



Singapore Healthcare Management 2024

Tranquil Claims

A comforting experience for next of kin (NOK)

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BACKGROUND

Planning after-death arrangements is emotionally taxing. Claiming a body from hospitals involves several steps and the body claim process varies depending on each hospital's guidelines. It is therefore important that the body claim process must be efficient and straightforward to minimize distress during the difficult time for NOK. Nurse shares body claim instructions with NOK when their loved ones passed away.

In KKH gynaecological wards, the types of body claims include adults or abortus less than 24wks in gestations. The body claims process after discharge was reviewed due to feedback from NOK and healthcare workers.

Process of Body Claim

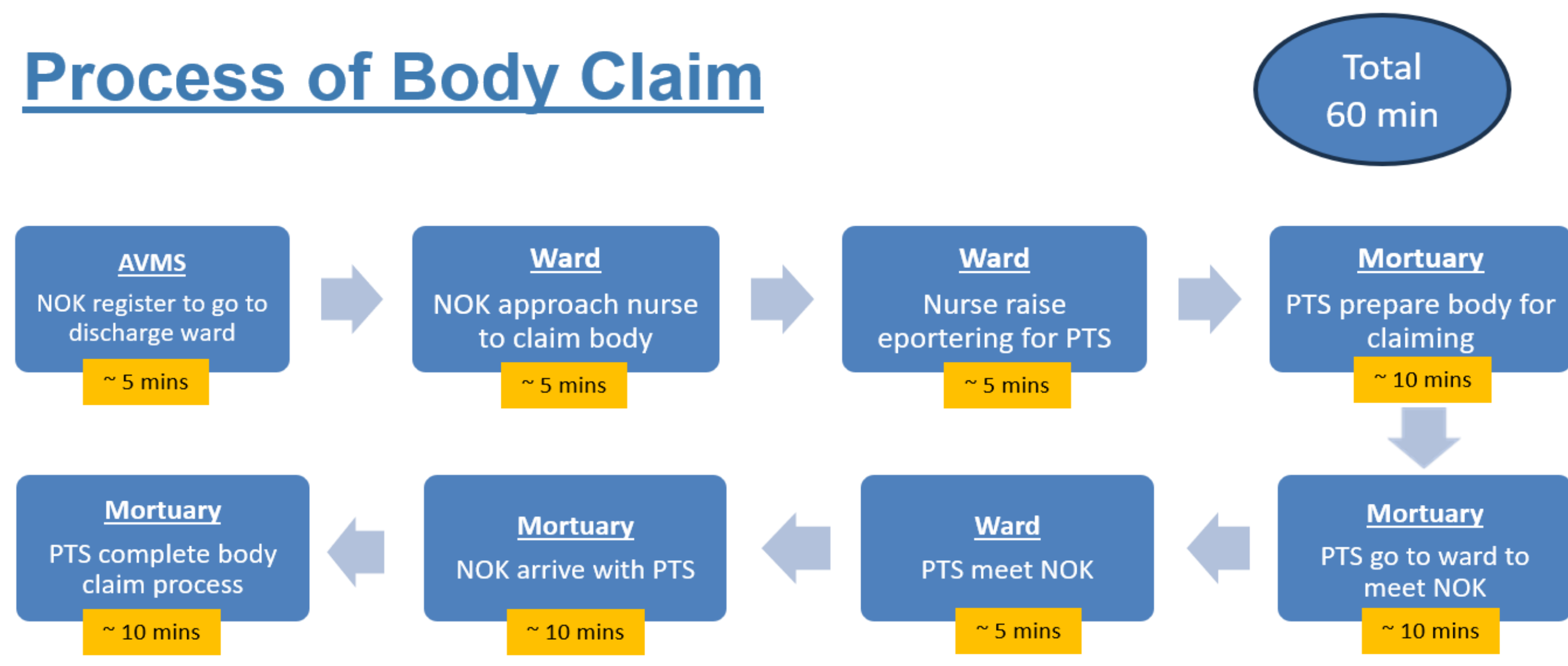


Figure 1 : Body Claim Process (After discharge)

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AIM

The aim of this project is to reduce the number of 'touch points' for NOK when they return to the hospital to claim the bodies of their loved ones, thus creating a seamless and positive experience.

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METHODOLOGY

A multi-departmental workgroup (Nursing and Patient Support Services) was formed in February 2024 with the purpose of reviewing and developing new process for body claims after discharge. A time and motion study was also conducted to determine the time duration taken to complete the body claiming process.

Problems Identified

- NOK first registers at Automated Visitor Management System (AVMS) gantry situated at level one, to return to the discharge-ward before meeting the mortuary assistant to complete the body claim process.
- Ward nurses will initiate e-Portering services for the mortuary assistant to bring NOK from discharge ward to Mortuary at basement one.
- Lack of designated waiting areas in the discharge-ward thus NOK will stand and wait around the nurses' counter for mortuary assistant.
- The total time taken for NOK to complete process of body claim was 60mins; of which 50 mins was waiting time.

