



**MONITORING PROCESS FLOW AND  
REDUCING TURNAROUND TIME (TAT) AT  
PRIMARY HEALTH CHECKUP (PHC)  
STATION AND RADIOLOGY DEPARTMENT  
OF ETERNAL HOSPITAL**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The turnaround time for elective care is a significant challenge in numerous healthcare systems, posing a hurdle to efficient patient flows. This metric serves as a crucial indicator of the quality of services provided by hospitals and is a tangible aspect that patients often use to evaluate healthcare personnel, sometimes even more than their knowledge and skills [1].

Similar to many tertiary healthcare centers, Eternal Hospital faces an increasing patient load, elevated patient expectations, and a growing number of complex cases requiring services from various healthcare providers. The escalating demands, coupled with limited resources, lead to inefficiencies and prolonged waiting times for consultations. Consequently, this results in diminished patient satisfaction and an unfavorable overall experience. The outpatient department (OPD) is commonly considered the hospital's showcase, playing a pivotal role in shaping patients' impressions of the institution [2].

To address these challenges, Eternal Hospital and Cancer Centre (EHCC) has established a team of highly qualified and experienced medical professionals who have devised the Health Check Program. This program comprises packages designed to provide comprehensive check-ups and, within their constraints, identify potential health issues. To enhance patient convenience, a dedicated station called the Preventive Health Check-up (PHC) station has been set up in the OPD [3].

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What were the leading factors resulting in the waiting time of patients during and after investigations?
2. What was the turnaround time of patients from registration to dispatching the investigation reports?

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

1. To observe the investigative procedures in OPD 1.
2. To gain an understanding of the workflow at the Preventive Health Check-up (PHC).
3. To calculate the Turn Around Time for patients following investigations at PHC.
4. To calculate the Turn Around Time for OPD and IPD patients after undergoing investigations in the Radiology Department.
5. To propose alternatives to enhance the efficiency of the investigative process for patients, leading to reduced waiting times.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Observational study was carried to understand the process which a patient undergoes after entering the OPD till he leaves the department. The bottlenecks and possible solutions were noted down. Time motion study was carried out to note time taken for each activity. Simple Random Sampling technique was used where every individual had equal chance of getting selected. The observational study was conducted at the PHC Station in the OPD and Radiology department, the TAT was measured, and discussions were held with the respective department head. MS Excel was used for statistical analysis.

## **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

The hospital consistently received feedback regarding prolonged waiting times experienced by patients during their visits to the Outpatient Department (OPD). Despite this concern, there was a lack of available data on the issue. In this phase, the team initiated the development of a comprehensive process map at a higher level to comprehend the overall process better and to establish a consensus on the project's overall scope. Enhancements in existing systems are imperative to align the organization with its goals. The creative evolution of processes and tools breathes new life into the organization's

operations, bringing them closer to achieving organizational objectives. Subsequently, the team engaged in another brainstorming session with representatives from each department facing inefficiencies to explore solutions that could positively impact the flow of patients.

## **CONCLUSION**

Eternal Hospital was grappling with a growing influx of patients, heightened patient expectations, and increasingly complex cases requiring the services of various healthcare providers. The escalating demands within the constraints of limited resources could lead to inefficiencies and prolonged waiting times for consultations. Consequently, this situation could result in diminished patient satisfaction and an overall unpleasant experience at the hospital. Given that this was still an initial phase of a quality improvement project, ongoing efforts to monitor, analyze, and enhance turn-around times would significantly contribute to improving the overall patient experience at Eternal Hospital. Future initiatives may focus on streamlining appointment scheduling for greater time efficiency, implementing a real-time patient tracking system to facilitate seamless coordination for patients with multiple same-day appointments, and reinforcing the Preventive Health Check-up (PHC) station to ensure a smoother patient flow.

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