



Improvement in Blood-Taking Waiting Time at NCCS

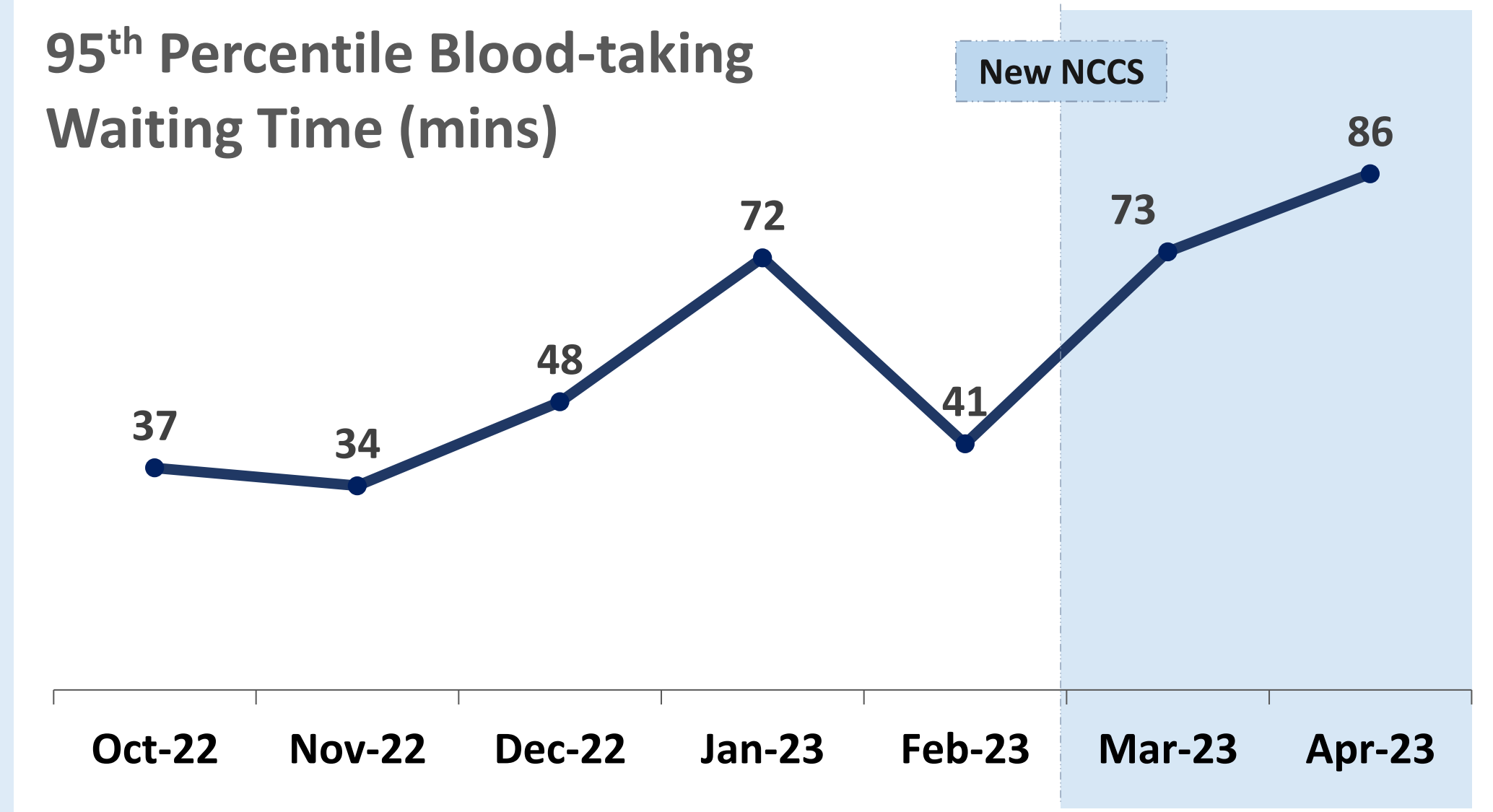
Introduction

Upon commencement of phlebotomy services in the new NCCS building in March 2023 and introduction of a new appointment system, patients started to experience long wait times.

A taskforce comprising of Organisation Planning and Performance, Clinic Operations and Clinical Lab was quickly formed to investigate the problem and provide recommendations.

This was a critical issue as:

1. The blood-taking station is typically the first touch point of a patient's journey after registration. Any delays in their blood-taking will impact the rest of their appointments.
2. Patient well being was affected by the long wait times.



