

Project Title

Managing First Visit Patients' Wait Experience at Urology Centre

Project Lead and Members

Project leaders: Kok Hui Wen

Project members: Sister Toh Poh Choo, Lim Yi Xun, USC Marcom Team

Organisation(s) Involved

National University Hospital (NUH)

Healthcare Family Group Involved in this Project

Healthcare Administration, Medical

Applicable Specialty or Discipline

Healthcare Administrators, Urology

Project Period

Start date: October 2022

Completed date: February 2023

Aims

To improve the first-visit (FV) patients' wait experience by providing early information to manage their expectations and improve the ePES score.

Background

First-visit patients were unprepared for their appointments, leading to disappointment and a lower ePES score of 84%. The project aims to set the right expectations early by providing an information pack via SMS.

Methods

Developed a patient journey map, conducted tests with patients, and piloted an SMS-based information pack to inform first-visit patients about their appointment expectations.

Results

Achieved a high click rate of 90.48% on the information pack link. The ePES score improved from 84.3% in CY2022 to 87.6% in CY2023, with four months achieving a 90% target compared to none in the previous year.

Lessons Learnt

Patients appreciated the effort to inform them beforehand. Feedback indicated that clear, concise information helps manage expectations and reduces anxiety.

Conclusion

The initiative was successful in improving patient experience and can be expanded to other departments.

Project Category

Care & Process Redesign

Quality Improvements, Design Thinking, Value Based Care, Patient Satisfaction

Technology

Digital Health, Mobile Health, Digital App

Keywords

Patient Experience, Urology Centre, First Visit (FV) Patients, ePES Score, Patient Journey Mapping, Service Improvement, SMS Information Pack, Patient Feedback, Waiting Time Management, Healthcare Communication, Digital Engagement, Quality Improvement, Patient Satisfaction, Healthcare Innovation, Singapore Healthcare

Name and Email of Project Contact Person(s)

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Incredible Care QIX Award (Service Experience)

Project Title 2: **Managing First Visit Patients' Wait Experience at Urology Centre (SIP 3)**

Department: **Dept of Urology**

Period: **Oct 2022 – Feb 2023**

Facilitators/Author: -

Sponsors (HODs): **Prof Edmund Chiong & Clarice Lim**

Team Leader/s: **Kok Hui Wen**

Team Members: **Sister Toh Poh Choo, Lim Yi Xun, USC Marcom Team**

What Was The Situation?

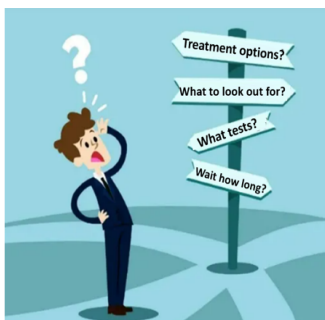
Problem statement

First-visit (FV) patients do not know what to expect for their FV and the time required, until they are at the clinic. The uncertainty leaves them mentally unprepared and unable to plan ahead.

They may form their own expectations and get disappointed when we do not meet their expectations. The average ePES score in 2022 is at the lower end at 84%.

Opportunity

How might we help FV patients be more informed and set the right expectation early, so they are better prepared for what to expect before they show up for their FV? Can ePES score be improved if we set the right expectation early?



Process Steps

Patients were engaged for concept development



Aug '22

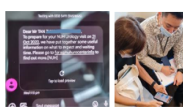
Testing of initial ideas with patients to test assumptions

- Showed mock-ups to 10 patients to get early feedback



Aug – Sep '22

Pivot & iterative refinement of ideas, into current proof of concept



Oct '22

Pilot trial for one week to understand effectiveness

- Tracked no. of clicks of the For.sg link in SMS sent to 84 FV patients to test behaviors
- interviewed 9 patients from 2 clinics for in-depth feedback.

Actions Taken

SIP#3

Development of Patient Journey to Manage Waiting Experience



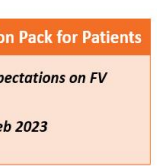
When our patient's appointment at the Urology Centre is confirmed, we send him an SMS informing him of the date, time, and location of his appointment.



Then 2 days before his appointment, he gets a reminder SMS from us.



We know how tiring and boring waiting can be. So in our second SMS to him, we suggest ideas on how he can better occupy his time.



And lastly, when our patient returns for his follow-up, he is given a journey card which provides visual references so that he can easily find the procedural and treatment rooms.



