

IMPROVING TURNAROUND TIME FOR INTRA-SOC REFERRAL FROM SURGERY TO OSTEOPOROSIS CLINIC

MEMBERS: NADIA ISMAIL, SITI AISYAH, CHAY YU XUAN, HAYLEY KHNG

- SAFETY
- PRODUCTIVITY
- QUALITY
- COST
- PATIENT EXPERIENCE
- OPERATIONAL & SERVICE

Define Problem, Set Aim

Problem/Opportunity for Improvement

Between Jul to Aug 2020, Surgery Clinic patients referred to Osteoporosis Clinic need to wait about 3 to 4 weeks to obtain an appointment. The Osteoporosis appointment slots were centrally controlled by the clinic. PSA need to call Osteoporosis Clinic to obtain appointment and check with the doctor in charge to triage before the appointment can be scheduled. This resulted in the long turn-around time (TAT) to book follow-up appointment. Patient experience was poor and those who were hyper anxious would call to enquire on their appointment bookings. There was also potential risk of appointment being dropped by both clinic PSA.

Aim

The team aim to improve the turn around time (TAT) for intra-SOC referral for Osteoporosis appointment from Surgery Clinic by 50% (below 14days) by Oct 2020.

Establish Measures

Performance before intervention:

Between July to Aug 2020, on average there were 5 patients referred to Osteoporosis clinic per month. Total Turnaround time to obtain an appointment below:

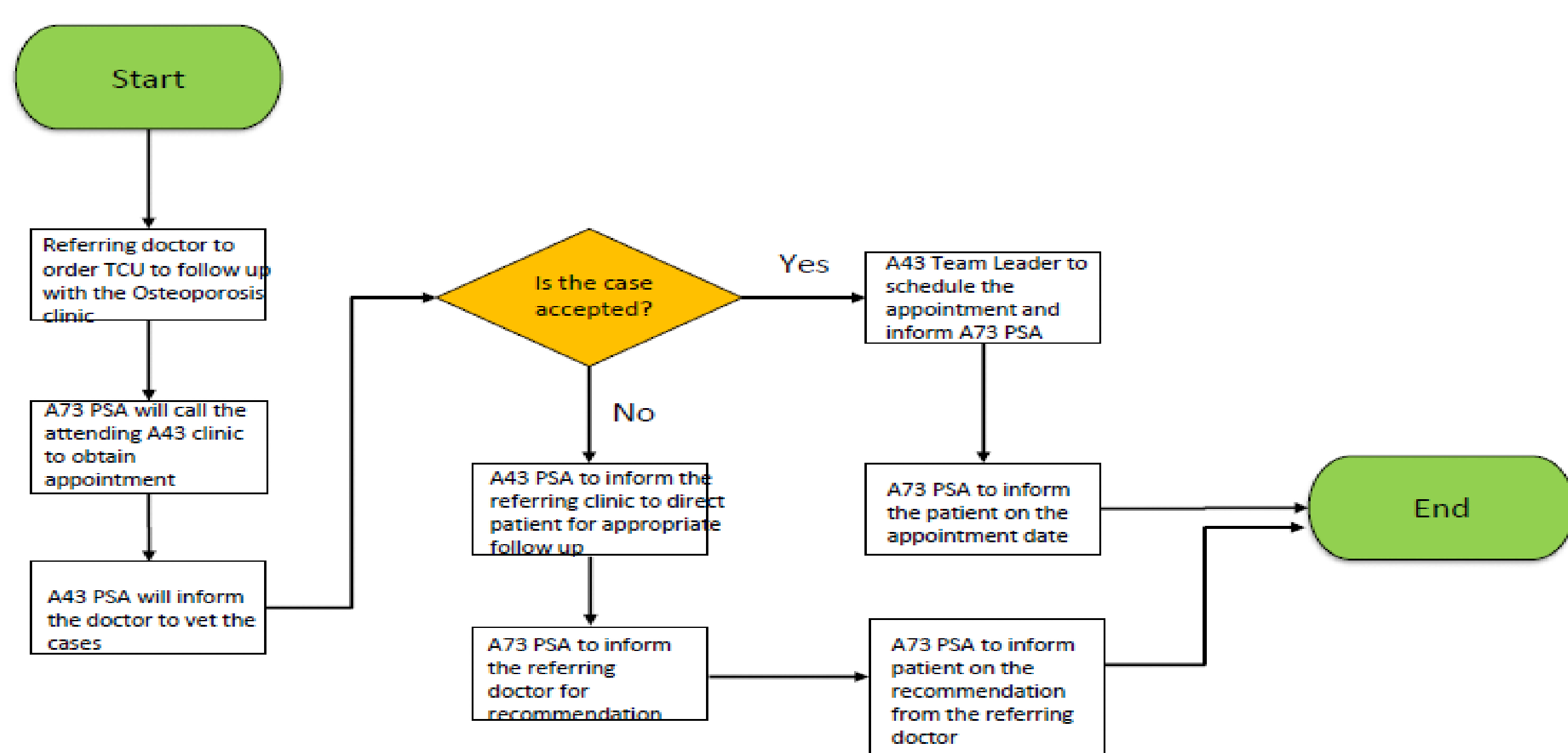
	Jul'20	Aug'20
Nos of days taken to obtain an appointment	26 days	27 days