Methodology

The taskforce applied the following key methodologies to diagnose and tackle the issues

Phase 1

Fact finding & identify root causes

A data-driven approach to identify root causes and compare current trends to those of the old building. The findings were:

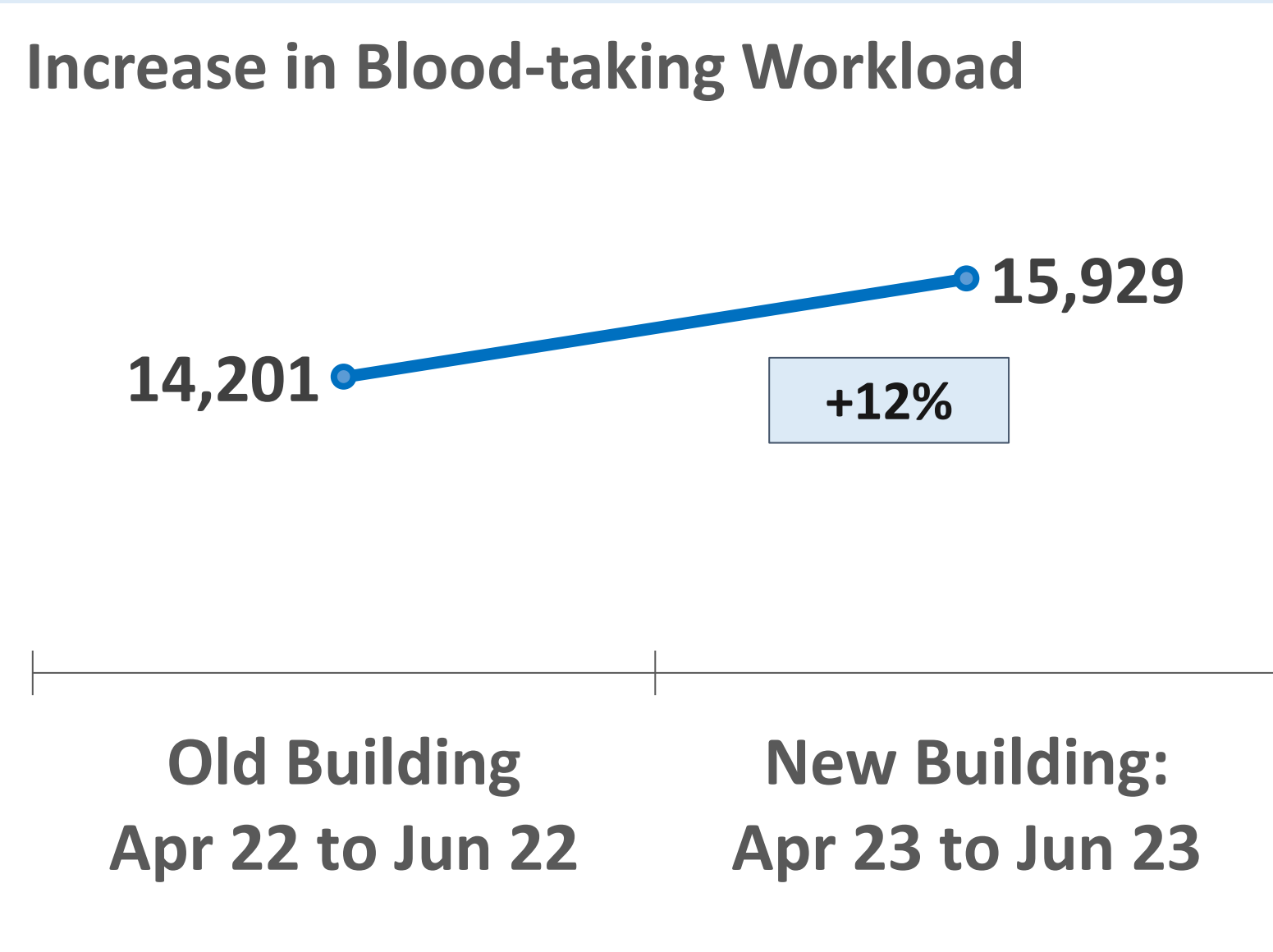
- Increased workload (+12%)
- Unbalanced load & patient arrival patterns
- Delayed patient response time

Data findings were validated against ground observations before implementing solutions.