Customised Information Pack for Patients

- Manage patient's expectations on FV experience
- Implemented since Feb 2023

Kok Hui Wen
Urology Centre,
Service Team Leader

Actions Taken

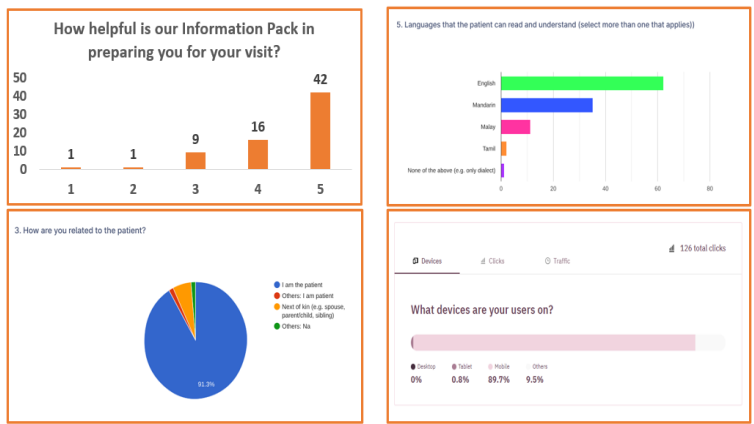
SIP#3



Outcomes / Results Achieved

SIP#3

Survey was conducted from 27 Feb 2023 to 25 Aug 2023 (6 months).

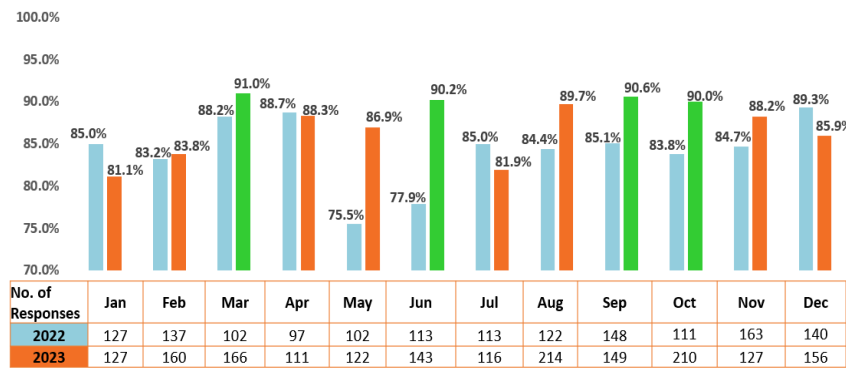


Outcomes / Results Achieved

SIP#3

Improvement in Urology Centre ePES Scoring

- CY2022 (84.3%) → CY2023 (87.6%)
- CY2022 (0 months achieved 90% target) vs CY2023 (4 months achieved 90% target)



What Was The Situation?

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First-visit (FV) patients do not know what to expect for their FV and the time required, until they are at the clinic. The uncertainty leaves them mentally unprepared and unable to plan ahead.

