"Doctor, I want a PSA test!"

Streamlining PSA Testing for Asymptomatic Men at Charlotte Medical Practice

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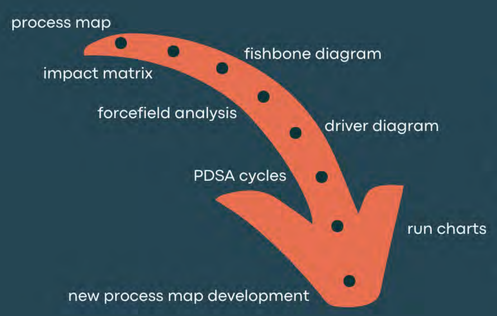


Sir Chris Hoy's shocking announcement of his terminal prostate cancer diagnosis made headlines across the UK [1]. The knock-on impact to Charlotte Medical Practice saw an increase in requests for asymptomatic men requesting a Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test. NICE guidelines highlight the need for pre-PSA counselling to be undertaken for men >50 seeking a PSA [2]. However, the impact on clinician time in providing pre-PSA counselling was seen to be significant and an alternative solution was required. Through engaging with various members of the practice staff and utilising QI tools we identified that by enabling asymptomatic men requesting a PSA test to book a test without a GP appointment we would reduce the impact on clinician time. This required changes to the following:

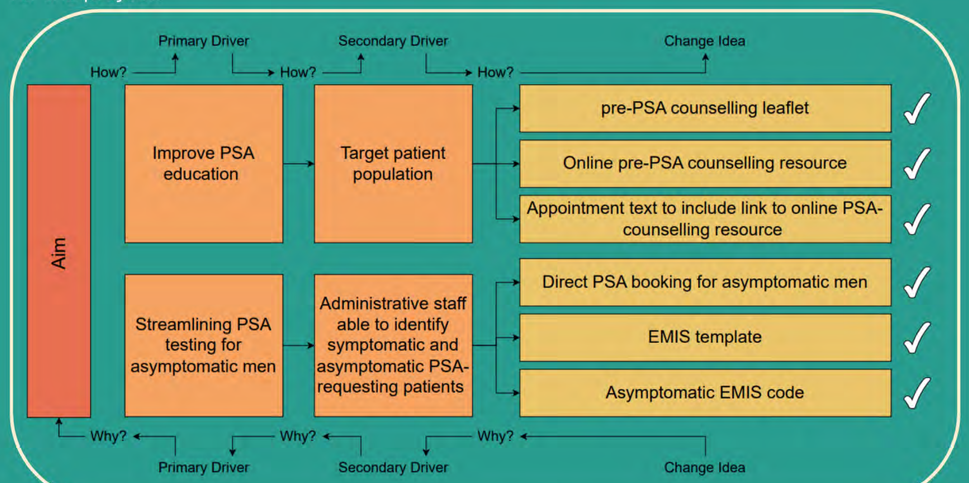
1. A new EMIS template to aid in determining who requires a GP appointment
2. An alternative method for pre-PSA counselling for asymptomatic men through a leaflet and a change to the practice website
3. Direct PSA test booking for men who engage with alternative pre-PSA counselling

AIM

By the 19th of March 2025, we aim to reduce the number of GP appointment slots by 50% for asymptomatic men requesting a PSA test, aligned to the current needs of Charlotte Medical Practice

Methods and Measurement Plan

Through systematically engaging with the QI tools we developed a driver diagram that aided in ensuring our change ideas were both driven by and in keeping with our overall aim for the project.



With the focus of our change ideas we set out to develop a clear measurement plan to ensure the data collected was focused to our project.

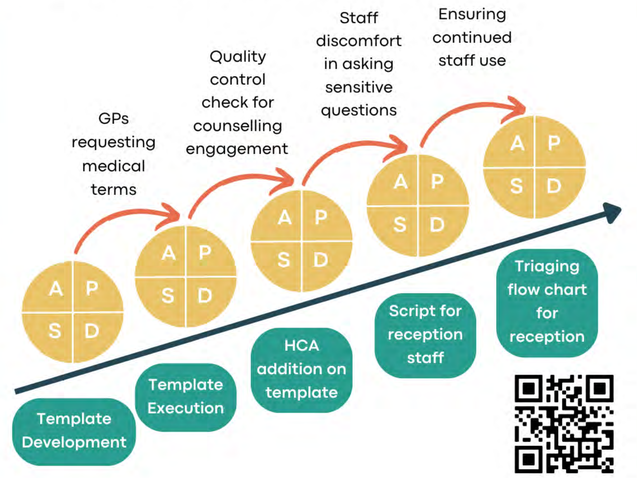
Outcome Measure	• The number of GP appointments given to asymptomatic men requesting a PSA test
Process Measures	• Rates of documented pre-PSA counselling • Use of the EMIS template for men requesting PSA test
Balancing Measure	• Time taken from an asymptomatic patient requesting a PSA test to having a blood test

Cycles of Change

To implement our change ideas we undertook multiple cycles of change for each of the two change pathways. Throughout the process, we regularly engaged with members of the practice staff to receive feedback regarding any change ideas and fine-tune the changes implemented. To guide our process of who should be engaged, we regularly reviewed our impact matrix. This ensured staff were listened to, and we were able to implement changes that were both appropriate for the project and their workload. This was vital for the staff members we knew would be most impacted by the change e.g. administrative staff.