Nos of patients' appointment request dropped (overlook and PSA pick up after 2 weeks):

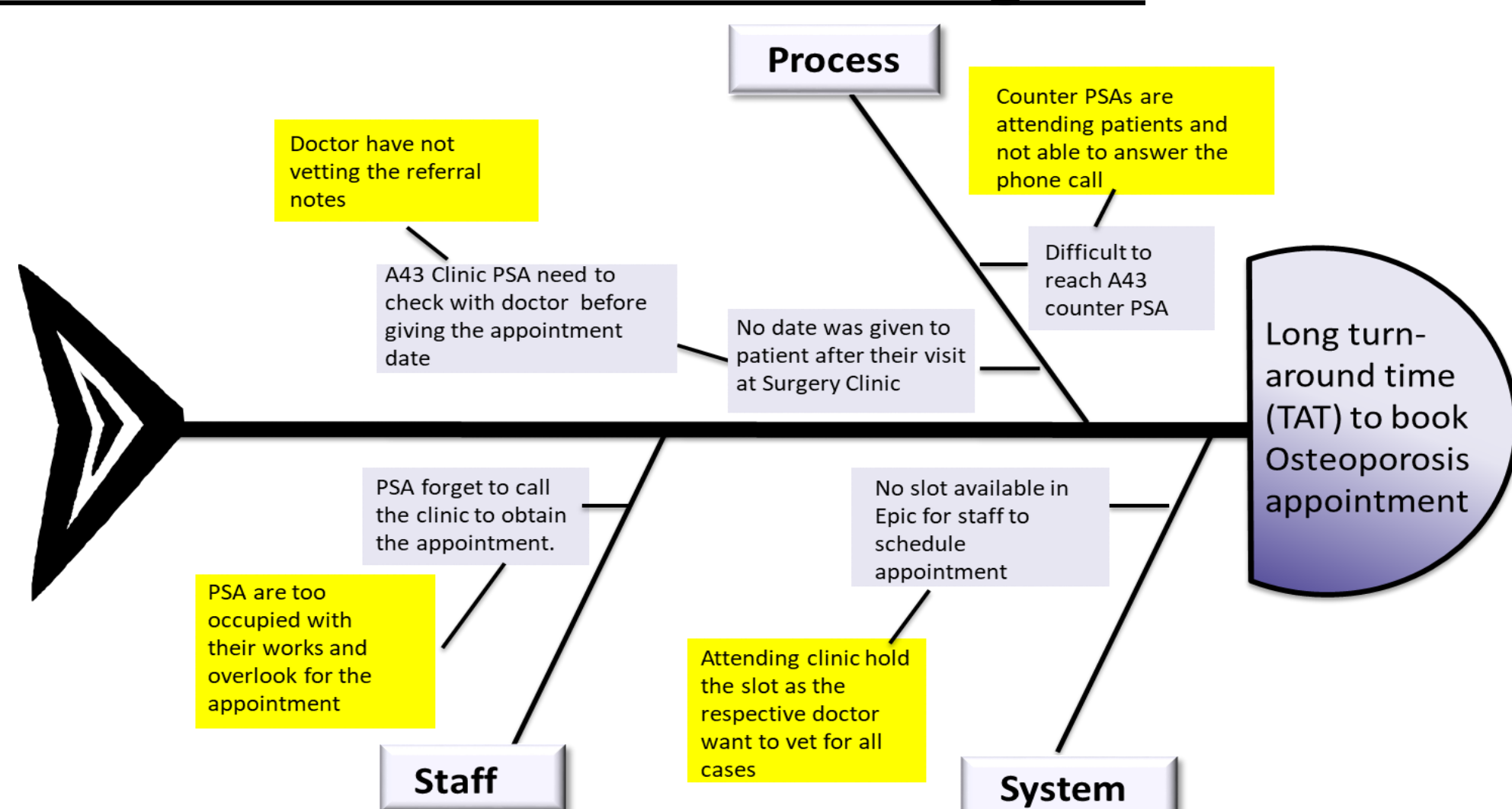
	Jul'20	Aug'20
Long TAT due to PSA had overlook the appointment request	2	2