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Opportunity

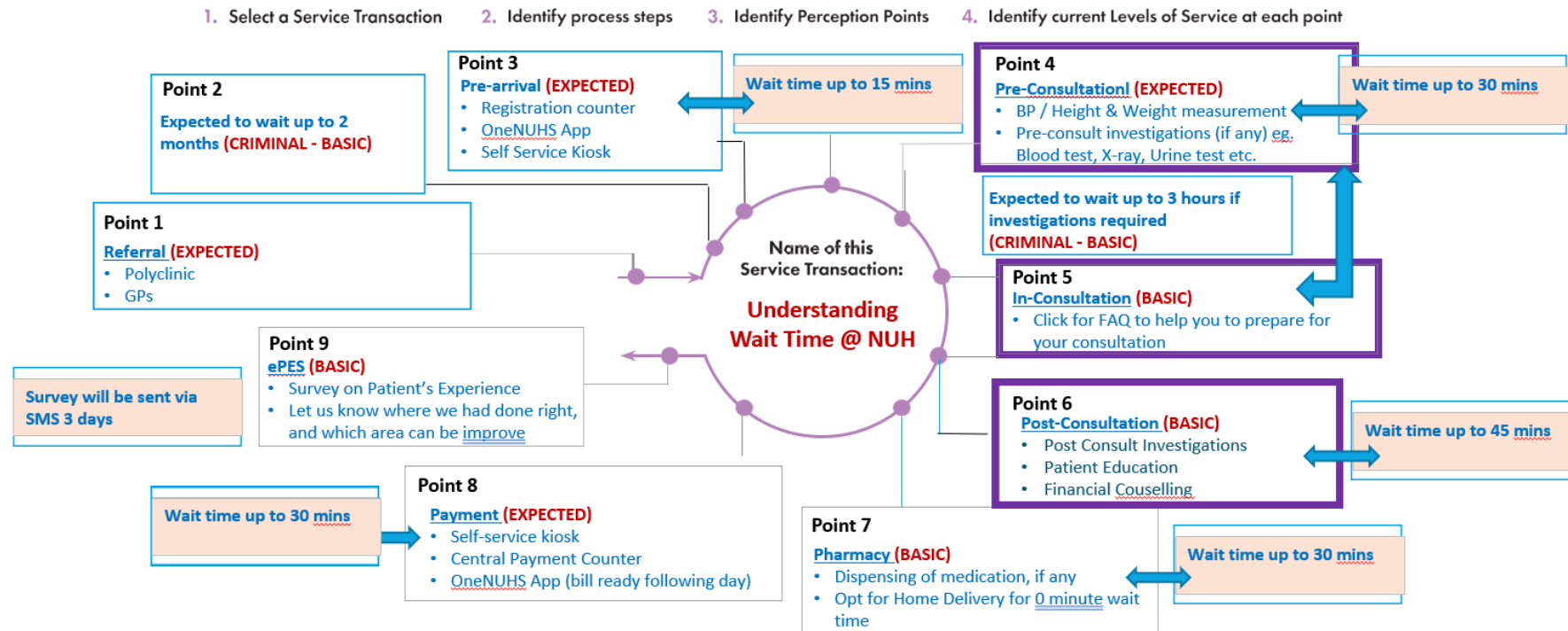
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Perception point mapping developed during SIP3

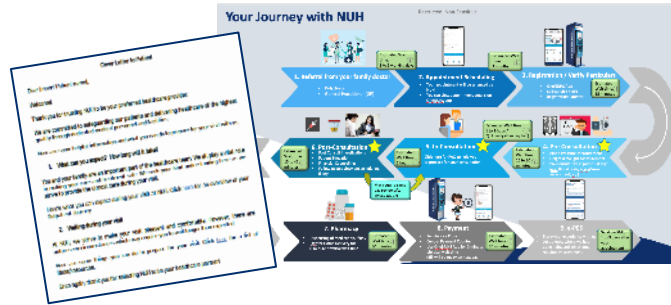
Restricted, Sensitive (Normal)

Our Service Situation in Process Steps and Perception Points™



Process Steps

Patients were engaged for concept development



Aug '22

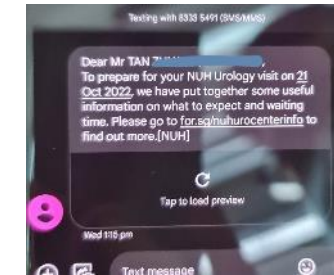
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Process Steps

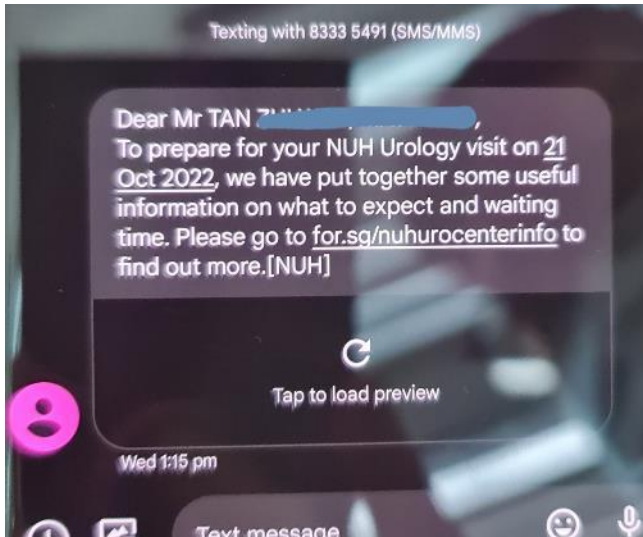
Proof of Concept

Hypothesis

By sending FV patients 2 days before their visit, an SMS with a link to an 'information pack' that contains a patient journey map with estimated wait time and tips to be prepared for the visit and wait time, we can better manage their expectations and perceptions.

