



# Improving Patient Experience in Cleanliness of Patients' Toilets in Wards

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## Introduction

The patient satisfaction ratings for cleanliness at SingHealth Community Hospitals – Sengkang did not achieved the KPI targets. SKCH has scored below 75% (cluster KPI in Year 21) from July 21 to Dec 21 for the "Always" rating category.

Below table shows the current state then, with KPI results that is not meeting KPI targets.

Hospital Environment	Month 2021					
("How often was your room and toilet kept clean")	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
KPI Result	61%	67%	67%	70%	68%	65%
Target (in %)	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%

Survey Question for Environmental Services

How often was your room and toilet kept clean?

您的病房和厕所是否都保持干净卫生?

- Always 总是
- Usually 常常
- Sometimes 偶尔
- Never 从来没有

## Methodology

The team adopted Lean Six Sigma – DMAIC with aim to understand the relevant processes in-depth to identify potential issues, with representatives from different departments.

Define	Form team and decide on objective and plan project's direction
Measure	Data analysis on patients' feedback and direct observations and engagement
Analyze	Finding: Multiple concerns on patients' toilets Scoping: Patients' toilets across all SKCH's wards
Improve	Shifting of linens bins closer to patients' cubicles Adjusting of housekeepers' workflow
Control	Set up proper communication channels More frequent on-the-ground monitoring

We investigated the problem to identify areas that contributed to patients' dissatisfaction through

- Data Analysis for both patients' ratings/verbatim.
- Gemba Walk for observation in wards.
- Voice of Customers - Direct engagement with housekeepers/ES, ward staff and patients.



## Improve

The following initiatives were implemented:

- Shifted waste and soiled linens bin from Dirty Utility (DU) room nearer to patients' cubicles to reduce housekeeper walking distance.



- Adjusted housekeepers' workflow to prioritize patient areas instead of areas - back of house during peak toilet usage by shifting job schedule.

Proposed changes to workflow	0830-1000	0830-1130	1130-1230	1230-1300	1300-1400
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning of Nurse Manager Office</li> <li>- Cleaning of Discharge Lounge and Activity Room</li> <li>- Cleaning of Doctor On-Call</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning of ACC Toilet, Dirty Utility and Treatment Room</li> <li>- Tea Break</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning of Discharge Lounge and Activity Room</li> <li>- Cleaning of ACC Toilet, Dirty Utility and Treatment Room</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning of Nurse Manager Office</li> <li>- Cleaning of Doctor On-Call room and Toilet</li> <li>- Spot Clean Toilet</li> <li>- Cleaning of patient cubicle corridor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning of Discharge Lounge and Activity Room</li> <li>- Cleaning of ACC Toilet, Dirty Utility and Treatment Room</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus is on cleaning patient's rooms and toilets as well as the clearing of waste &amp; linen</li> <li>• Fixed tea break timing for both housekeepers</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean patient's room, Sub-Nurse Stations</li> <li>• Wiping of patient bed</li> <li>• Clear and dispose of waste</li> <li>• Clear soiled linen from the bathroom</li> <li>• Clean shower rooms and toilet</li> <li>• Tea Break (0900-0930)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean patient's room, Sub-Nurse Stations</li> <li>• Wiping of patient bed</li> <li>• Clear and dispose of waste</li> <li>• Clear soiled linen from the bathroom</li> <li>• Cleaning of patient cubicle corridor</li> <li>• Clean shower rooms and toilet</li> <li>• Tea Break (1030-1100)</li> </ul>		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaning of Discharge Lounge and Activity Room</li> <li>• Cleaning of ACC Toilet, Dirty Utility and Treatment Room</li> </ul>		
			<p>Areas that were previously cleaned from 0830-1000, were shifted to a timeslot after the morning rush is over</p>		<p>Discharge lounge and activity room is proposed to be cleaned at 1130 so that patients can use the area in the afternoon</p>

## Analyze

Based on the investigation, the team found concerns relating to upkeeping the cleanliness in patients' toilets.