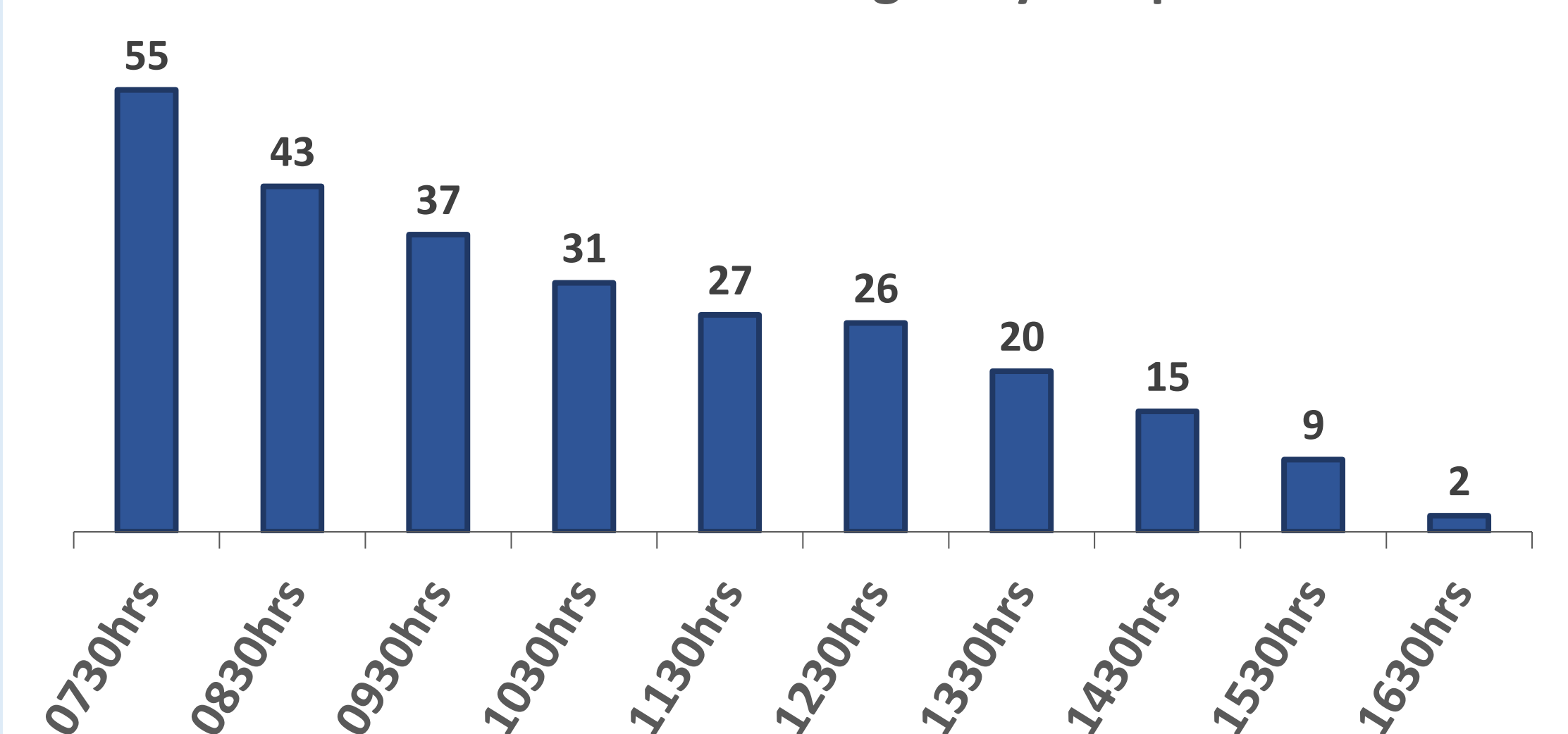
Phase 2

Piloting interim measures to alleviate ground situation

- Installed individual queue panels at each blood-taking station to improve visibility
- Optimised load-balancing across the week and number of appointments per slot
- Displayed signages to inform patients about long waiting time
- During peak hours, requested walk-in patients to return for blood-taking at a later time or date
- During peak days and hours, an additional phlebotomist was activated
- Limit maximum number of blood-taking appointments on peak days



