

Process Improvement for Initial Screening (Triage) in Urgent Care

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BACKGROUND

- Emergency Departments (EDs) & Urgent Care Centers (UCC) provide health care services to walk-in patients with varying symptoms.
- It is essential to have an efficient patient screening process in place to be able to identify critical conditions promptly.
- A standardized triage process ↓ the risk of miscommunication of patient information, improves patient assessments & ↑ patient safety.

PURPOSE

- To ↑ efficiency & patient safety in a UCC triage by:
- Improving nurse triage skills through education
 - Developing efficient collection & display of assessment data
 - Establishing a standardized triage workflow

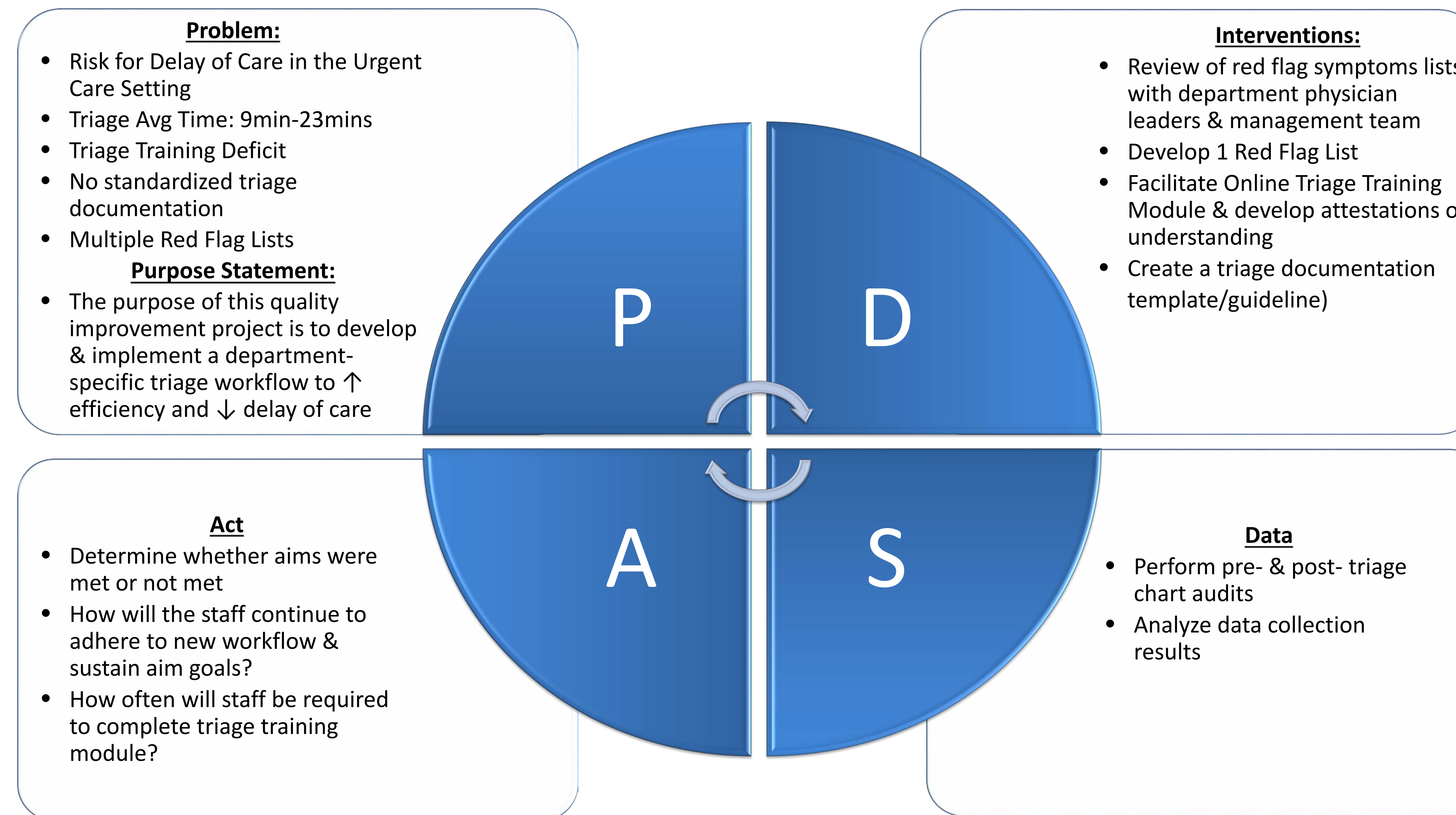
METHODS

- Change project (triage protocol):
- Provide triage education & training for RNs
 - Review revised Red Flag List with Service Representatives
 - Implement triage protocol
 - Perform pre & post evaluation of triage skills using direct observations
 - Evaluate chart audit adherence to standardized documentation templates