Analyse Problem

Process before Interventions

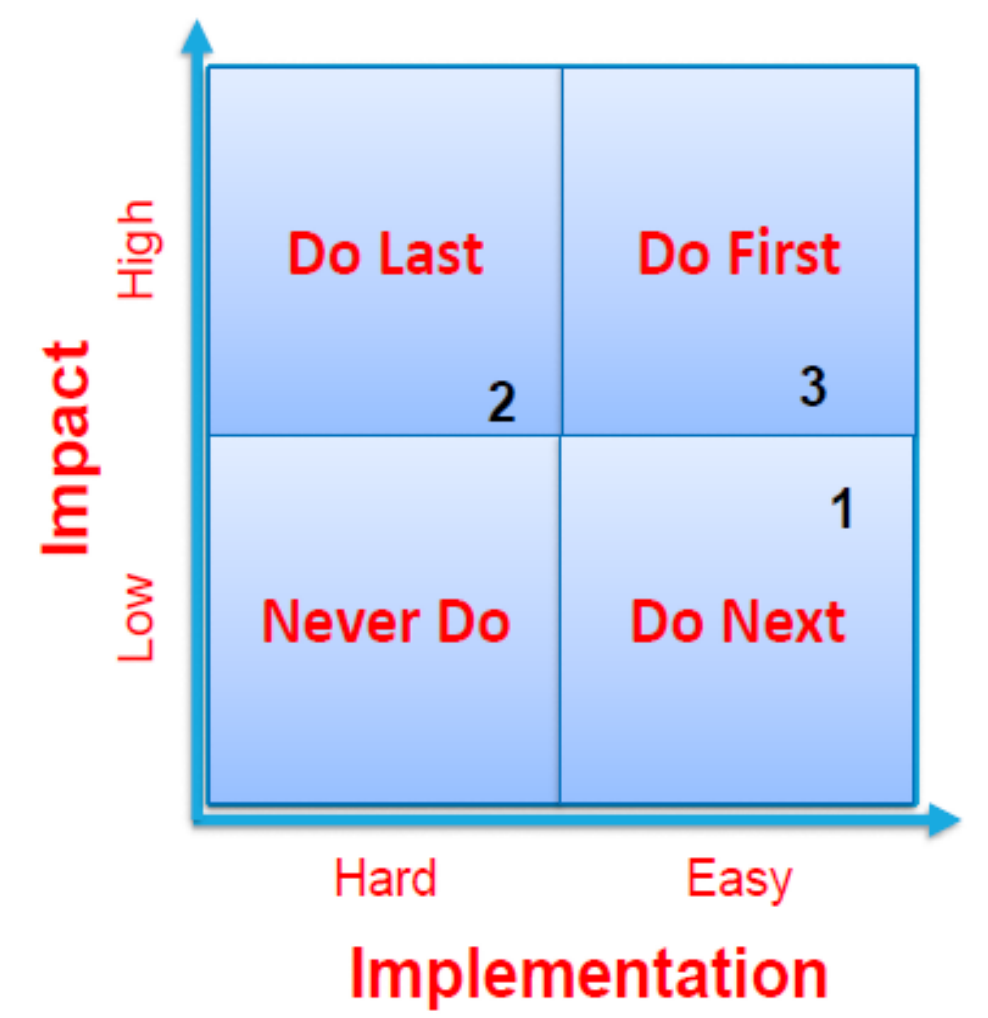


Probable root causes – Fishbone diagram



Select Changes

Root cause	Probable solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A73 Room PSA has to call A43 Counter PSA to get an appointment for the referral Due to busy clinic, A43 is unable to pick up the call 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To implement patient scheduling list by weekly unless the requested appointment has to be obtain urgently
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A73 PSAs unable to wait for them to pick up the calls as they need to assist the next patient. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tiger text the attending clinic PSA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A43 Doctor hold the slots for vetting and reserve for urgent case. As some of the case can be seen in Polyclinic. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Email the referral to A43 Clinic in charge whenever there is any vetting. As such the doctor are able to decide if this case is urgent.