Prototype 1 – SMS

(sent 2 days prior to FV date)



Prototype 2 – FV Information Pack

(hosted on for.sg to enable tracking of click rate)



<https://for.sg/nuhurocenterinfo>

Process Steps

Pilot

Experiment to validate the PoC

Assumption: Patients will click on the SMS link to learn more about what to expect for their FV.

Test: SMS were sent to selected FV patients of Urology Centre, during a week period.

- 84 Urology Centre patients with FV appts between 17 – 21 Oct received the SMS 2 days prior to appt date.

How we measure: No. of clicks on the link to access the 'info pack', in the for.sg dashboard.

Process Steps

Observations & Learnings from the pilot

We tracked the total number of clicks at Urology Centre

Click rate for Urology FV patients: 76 out of 84

Date	No. of clicks
14/10/2022	4
15/10/2022	9
17/10/2022	20
18/10/2022	3
19/10/2022	35
20/10/2022	1
21/10/2022	4
Total no. of clicks	*76
Total no. of FV Pts who received SMS	84
Click rate %	90.48

Observation

A very high click rate of around 90%.

Interpretation

9 out of 10 FV patients are interested to learn more about their FV and as a result, are willing to click on the SMS prior to arrival.

*Assuming each patient clicks on the link once

Qualitative feedback from patients' interview

We talked to a total of 12 patients



3 received but didn't click



I've **been to NUH** for other surgery, **familiar with the process**. Don't think the waiting time is any different.

- Mr Tee, 35

I've **been to NUH** for past 4 years, **expect to spend half a day** here. I'm also **wary of SMS link**, I will trust if it comes from the app.

- Matthew, 26

I **dare not click**. If I incur extra data charge or the phone gets a virus, my daughter will scold me

- Mr Tio, 75



9 received and read the info pack



Helpfulness: 4/5 out of 5 ★ | Clarity: 4/5 out of 5 ★

It is very 温馨 (heartwarming) that **NUH cares for its patients** even before they arrive.

- Mdm Toh, 42

I came to NUH many times for other conditions. This is the first I received this, I was very **impressed by the details** and I showed my wife.

- Mr Wong, 61

The **actual wait time was shorter** and exceeded my expectation of it being longer.

- Ednis, 22

Development of Patient Journey to Manage Waiting Experience

DOING BETTER EVERYDAY!

Spotlighting the Incredible Care Initiatives by our colleagues.

Patients visiting our NUH Urology Centre want to be better informed on what to expect for their first visit.



So we came up with some ideas to create a smoother, more caring experience for them. Here is what we did!

When our patient's appointment at the Urology Centre is confirmed, we send him an SMS informing him of the date, time, and location of his appointment.

DING!



Kok Hui Wen
Urology Centre,
Service Team Leader

Then 2 days before his appointment, he gets a reminder SMS from us.

DING!

Oh yes! My appointment is on Monday! I almost forgot!

This SMS also tells me how long the wait will be, ways to occupy myself while waiting, and also suggests questions to ask the doctor!



We know how tiring and boring waiting can be.

So in our second SMS to him, we suggest ideas on how he can better occupy his time.



Customised Information Pack for Patients

- *Manage patient's expectations on FV experience*
- *Implemented since Feb 2023*


And lastly, when our patient returns for his follow-up, he is given a journey card which provides visual references so that he can easily find the procedural and treatment rooms.



Just match the icons on this card to the icons at the door

Aha! That's the blood test room!





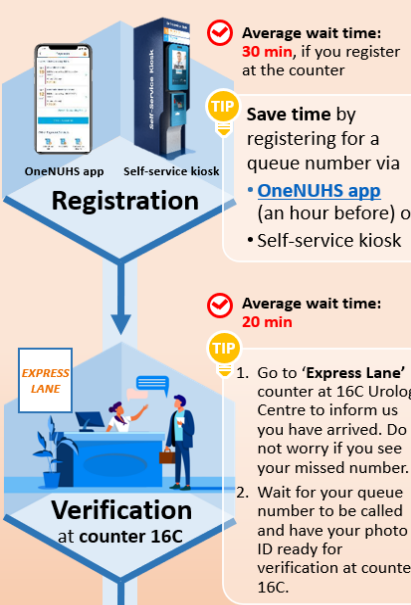
Greetings from all of us at NUH!