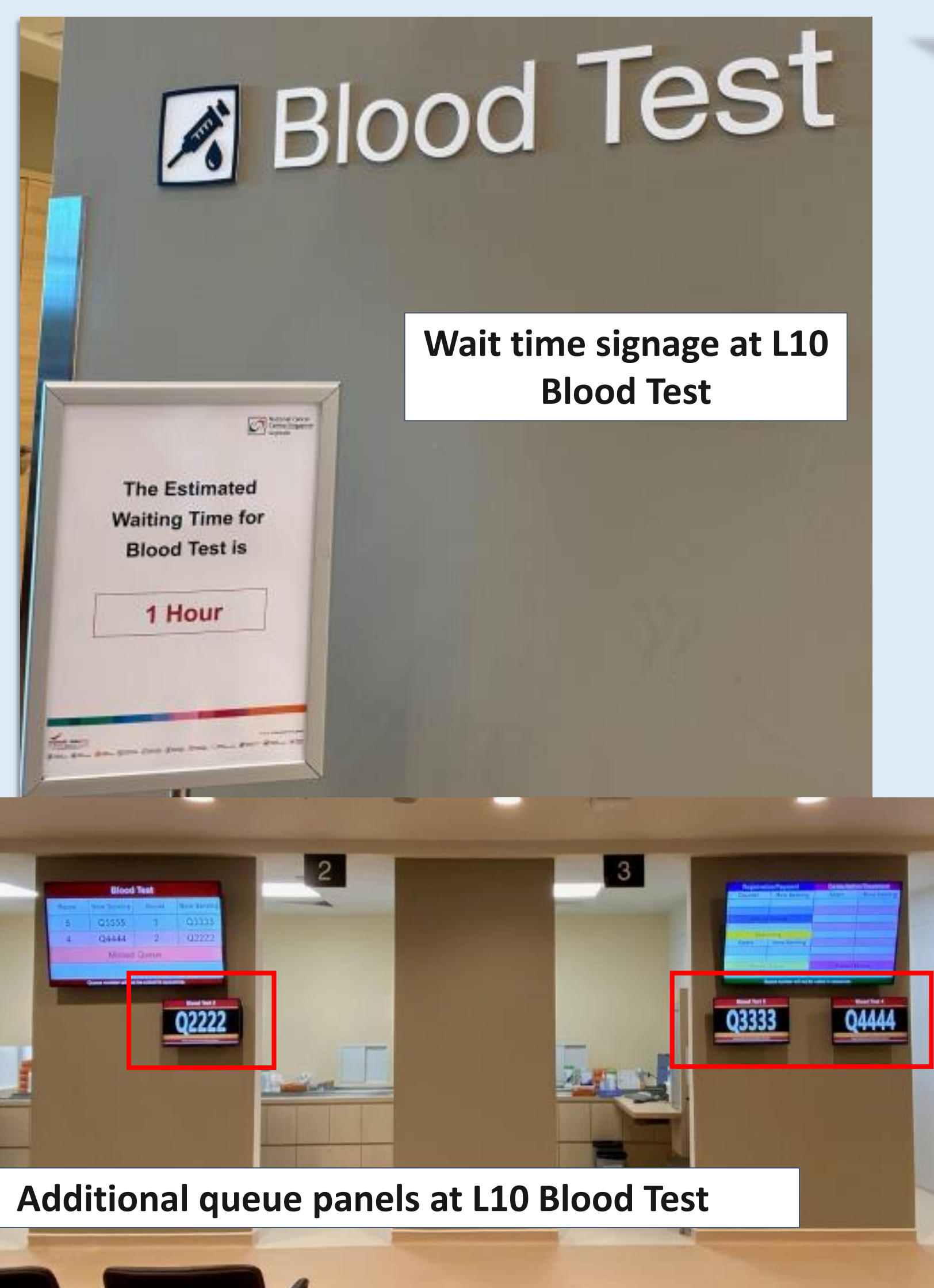
Patient Arrival Count on an Average Day in Apr23



Phase 3

Implemented more extensive and longer-term measures

- Aimed at reducing waiting time further and future-proofing against growing workload
- Hired extra phlebotomists and to fully mend all blood-taking stations in existing facility to cope with a bigger crowd
- Opened a new blood-taking facility for private patients to enhance patient experience