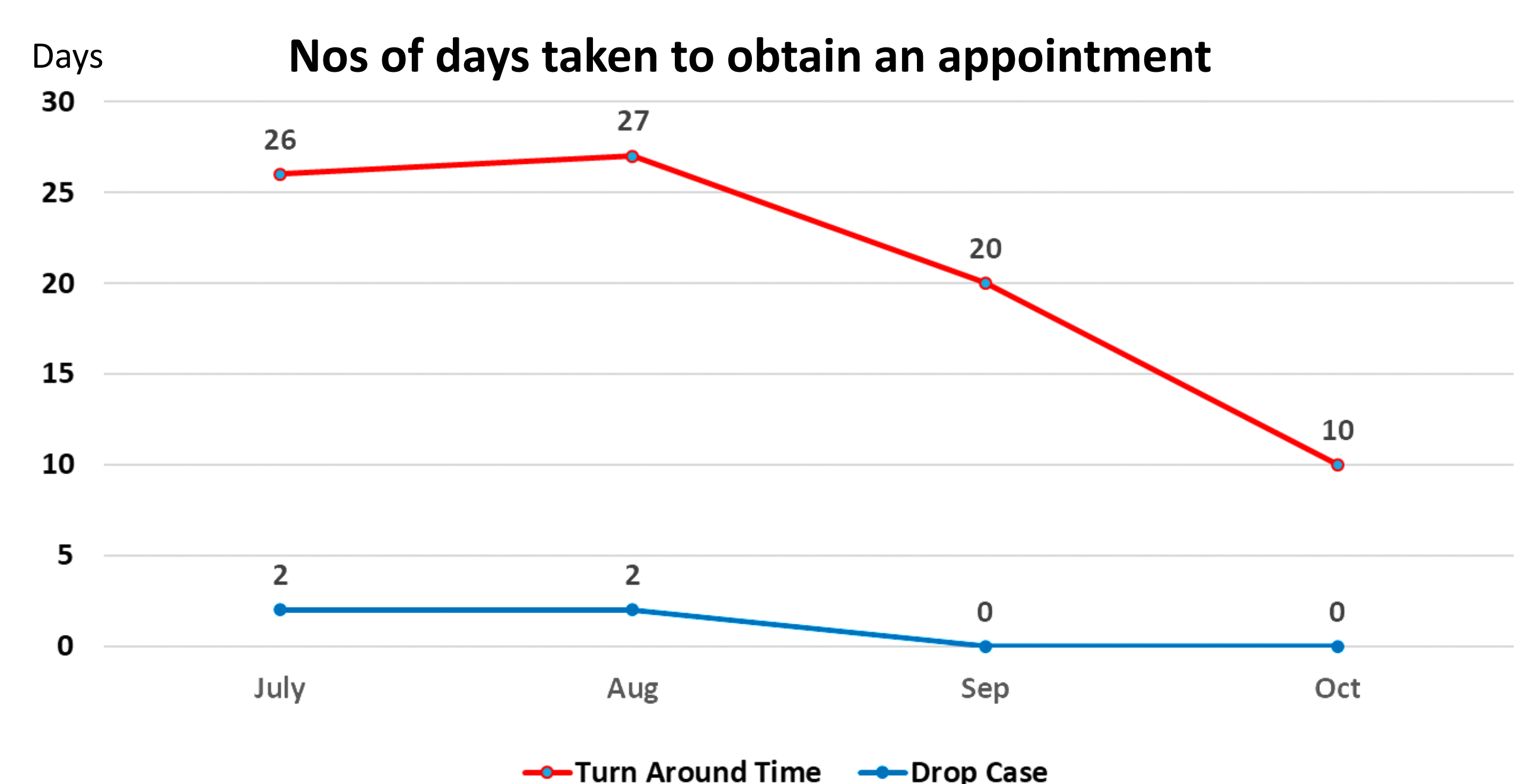


Test & Implement Changes

CYCLE	PLAN	DO	STUDY	ACT
1 (Jul-Aug 20)	Change the workflow to email the Osteoporosis Clinic in charge instead of calling to respective clinic counter.	To collate the number of pending osteoporosis appointment from clinic PSA daily and send to A43 clinic ops	Having a direct channel to email on the pending appointment allow a seamless way to obtain appointment. However, Clinic team/in charge never email the pending appointment immediately. There is 1 patient who received appointment after 2 weeks	Adopt the plan to email the osteoporosis appointment. To fix a weekly schedule for emailing
2 (Sep-Oct 20)	To fix a weekly schedule for emailing	An excel list was created for a weekly appointment to email Referring clinic ops.	0 drop case. All patients are scheduled within 2 weeks.	Standardized the workflow and roll out to clinic PSAs

Results after implementation

- All patients were able to get appointment to Osteoporosis clinic within 10 days after vetting.
- There was zero incident of dropped case in Sept and Oct 2020.



Spread Changes, Learning Points

Key Learnings

Improve communication between referral and receiving clinic is important in facilitating the appointment booking process and to reduce the total turn around time.