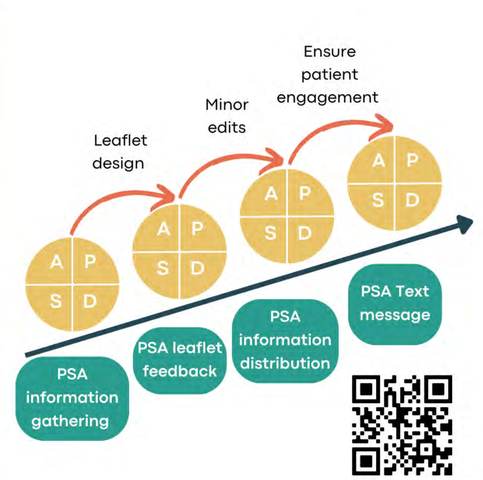
New Process Map

Streamlining PSA testing



PSA Template

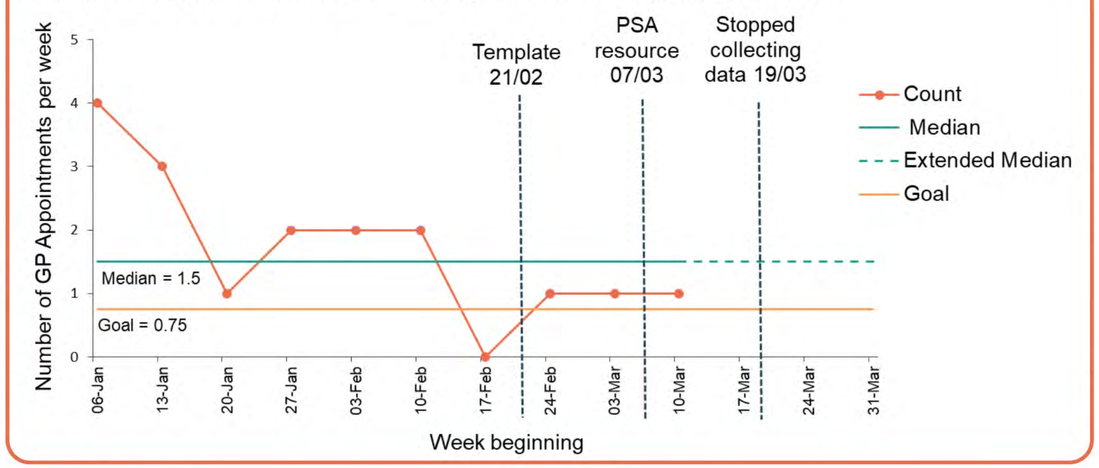
PSA Education



PSA Leaflet

Results

Number of GP Appointments given to Asymptomatic Men requesting a PSA Test



Outcome measure:

- Reduced pre-PSA appointments for asymptomatic men from a mean of 2 to 1 a week

Process measures:

- Increased documented counselling by 63.3%
- 23.5% of all PSA tests used the template once implemented

Balancing measure:

- Average appointment wait time decreased from 37 days in Feb to 7 days in March

Qualitative data shows our template helps reception staff

"The template helps identify patient symptoms for booking"

Next Steps

Charlotte Medical Practice has been provided with a new triaging flowchart as a reminder of the new process. Longer term data collection would be necessary to ensure the changes are sustainable in the practice. Other GP practices could look to adopt our online counselling method as a way of reducing the impact on clinician time.

Conclusion

The EMIS template and PSA resource were successful in reducing the number of pre-PSA GP counselling appointments for asymptomatic men by 50%. We felt encouraged by the positive feedback we received. Overall, we gained an understanding of the positive impact that small changes can have on improving systems within the NHS.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Charlotte Medical Practice for participating in this QI project, with special thanks to the Practice Manager, Suzanne Robson, and our supervisor Dr Lee.

Sources

1. Cyclist Chris Hoy announces that his cancer is terminal - BBC News https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cj4dr9xdxgro
2. Assessment | Diagnosis | Prostate cancer | CKS | NICE https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/prostate-cancer/diagnosis/assessment/

Full Report

NHS Dumfries & Galloway

ScotGEM Scottish Graduate Entry Medicine