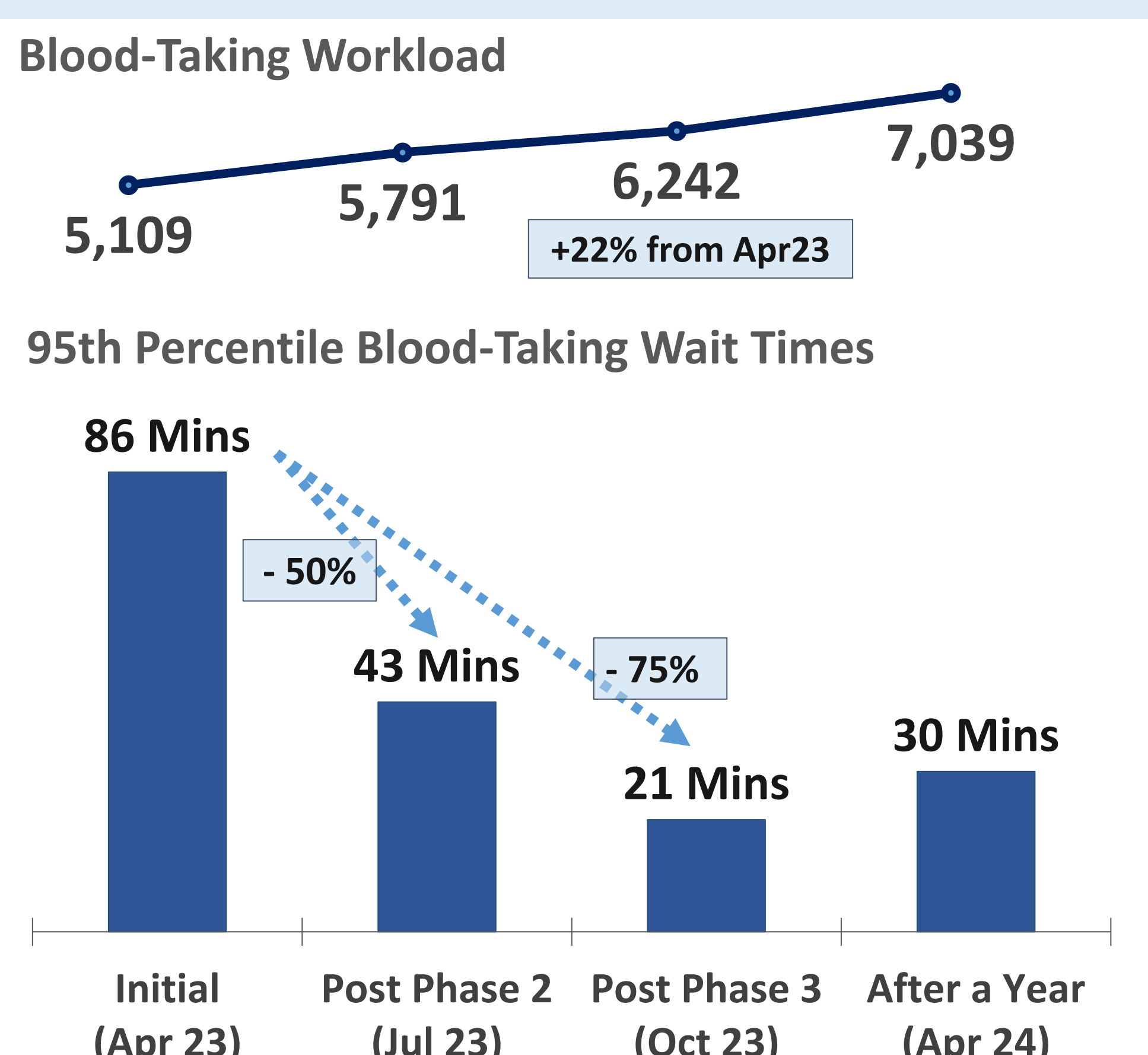


Additional queue panels at L10 Blood Test



Additional blood-taking facility on Level 11 for private patients

Results



Comparing October 23 (post phase 3) to April 23, 95th Percentile waiting time reduced from

86 Mins to 21 Mins

A 75% reduction

Despite a 22% increase in workload

Patient Feedback:

- 😊 "I am impressed with all the staff and services at blood test"
- 😊 "I am impressed with the blood test on 11th floor. It was quick, no queue and staff were totally competent"
- 😊 "Impressed with the blood test queue, it has shortened"
- 😊 "I am impressed with the short blood test waiting time"

Conclusion

The action plans to address the higher workload and load balancing were highly effective.

There was a significant drop in wait times despite the increase in workload. The low wait times are still observed today.

The project garnered many positive reviews and feedback from patients and staff on the improvement in waiting time.