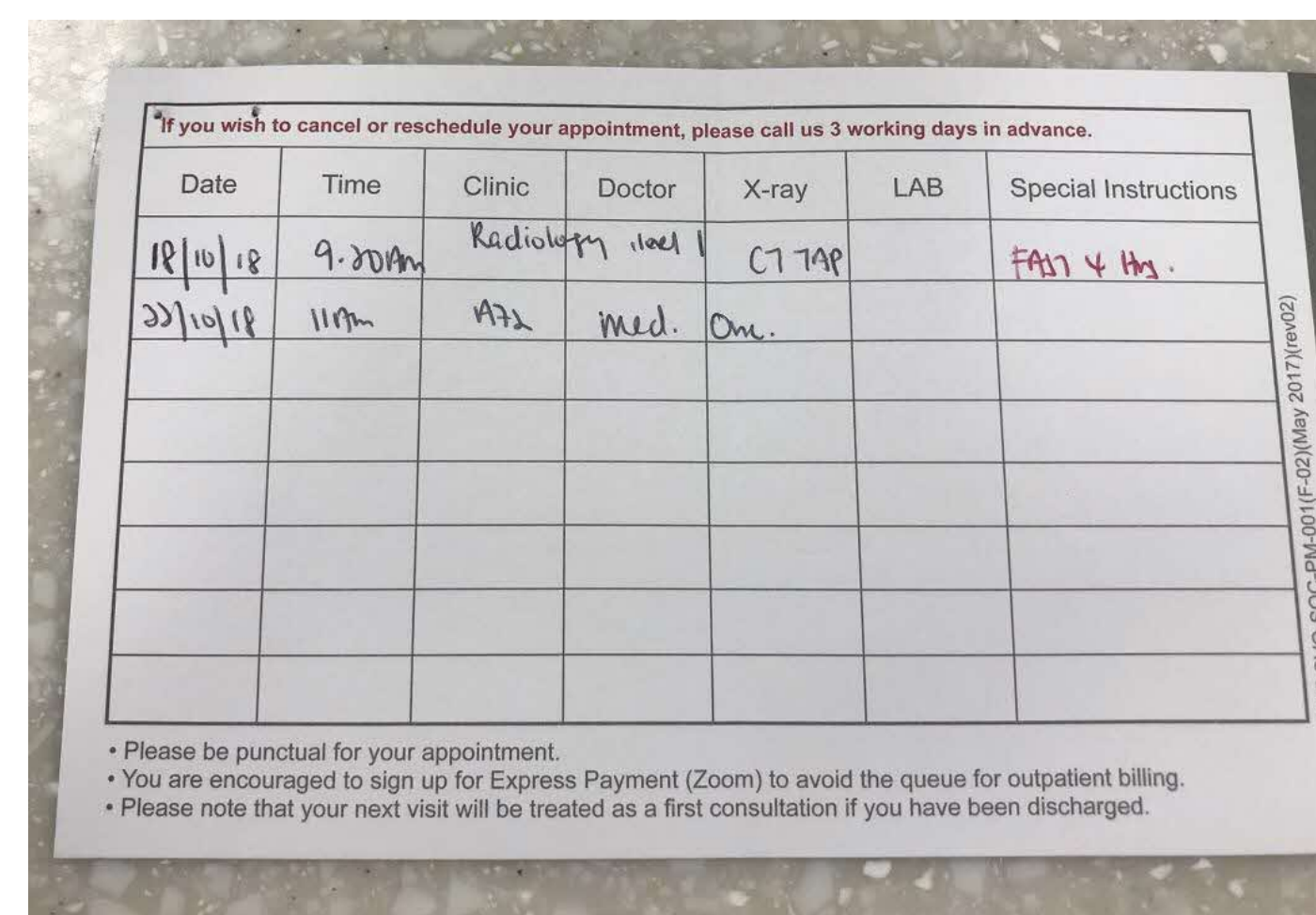
We aim to achieve 100% compliance for patients to turn up for their scan/2D echo, so as to minimize any delay in their treatment plan, from Jul 2017 to Jan 2018.

We also aim to minimize negative feedback from the other Departments that the number of Oncology patients who did not turn up for their scan/2D echo appointment has reduced from 4 cases per month to zero, so as to well- utilize their appointment slot.