Project Description

- Consolidated Red Flag Lists
- Implemented a guided triage documentation template to assist the triage nurse in guiding their assessment & ensure consistency of data collection among triage nurses
- Conducted video and didactic triage training
- Performed observations of the nurses performing triage assessments
- Collected (pre/post) evaluation data
- Identified gaps & proposed recommendations for further training

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



RESULTS

- 13 RNs trained on triage protocol
 - 3 Service Representatives were trained on the Red Flag List
- Improvement**
- Service Representatives flagging charts appropriately
 - Nurses collecting & documenting complete set of vital signs
 - Nurses using dot phrase documentation template for all triages
- Impact on Patient Safety & Care**
- Delay of care ↓ for patients with red flag symptoms
 - Patient wait times ↓

LIMITATIONS

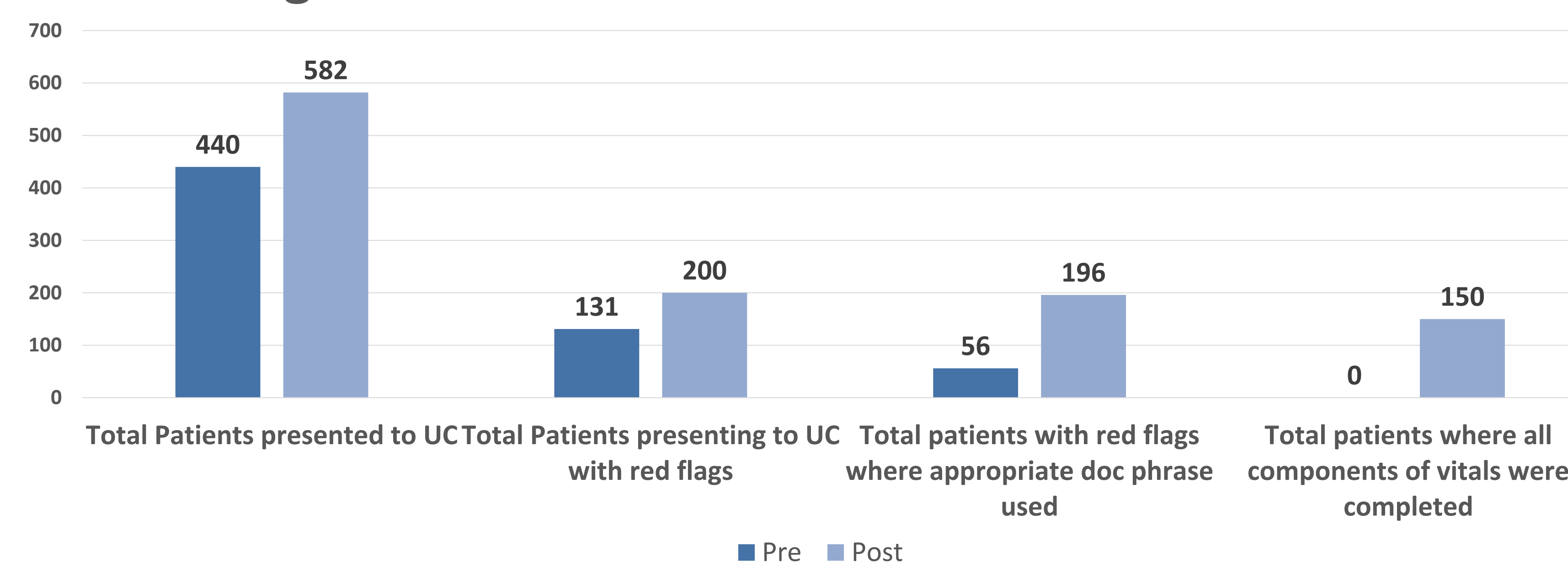
- Short post-implementation evaluation period
- Some staff on LOA; may hamper sustainability
- Questions about sustainability, timing & need for booster sessions could not be addressed in brief evaluation period

SUMMARY

- Previous research has identified that a triage process with clear, concise, and consistent communication between healthcare providers helps minimize the risk for delay of care & poor patient outcomes.
- Further implementation & evaluation of a standardized triage education protocol will increase patient safety in the urgent care setting

RESULTS

Urgent Care Walk-In Patient Volume Chart Audit



Urgent Care Percent Compliance