We hope for you to not only get well soon, and also feel good about your visit with us.

Hence we have put together this information pack to help you:

- understand what to expect and be more prepared for your visit. (Page 2 – 5)
- make yourself more comfortable while waiting, especially during busy times when the wait can be longer. (Page 6)
- think about the questions for your doctor during consultation. (Page 7)

AS will be implementing this across ALL SOC's in CY2024.



Registration

Average wait time: 30 min, if you register at the counter

TIP Save time by registering for a queue number via

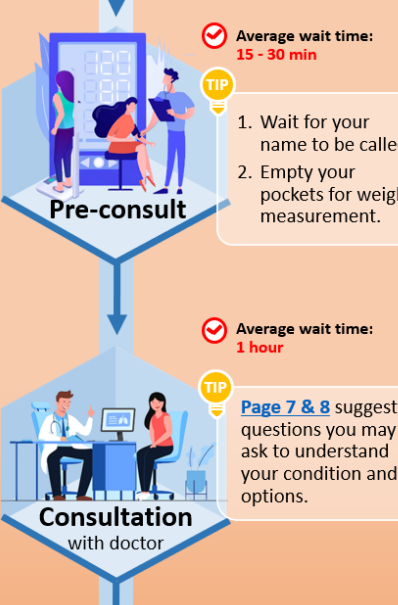
- OneNUHS app
- Self-service kiosk

Verification at counter 16C

Average wait time: 20 min

TIP

1. Go to 'Express Lane' counter at 16C Urology Centre to inform us you have arrived. Do not worry if you see your missed number.
2. Wait for your queue number to be called and have your photo ID ready for verification at counter 16C.



Pre-consult

Average wait time: 15 - 30 min

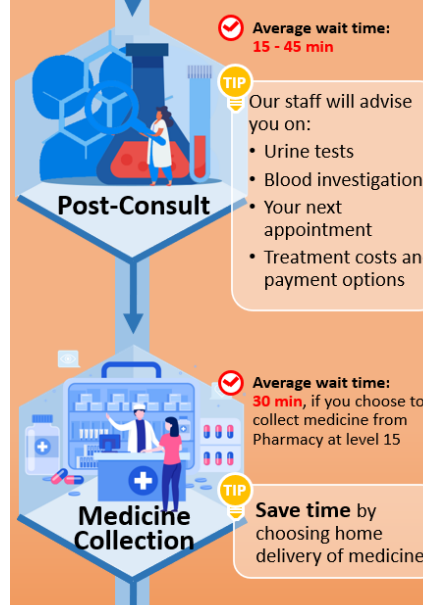
TIP

1. Wait for your name to be called.
2. Empty your pockets for weight measurement.

Consultation with doctor

Average wait time: 1 hour

TIP Page 7 & 8 suggest questions you may ask to understand your condition and options.



Post-Consult

Average wait time: 15 - 45 min

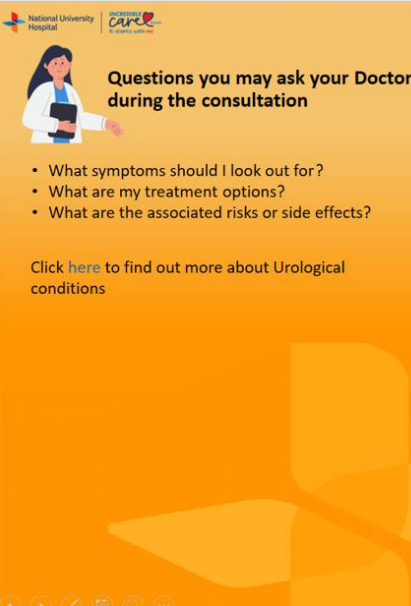
TIP Our staff will advise you on:

- Urine tests
- Blood investigations
- Your next appointment
- Treatment costs and payment options

Medicine Collection

Average wait time: 30 min, if you choose to collect medicine from Pharmacy at level 15

TIP Save time by choosing home delivery of medicine.



Questions you may ask your Doctor during the consultation

- What symptoms should I look out for?
- What are my treatment options?
- What are the associated risks or side effects?