Proposed new process for body claim after discharge was discussed and finalized. Briefings were conducted to the relevant departmental stakeholders from 1st to 7th April 2024. The NEW process was implemented on 8th April 2024.

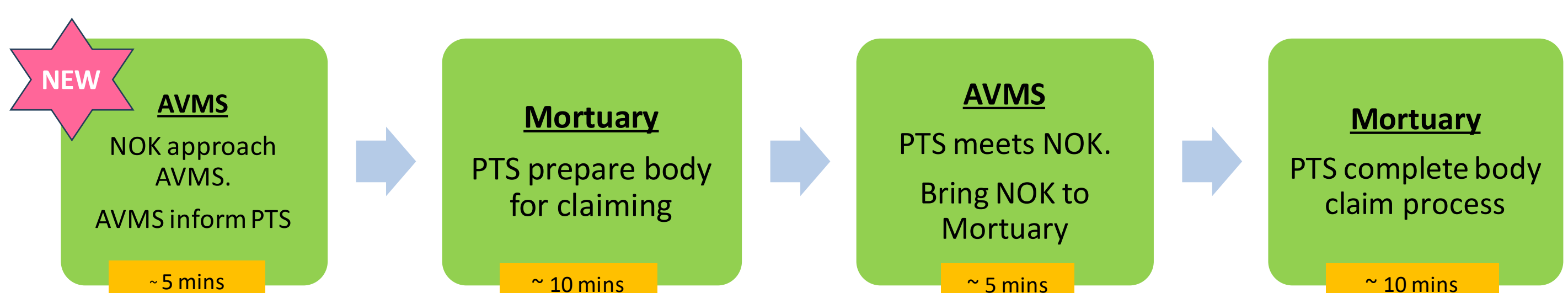


Figure 2 : New Body Claim Process (After discharge)

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RESULTS

With the new and improved process, the number of 'touch points' are reduced to one (AVMS staff). This will minimize recollection of the demise of loved ones as NOK does not need to return to the discharged ward. Lesser time is spent in completing the body claim process as NOK no longer need to go through the numerous touchpoints.

Through post implementation time and motion studies, the time taken for NOK to complete body claim process after discharge were found reduced from 60 mins to 30 mins, a 50% reduction.