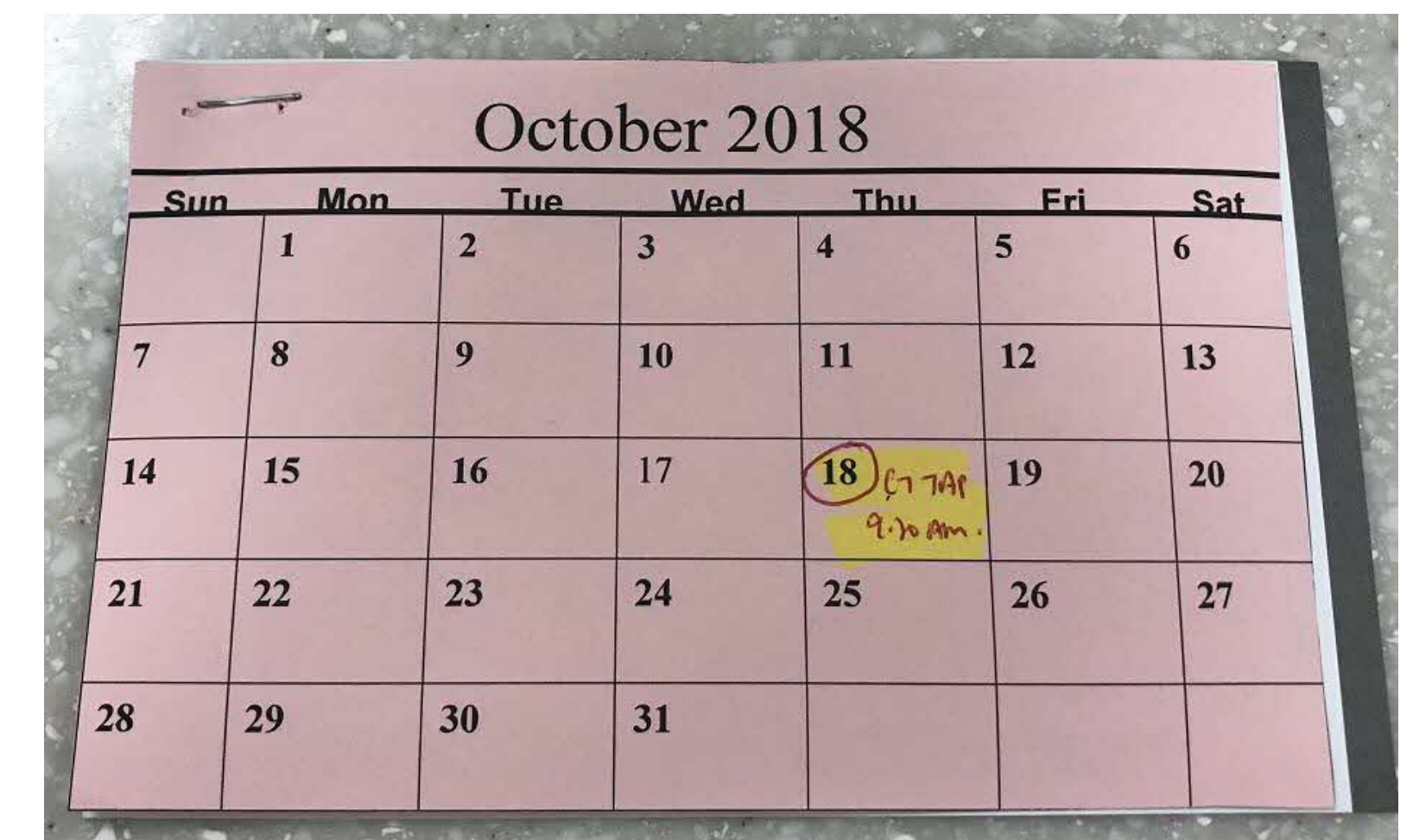
Select Changes

The project team did a brainstorming session with the rest of the staff during Department Meeting, and decided to test whether introducing a calendar helps patients to remember their scan/2D echo appointments.