Click [here](#) to find out more about Urological conditions

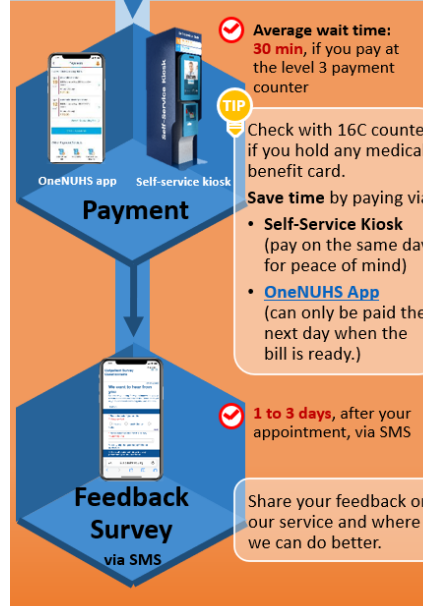


Wait time-occupier tips

- Bring along a book or magazine to read
- Catch up on email or news on your mobile phone
- Go through and organise your photos in your phone
- Learn about the Urological conditions that we treat, via www.nuh.com.sg/urology or the OneNUHS app in the 'Services & Useful Links', look for the 'Condition/Treatment' option.

Make yourself comfortable...

- Help yourself to one of the blankets provided, if you feel cold
- Hot & cold water dispenser is available to refill your water bottle
- Purchase a hot snack from the vending machine on level 17 (one floor above).



Payment

Average wait time: 30 min, if you pay at the level 3 payment counter

TIP Check with 16C counter if you hold any medical benefit card.

Save time by paying via

- Self-Service Kiosk (pay on the same day for peace of mind)
- OneNUHS App (can only be paid the next day when the bill is ready.)

Feedback Survey via SMS

1 to 3 days, after your appointment, via SMS

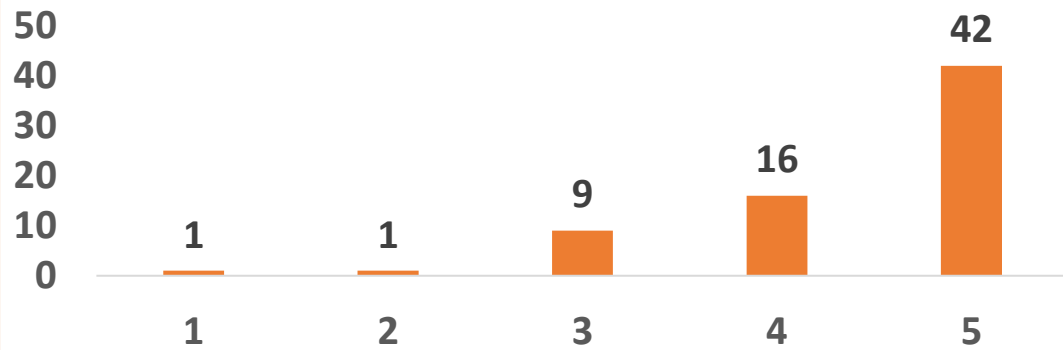
Share your feedback on our service and where we can do better.

Outcomes / Results Achieved

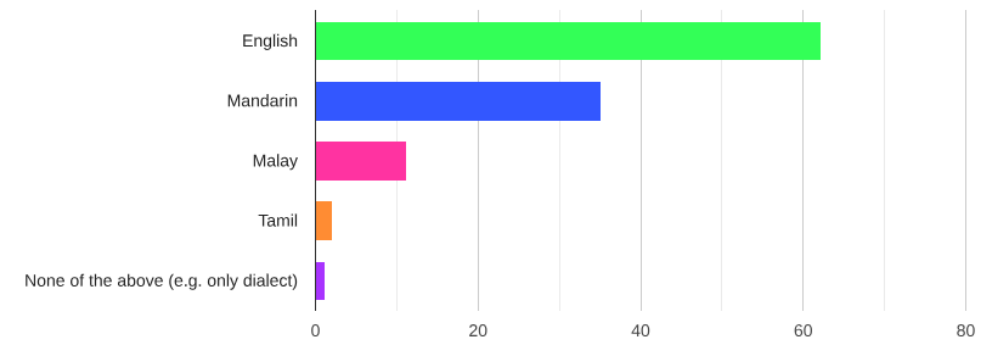
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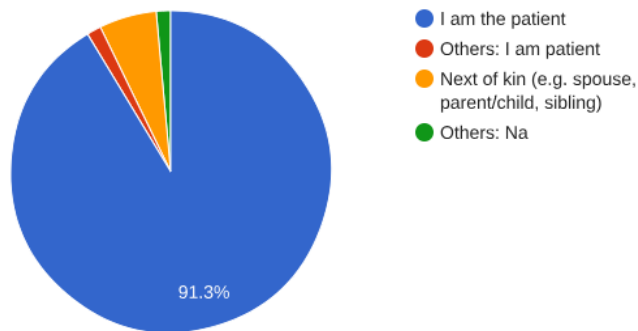
How helpful is our Information Pack in preparing you for your visit?



