



Name of project: Community paediatric nurse triage appointments

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Kent Community Health
NHS Foundation Trust

What was our aim?

To reduce the length of time from request to appointment for urgent attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) medication reviews within the Community Paediatric Service from an average of 45 days, to 15 days, by December 2021.

Why is it important to service users and carers?

Offering earlier appointments for children and young people can mean they are able to access their education with minimal disruption and improve their relationships within the family home.

There was previously no duty system for the nursing team. The calls received went directly to doctors (some of these calls would be sent to nurses, but this is variable depending on the doctor and nurse). Patients would wait for appointments, approximately a minimum of three months.

Ideas and tests of change

A new duty rota was implemented which would mean that nurses had allocated time to carry out urgently request medication reviews.

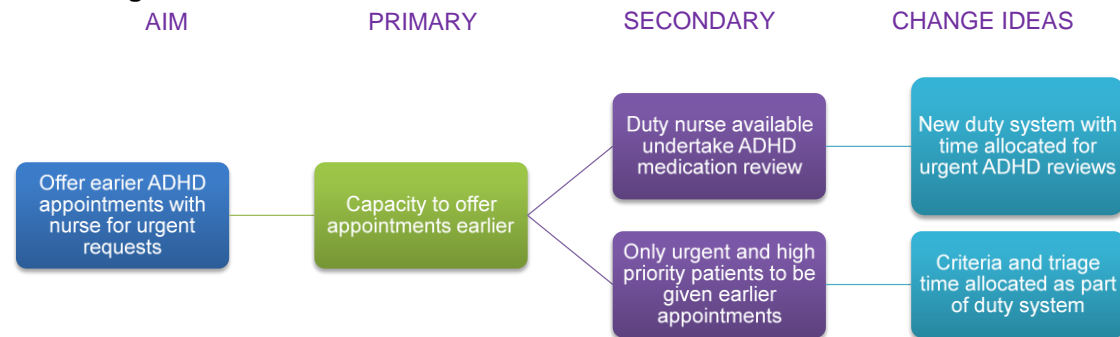
In order to do this, a rota was created where each nurse was scheduled to be on duty pro rata to days worked per week. For example, part time working three days a week, would work three duty days per month and full time would do five duty days per month.

A list of criteria was created for the administration and nursing teams to follow, to ensure only children who met the guidelines could be offered an urgent appointment. This would help to make sure that urgent appointments, would only be allocated to children that really needed them in the short-time scale requested and that capacity would be available for other children, potentially at higher risk, if required.

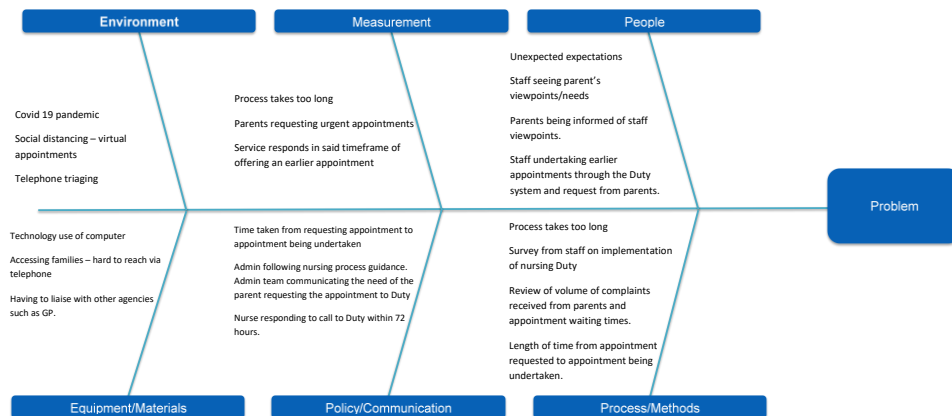


The tools we used

Driver diagram:



Fishbone diagram:

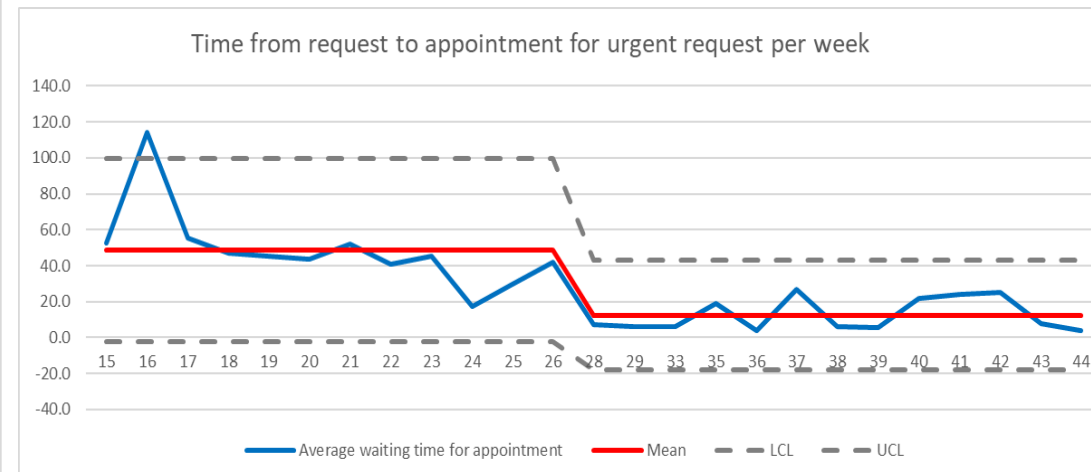


Plan, do study, act (PDSA) cycles and statistical process control (SPC) charts

Results/How did we do/Anticipated outcome

Time from request to appointment for early ADHD medication reviews:

The below SPC chart shows that since the introduction of the duty rota in June 2021 (week 26), the average time that a child has to wait between requesting an urgent appointment and being seen by a nurse, dropped from around 49 days to just over 12 days. This means that instead of waiting over a month, a child can be seen within two weeks.



What we learned and what's next

The new duty rota has provided assigned time that can be used to offer urgent ADHD medication reviews to children; however, having the ability to get an appointment more quickly may have increased demand. This means that the system is likely to require further adjustments for future delivery. In addition, having had the system in place for some time, clinics have filled up further in advance, with an increased need for urgent appointment slots. Consequently, we will need to re-evaluate the time to from request to appointment again to see if the improvements have been sustained.