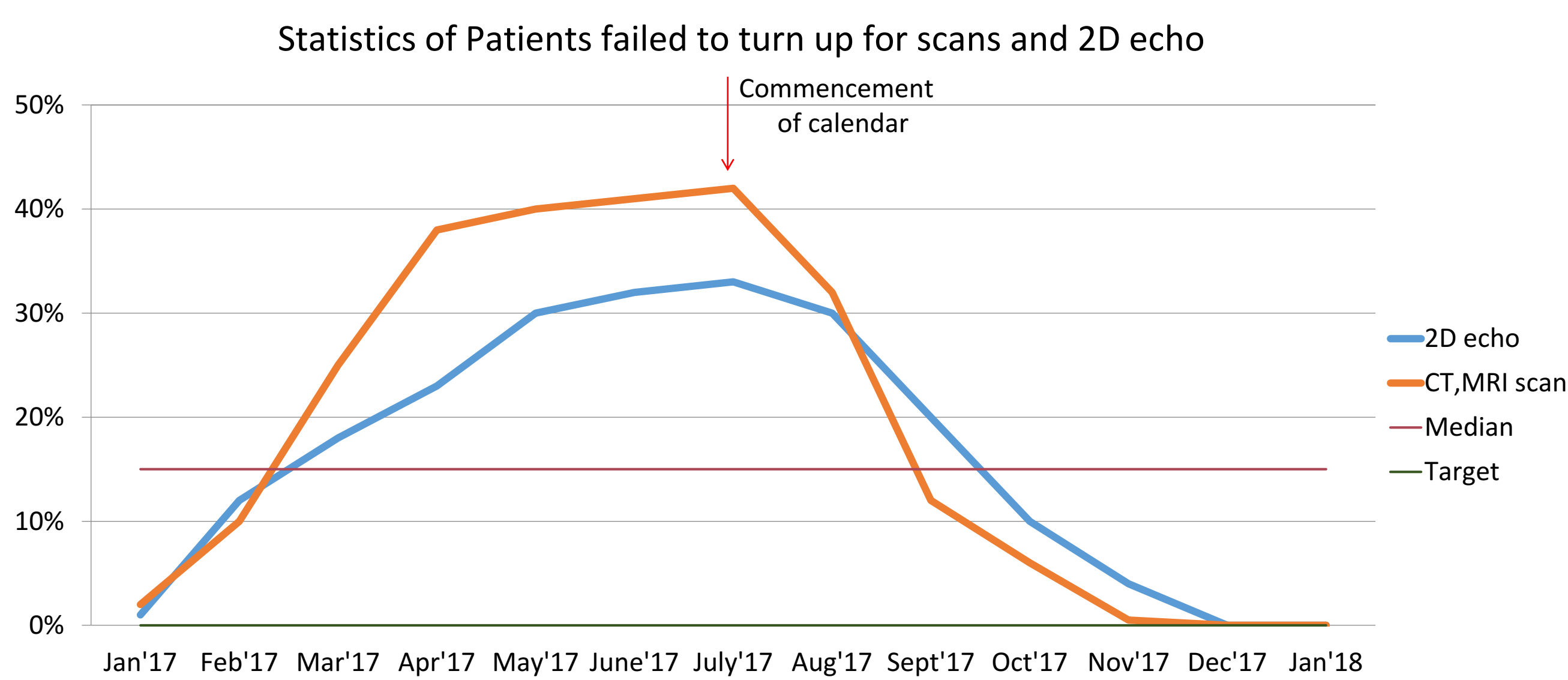
Before



After



Establish Measures



Test & Implement Changes

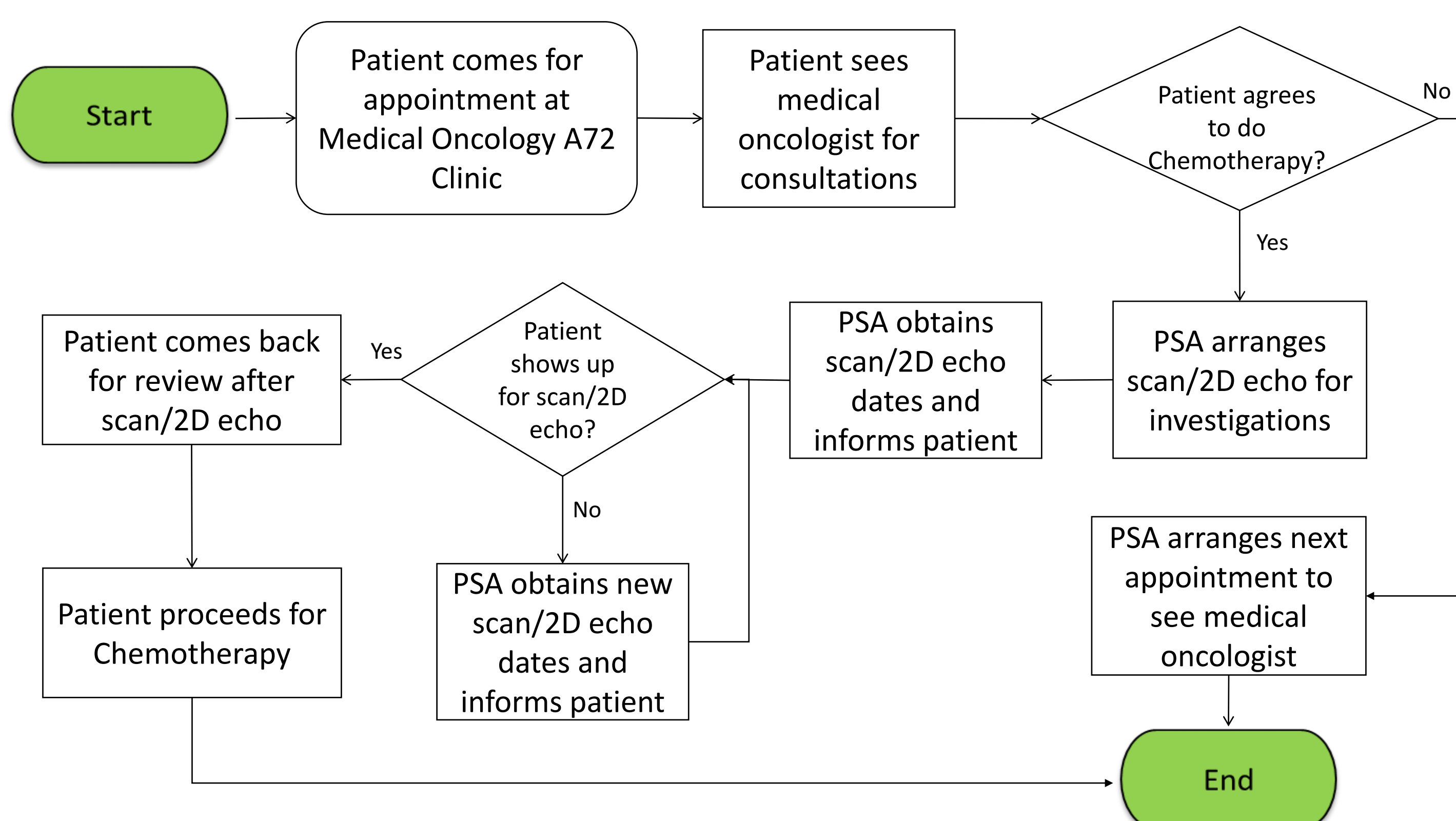
1. Roll call to all staff to note implementation
2. Calendars were distributed to each consultation rooms for the room nurses to use.
3. Explanation given to patients that the calendar was to serve as a reminder for them to comply with their scans/2D echo on that particular month.
4. The calendar was attached to appointment card when scans/2D echo were ordered.

Results:

