



Improvement : Reducing time taken to organise outpatient appointments at Edenbridge Hospital

Project team: Rumbi Chineka, speciality doctor and Rachael Tufo, ward clerk



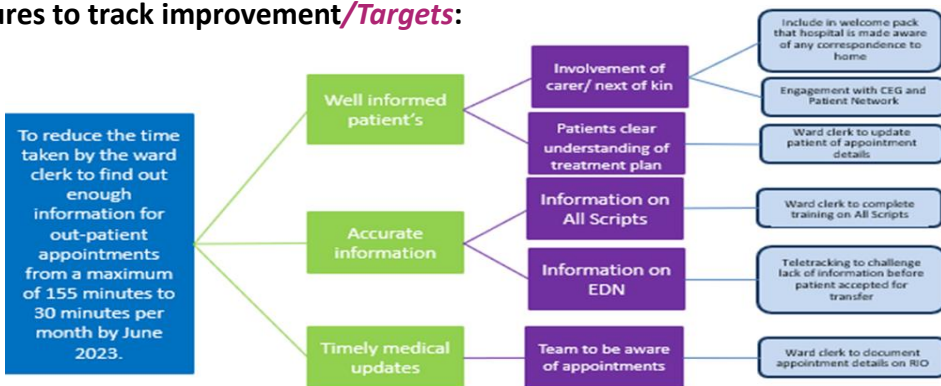
Problem statement:

Patients that are discharged to Edenbridge Hospital, from an acute hospital ward, without adequate outpatient appointment details are at risk of missing their appointment. This impacts on their care planning and rehabilitation.
Ward clerks take a long time trying to find out the information needed for patients to attend their appointments preventing them doing other tasks.

SMART aim/Vision Statement:

To reduce the time taken by the Edenbridge ward clerk to find out enough information for outpatient appointments from a maximum of 155 minutes to 30 minutes per month, by June 2023.

Measures to track improvement/Targets:



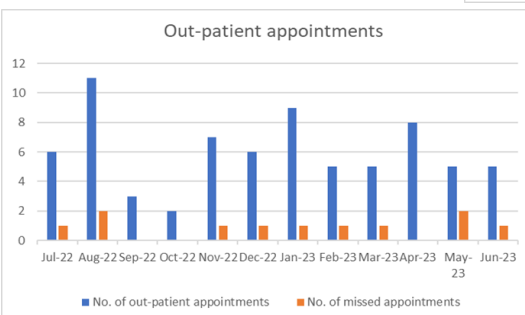
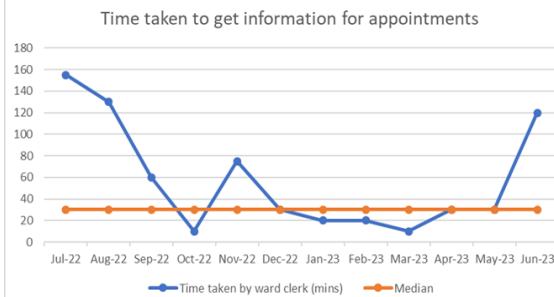
Tests of change/Programmes of work:

Six plan, do, study, act (PDSA) cycles were run to test out the change ideas generated by the driver diagram.

- 1 Families/carers to bring in outpatient information sent to the patient's home address (November 2022)
- 2 Contact details for fracture clinic (November 2022)
- 3 Request for additional information on electronic discharge notice (EDN) asked of Teletracking team (December 2022)
- 4 Ward clerk access to All Scripts system (January 2023)
- 5 Re-emphasising welcome pack to colleagues (May 2023)
- 6 Ward clerk arranging for appointments to be virtual , as able (May 2023)

Data/Current state and baseline measurements for the targets:

Time taken for the ward clerk to find out enough information about appointments has reduced from a median of 60 to 30 minutes



Baseline data from July to November 2022 showed there were 29 appointments, of which four were not attended by the patient.

Since the start of the project, in December 2022, there have been 43 appointments, of which seven have been missed.

Results, what we learned and what's next/analysis:

- Even with high numbers of outpatient appointments, the time taken by the ward clerk has not exceeded 30 minutes since December 2022. This was apart from June 2023 when there was a specific need for a patient to attend an out of area hospital appointment which required additional time to organise.
- Appointments are often added to the Electronic Discharge Notification (EDN) but not booked at time of discharge, so details will not be available at admission.
- Appointment letters are sent to the patient's home address when they remain a KCHFT inpatient.
- When families/carers are aware that letters sent to the patient's home are needed by the ward they will bring them in.
- Fracture clinic appointments are sometimes created at the point a query is made.
- Being proactive about appointments gives the team time to organise attendance.

What's next:

The improvement will be shared with the other community hospitals to ensure that families/carers are aware, that ward clerks have access to the correct systems and know who to contact.

Concerns around IT systems not being synchronised across trust's have been raised through the RIO super-user group.