

The Benefits of an Enhanced Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Service in Orthopaedic Rehabilitation

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Quality issue / initial problem

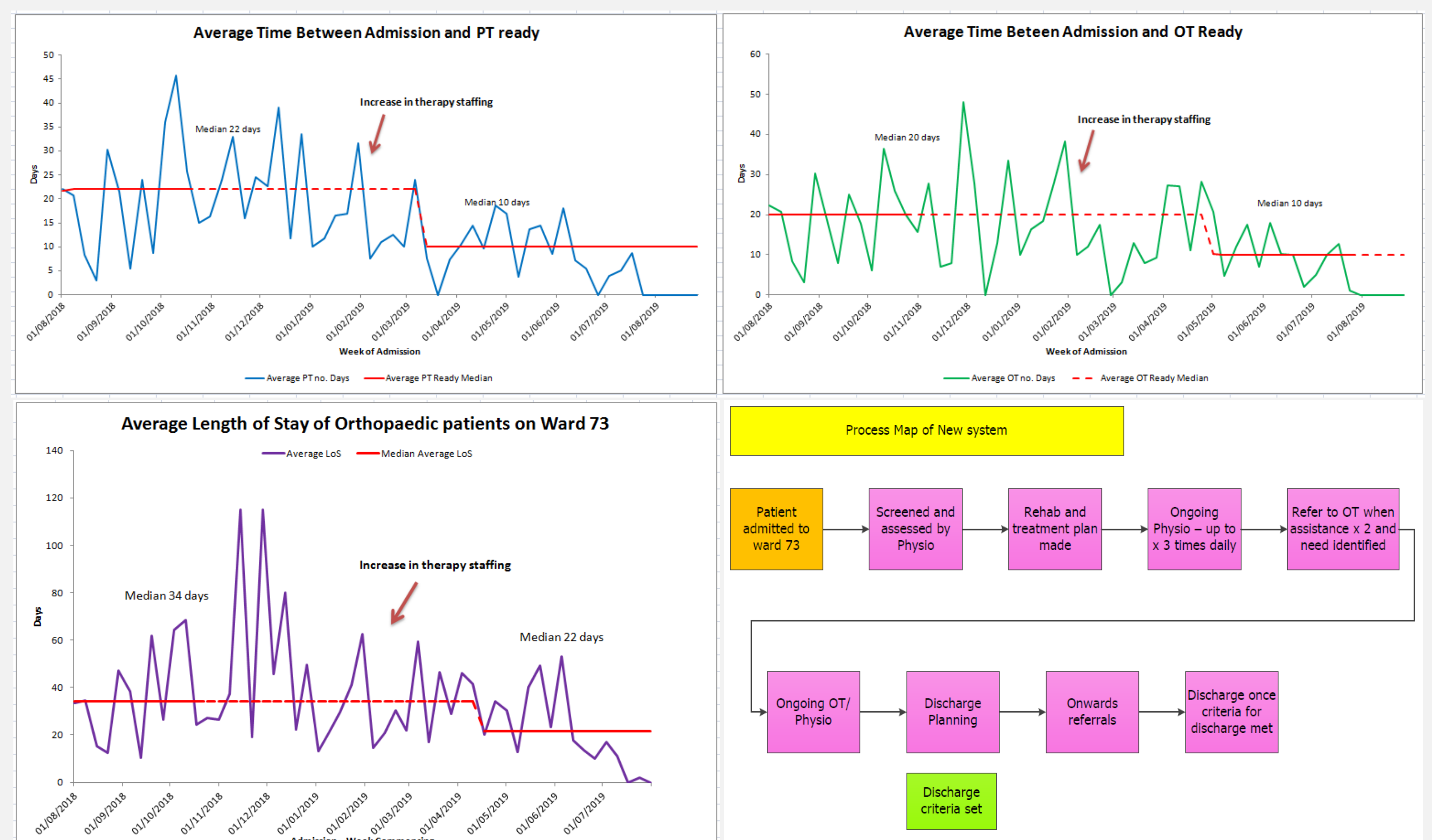
It was identified that Physiotherapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) staffing levels were significantly different across all Orthopaedic Rehabilitation units in NHS Lothian. This was reflected in an overall longer length of stay in the Orthopaedic Rehabilitation unit in the Western General Hospital. Financial investment was made to improve equity across the units, with the Western General Hospital receiving additional PT and OT staff for 12 months.

Specific aim

- To reduce number of days between date of admission to the orthopaedic rehabilitation unit and date when patients are deemed to be ready for discharge from an Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy perspective.
- To enhance therapy intervention and have a positive impact by reducing overall length of stay on the ward.

Measurement of improvement

- Information regarding date of admission, date ready to go from a therapy perspective and overall discharge date gathered and analysed.
- The definition of 'ready to go' was agreed amongst the team to ensure consistency.
- Percentage of patients readmitted within one month also recorded as a balancing measure.
- Data gathering commenced six months prior to project start date to allow for comparison.



Tests of change

- Increase frequency/intensity of PT interventions.
- Daily PT exercise class programme introduced
- Earlier OT intervention- initial assessment carried out when patients are able to stand with assistance of 2.
- Increased number of Home Assessments carried out
- Increased joint OT/PT assessments and interventions
- Specialist orthopaedic therapy staff ring fenced for orthopaedic patients.

Tools

- Pareto charts
- Run charts
- Process map
- Staff Experience

Effects of change

Six months in to the project, the average therapy ready to go dates for both professions have seen a reduction. There has also been a reduction in the average overall length of stay on the ward. The model for this project has been used to secure funding for enhanced therapy in other clinical areas within the hospital. At present the funding is available for 12 months. By continuing to demonstrate that an enhanced therapy service has an impact on overall length of stay it is hoped we can secure permanent funding.

Lessons learned and message for others

Gather as much information as you can. It was a great benefit to us that we already had baseline data from before any changes were implemented. Multiple charts were made to demonstrate change however remains unclear which chart to use.