5. Languages that the patient can read and understand (select more than one that applies))



3. How are you related to the patient?



126 total clicks

Devices

Clicks

Traffic

What devices are your users on?



Desktop

Tablet

Mobile

Others

0%

0.8%

89.7%

9.5%

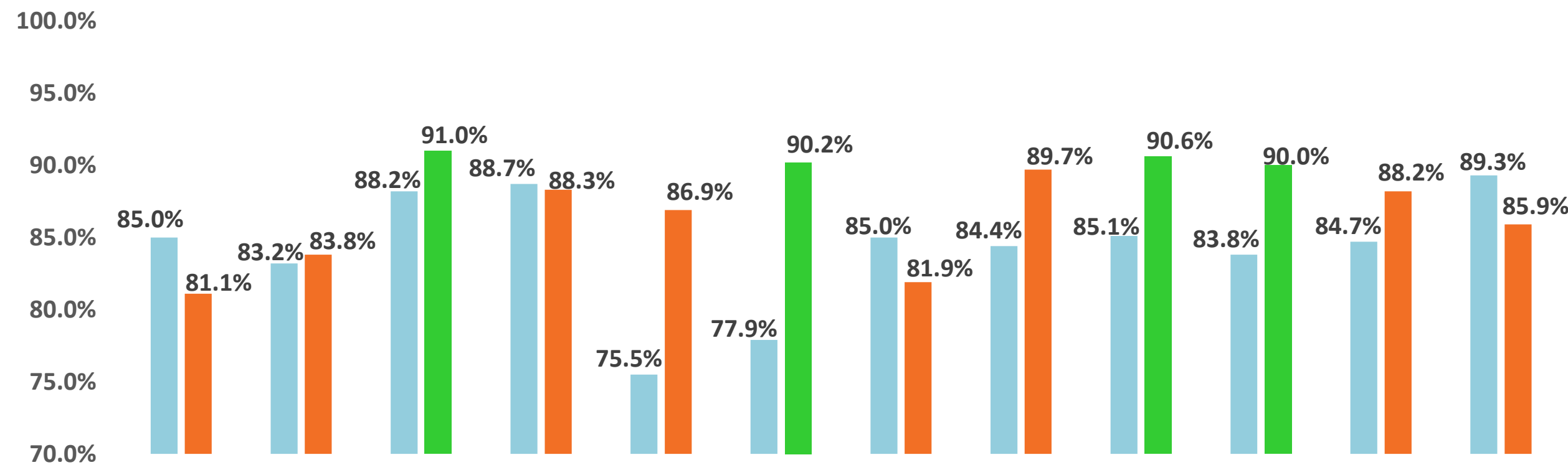
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Other Verbatims Received

- *Indeed is very helpful bcoz easy access, incase not sure of the timing, date and clinic in which for all the necessary info*
- *First time using this app think is user friendly. Probably the security features is very strict, if can improve on it for senior people like us but of course don't wish to compromise convenient against security.*
- *Advanced instructions on process of check in*
- *Comprehensive content. Easy to understand and follow through*
- *Information was clear*
- *Very helpful and explained very nicely thanks*
- *It provide expected process and waiting time during the visit.*
- *Better now. With info regarding scans, lab tests etc. Previously was only notification on doc's appt time*
- *Helpfulness: an idea of the flow. Gives patient a sense of assurance when they feel lost*
- *Immediate direct to the registration counter without hassle.*
- *Good to know before arrival*
- *Delighted to have a pre-medical information of what to expect for my check-up today*

Improvement in Urology Centre ePES Scoring

- CY2022 (84.3%) → CY2023 (87.6%)
- CY2022 (0 months achieved 90% target) vs CY2023 (4 months achieved 90% target)



No. of Responses	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2022	127	137	102	97	102	113	113	122	148	111	163	140
2023	127	160	166	111	122	143	116	214	149	210	127	156