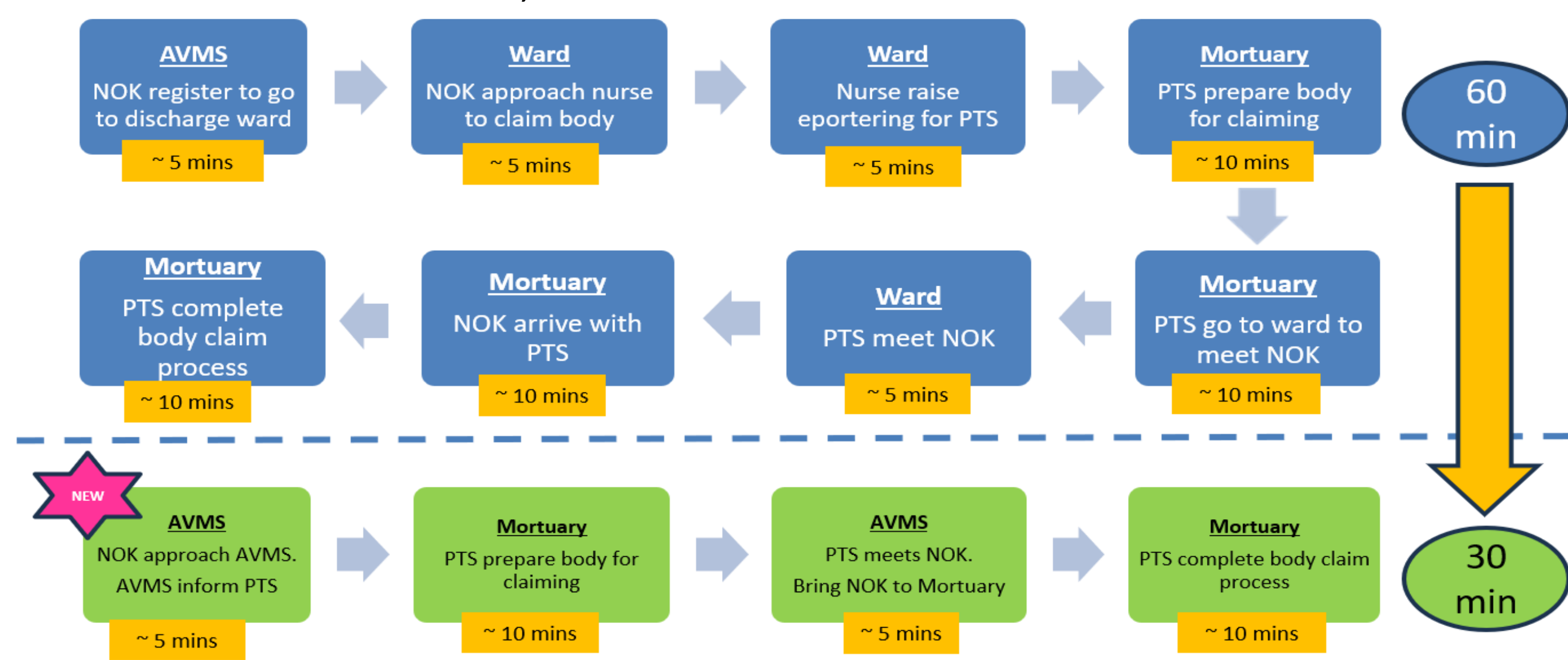


Figure 3 : Time Reduction for Body Claim Process

The calculation in the table below shows time saved by the number of claims after discharge with the new time taken to complete the body claim process.

	No of death (OG)	Claim after discharge	Time saved
Y2022	156	55	55 X 30 = 1650 min (27.5 hrs)
Y2023 (Jan to Aug)	120	39	39 X 30 = 1170 min (19.5 hrs)
Y2024 (Apr – May)		10	10 X 30 = 300 min (5 hrs)

Figure 4 : Time savings from NEW process

For April and May 2024 – there were 10 body claims after discharge and 5 hrs saved.

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CONCLUSION

Strong collaborative effort between various disciplines supported the successful roll-out of this project which made body claim seamless and positive for NOK.

Most importantly, memories of the loss are not evoked as NOK do not need to return to the discharge-ward. Lesser time is spent in completing the body claim process as NOK no longer need to go through the numerous touchpoints.

The workgroup gathered verbal feedback from healthcare workers on this new body claim process after discharge and there were many positive ones. This small change in the previous process made a HUGE difference for NOK who lost their loved ones.

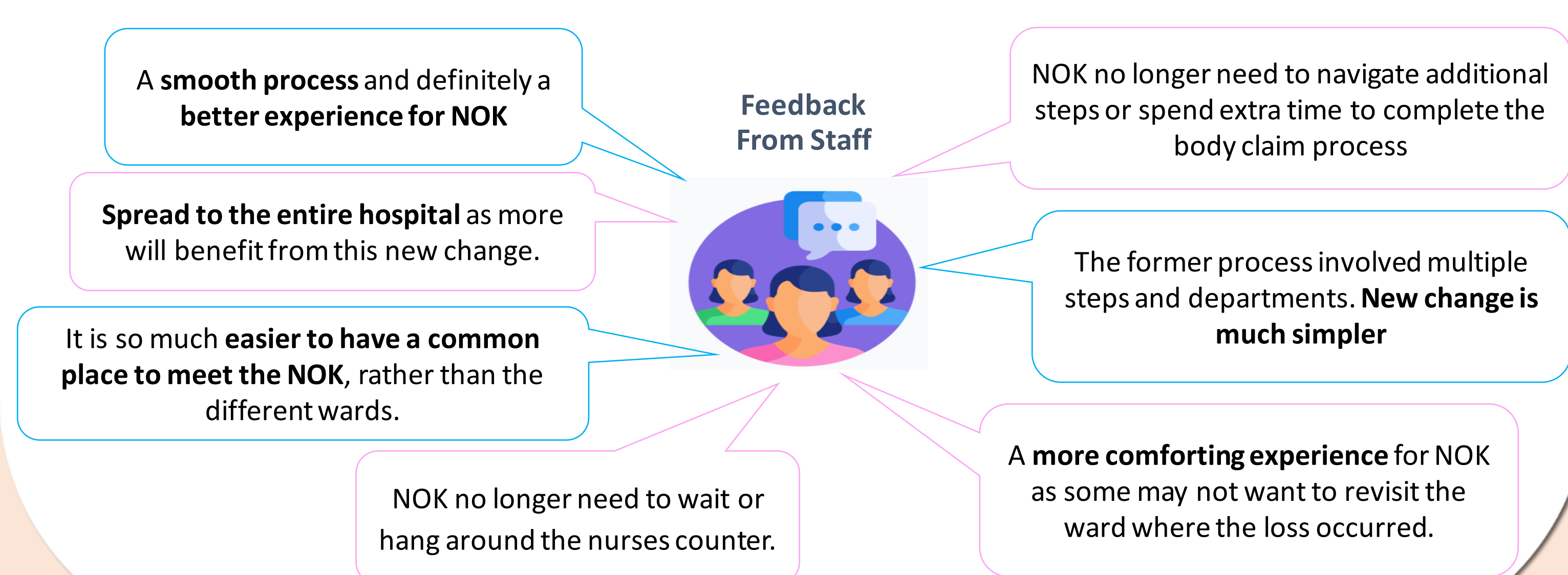


Figure 5 : Feedback from staff