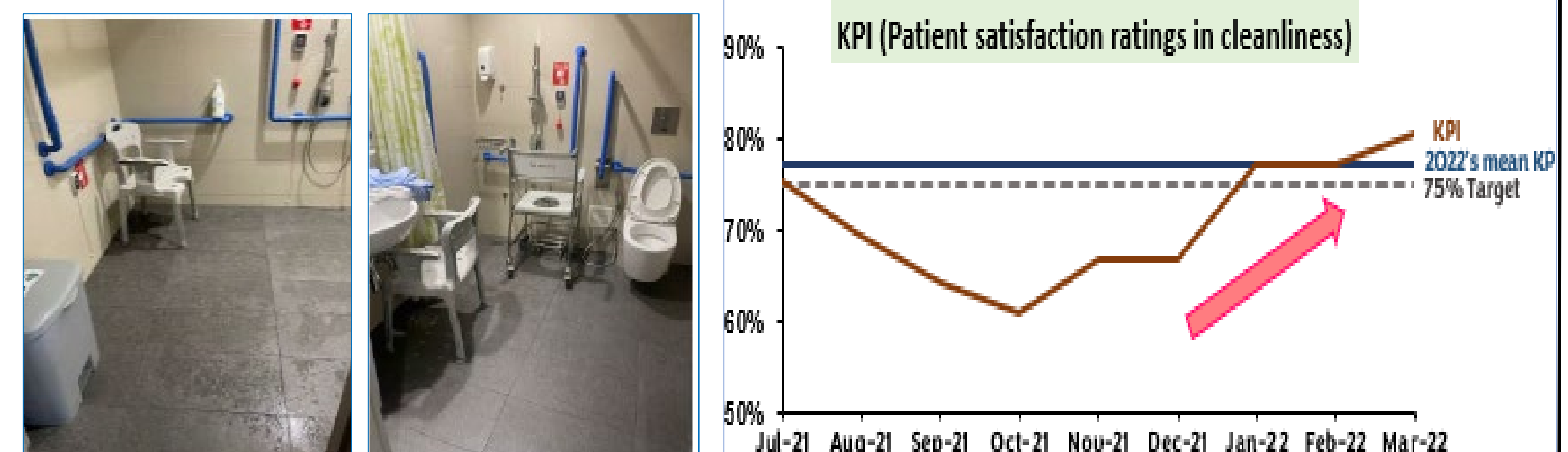
Hospital Environment	Oct-21				Nov-21				Dec-21			
("How often was your room and toilet kept clean")	Always [1]	Usually [2]	Sometimes [3]	Never [4]	Always [1]	Usually [2]	Sometimes [3]	Never [4]	Always [1]	Usually [2]	Sometimes [3]	Never [4]
Ward 1	4	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	6	3	0	0
Ward 2	5	6	2	0	5	3	0	0	10	3	0	0
Ward 3	3	4	1	0	6	8	0	0	4	4	0	0
Ward 4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ward 5	1	2	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	4	0	0
Ward 6	6	5	0	0	6	1	0	0	6	4	1	0
Ward 7	11	1	1	0	5	1	0	0	4	0	0	0
Ward 8	5	0	0	0	4	3	0	0	8	1	0	0
Ward not indicated	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
Total Feedback Form Received	<b>59</b>				<b>51</b>				<b>60</b>			
Col%	61%	32.2%	6.8%	0%	66.7%	33.3%	0%	0%	66.7%	31.7%	1.7%	0%

- Condition of Toilets in Morning**
- Jul – Dec 21**  
(Some common feedback received)
- Toilet cleaning - poor. Did not see any cleaning of flooring during my stay
  - Some patients poo and throw toilet papers on the floor
  - Toilet not clean
  - Toilet should clean at least twice a day. They only come in replenish supplies but never clean.
  - The toilet bowl is always dirty. The supervisor should come in to check the cleanliness of the toilet
  - Toilet - seems to be smelly, dirty and not clean. Due to patient after use and not clean before or after they use.
  - The toilet has a very strong smell in mornings
  - Please do something to the toilet! Smelly!

- The investigation involved adoption of a process mapping approach, which included direct observation of the housekeepers' daily work processes and schedule. Discrepancies were noted between the housekeepers' schedule and their actual tasks.
- The root cause of this discrepancy was identified as inefficient routing when clearing waste, leading to longer travel times for the housekeepers to reach the disposal area located at the back of the house.
- Additionally, housekeepers' daily schedule indicated that they were cleaning back of the house during peak toilet usage hours.

