

Sustaining low no-show rates for diabetes foot screening service appointments

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Aim

Primary objective:

Improve no-show rates for Admiralty Medical Centre (AdMC) Diabetes Foot Screening (DFS) Service

Secondary objective:

Ensure minimal wastage of slots for DFS to allow patients who are stratified as "Moderate" or "High" risk to return timely for regular foot surveillance, enhancing patient safety and clinical outcomes

Background

No-show rates prior to Aug 2020 was high at 32.5% with 3 yearly average of 26.2% for Diabetes Foot Screening Service. Root cause analysis has found the following (Figure 1):

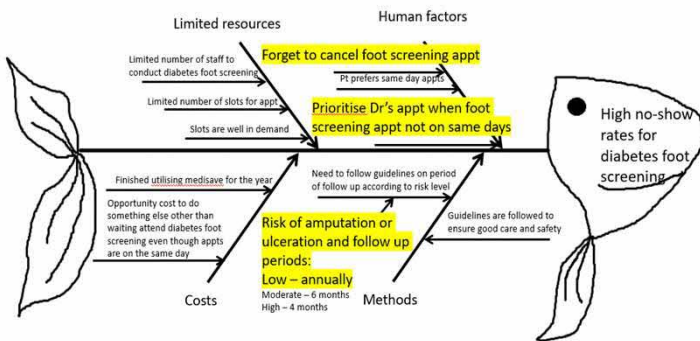
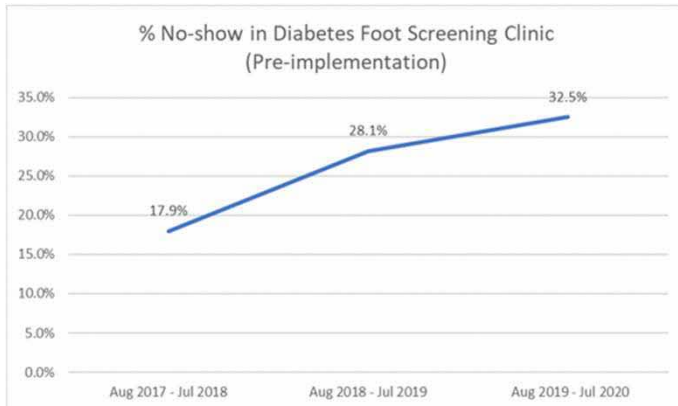


Figure 1. Root cause analysis of high no-show rates

Doctors / Patient Service Associates (PSAs) reported difficulty in booking "Moderate" and "High" patients in for their 6-monthly or 4-monthly foot surveillance appointments due to requests for same-day appointments. This led to unhappiness from doctors, PSAs and Podiatry staff as time was wasted to uncommunicate on the next best option for these patients. Safety is being compromised as well as patients often ended up being provided a review date longer than recommended.



Graph 1. No-show rates before implementation

Team Members

Name	Designation	Department
Chong Li Ling	Senior Podiatry Assistant	Podiatry
Liew Mei Wan	Senior Podiatry Assistant	Podiatry
Murtinah Wati Bte Daud	Senior Podiatry Assistant	Podiatry

Interventions / Implementation

1. Instead of the traditional appointments to be made for "Low" risk patients annually, these patients were advised to "Walk-in" during the doctor regular visits.
2. This helped to address the issue of no-show, freeing up slots for "Moderate" and "High" risk patients; providing same day appointments where possible.
3. Since EPIC started, the "link appointment" was possible – helped to alert the Contact Centre to change both doctor's and DFS service appointment when patients call in to change appointments. In the past, patients often overlook changing the DFS service appointment, resulting in high no-show rates.
4. Left over available slots are reserved for same day "Walk-in" appointments for doctors to book in "Low" risk patients who are seen in their clinics

Onward 2026

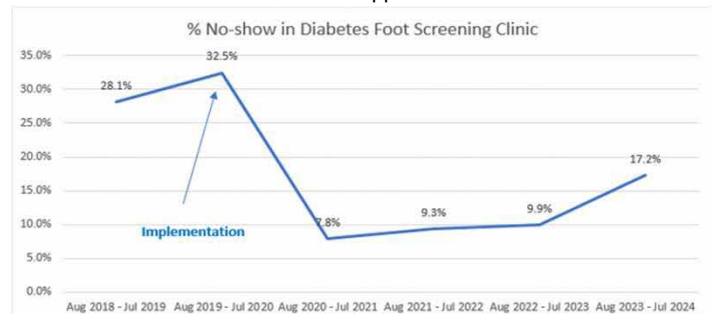
We contribute to Onward 2026 by:

1. Providing same day appointments to patients, reducing hassle for patients and family
2. Providing timely appointments to our "Moderate" and "High" risk patients, ensuring safe care
3. Keeping our staff happy at work, allowing better provision of services

The sustained reduced no-show rates proves that we are better at catering to the needs of our patients compared to pre-implementation

Results & Outcomes

- Pre-implementation, no-show rate for DFS was 42.3%. Immediate no-show rates 10.1% (Aug 2020 to Oct 2020) and demonstrated a **63% improvement** in no-show rate
- The improvement has been **sustained for at least 4 years** (Graph 2.) and with consistent no-show rate [15.9% (FY2023) and 15.8% (FY2024 to date)] below the average "no-show" rate of Specialist Outpatient Clinic (SOC) of 18.4% (Sep 23 - Sep 24).
- More slots were made available for the "Moderate" and "High" risk patients to receive foot surveillance
- Enhancing patients' satisfaction and experience by occupying time between blood tests and doctor's appointment



Graph 2. No-show rates before and after implementation

Conclusion

- This improvement project met both our primary and secondary objectives to reduce no-show rates and enhance patient safety particularly for our higher risk patients
- It has also been proven to be an effective and sustainable solution where the no-show rates average over last 4 years of 11.1% have been sustained to below normal SOC no-show rates of about 15.8% (FY2024 to date)