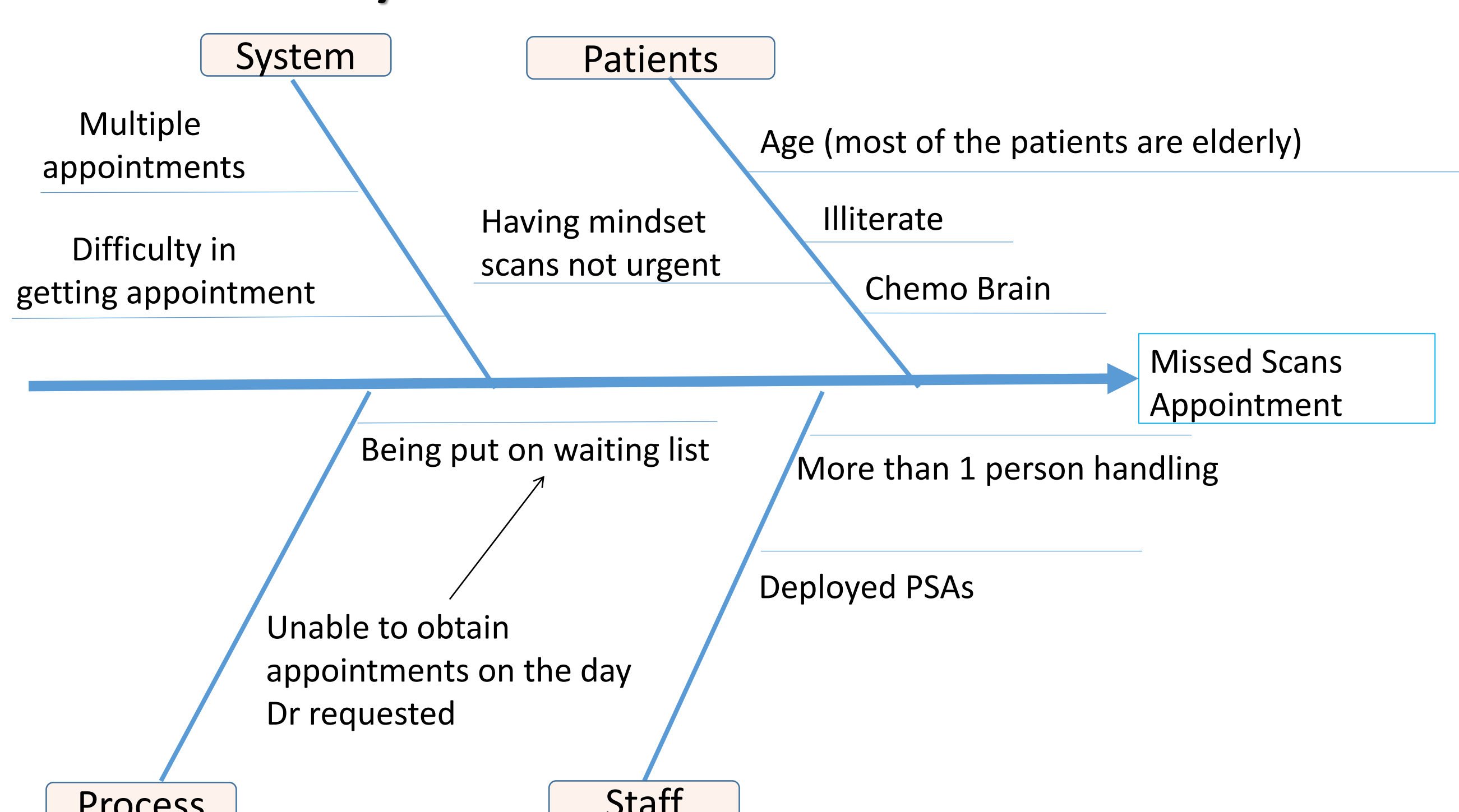
- Patients' treatment plan were not interrupted as doctors were able to order their chemotherapy treatment as scheduled.
- Patients felt it did help them to remember and comply with their scan/2D echo appointment.
- Positive feedback of Oncology patients turning up for their investigations from other departments.

Analyse Problem

Process before improvement



Root Cause Analysis



Spread Changes, Learning Points

Strategies to spread change after implementation

After the implementation, we achieved full success rate of compliance for their scans/2D echo appointments. However, there was a drop in compliance subsequently when the consult rooms were taken over to be assisted by the PSAs, as the Calendar was not followed through by them. Reinforced to the PSAs on the importance of this practice. Subsequently, patients' full compliance with their multiple appointments was achieved once this practice was in-placed again.

Key learnings

- With the introduction of the Calendar, patients' futile trips were minimized with their scan/2D echo done prior to their doctors' appointments, followed by their chemotherapy treatment not interrupted.
- The Calendar was proven as an effective measure, and we would like to recommend all clinics to develop this strategy to remind patients on their multiple appointments.