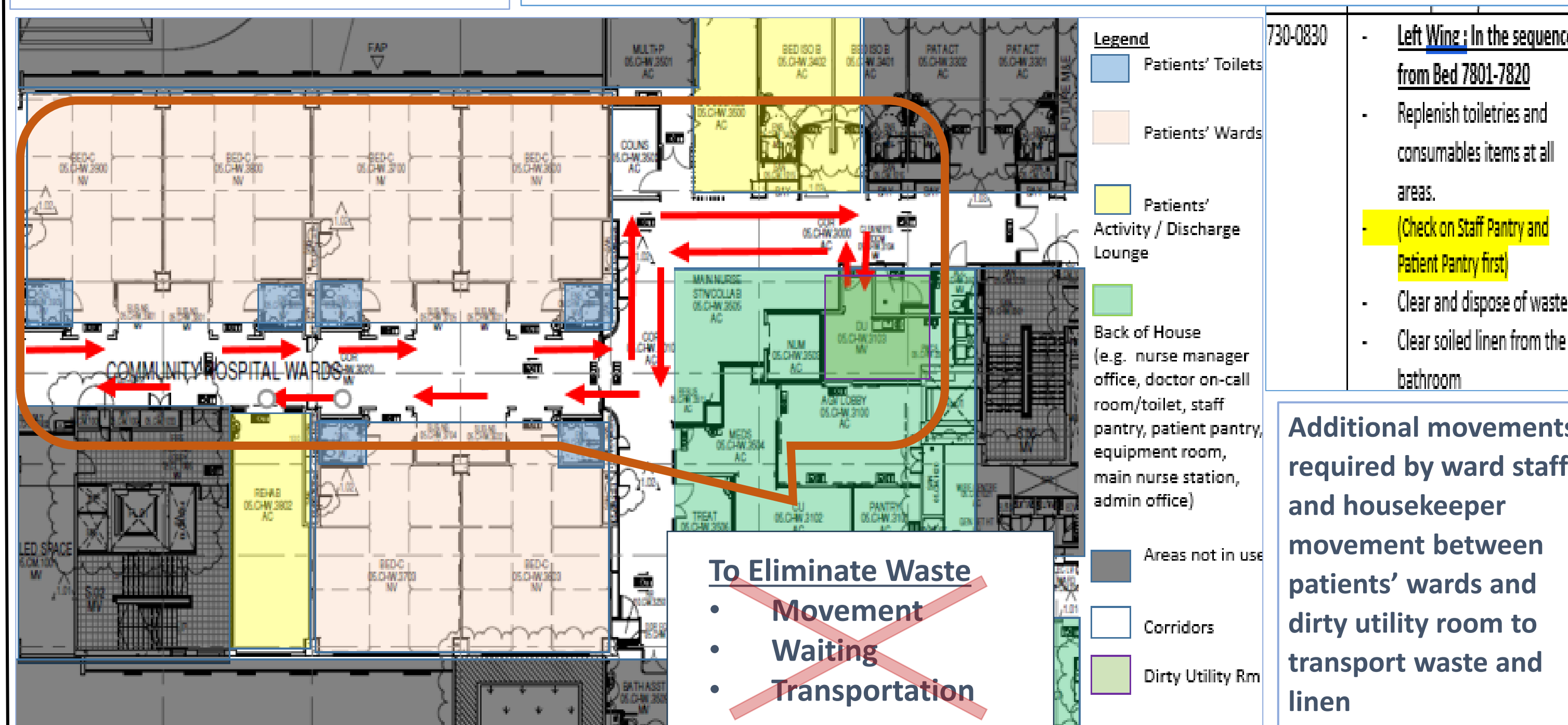
## Result

- Directly linked to our goal, the team managed to achieve the targeted KPI, improving patients' satisfactions with an overall improvement in patients' satisfaction scores.
- The team has managed it with no additional resources and additional cost to be incurred.



## Conclusion / Area for Improvements

- While revising the ES workflow contributes to ensuring the cleanliness of toilets, it is not the sole method.
- Addressing user behaviour is also crucial, necessitating regular checks and reminders to prevent the improper disposal of linens and used bedpans.
- The team acknowledge the need for continuous routine checks in a systematic way, through audit checklist to ensure consistency, as shown.



Audit Checklist		Bathroom / Toilet
<b>Floor</b>	Floor Trap free from hair / dirt	Toilets are non slippery
<b>Room furnishing</b>	Surface on Cabinet / shelf / locker / wardrobe are clean	Door is clean from soap and dirt
	Surface of PVC Chairs and sofas are intact and clean	Mirror is clean with no imprint
	Water dispenser are clean and with no leakage	Shower curtain is clean and free from soap and foam
	PPE Holders is clean	Wash basin is clean
	Work surface and sinks are clean and well maintained	Toilet and urinary bowl is clean
	TV set and computer is free from dust	<b>Total Inspected</b>
		<b>Percentage (%)</b>