

DIRECTORATE: QUALITY MONITORING & IMPROVEMENT

AN APPROVED NATIONAL GUIDELINE ON MANAGEMENT OF PATIENT WAITING TIME IN CLINICS, COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS AND OPDs OF PUBLIC HOSPITALS OF SOUTH AFRICA

JAUTSE IA

Date: 26 March 2024



**NATIONAL GUIDELINE ON MANAGEMENT OF PATIENT
WAITING TIME IN CLINICS, COMMUNITY HEALTHCENTERS,
AND OUTPATIENT DEPARTMENTS OF PUBLIC HOSPITALS
OF SOUTH AFRICA**

DECEMBER 2023



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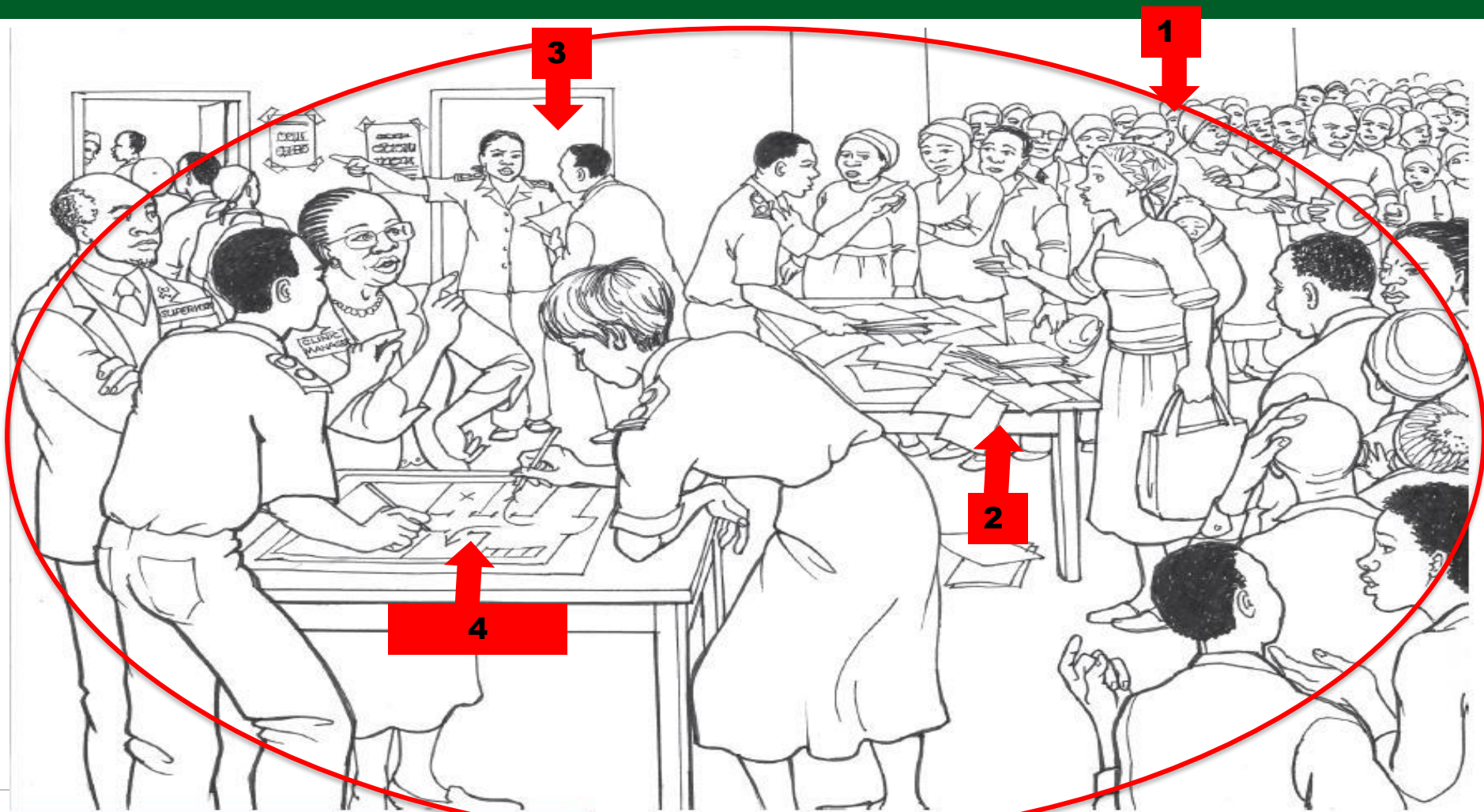
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1.INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT



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2. PURPOSE OF THIS PRESENTATION

To

- ✓ outline the contents of the approved guideline
- ✓ Demonstrate the capturing of PWT in IHF system.

I therefore urge all public health officials to consciously be guided by this National Guidelines on Management of Patient Waiting Time in Clinics, Community Health Centers, and Outpatient departments of public hospitals in South Africa and to do everything in their power to improve patient waiting time.



Dr SSS Buthelezi

Director-General: Health

Date: 14/12/2023



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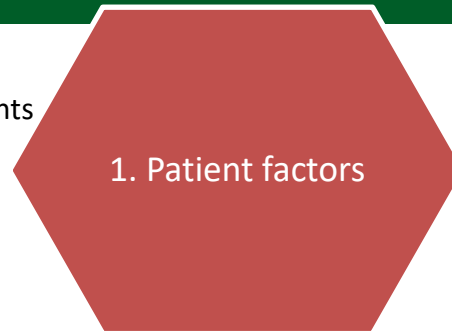


3. MANAGEMENT OF PWT

A: MEASUREMENT OF PWT

B: ADDRESSING FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH PWT

C: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY



- ✓ Help desk
- ✓ Accessible location of records/file area
- ✓ Proper management of files.
- ✓ Triage system
- ✓ One stop service
- ✓ In A&E follow the SA triage system.

- ✓ Matching of staff to patient numbers
- ✓ Prioritization of job : clinical versus administrative/management/ housekeeping.

5. OTHERS

- ✓ Consistent availability of medicines
- ✓ Patient referral system and pathways
- ✓ Process mapping and improvement
- ✓ Consistently measure performance against targets
- ✓ Document improvements

- ✓ Patient education on available services and health establishments
- ✓ CCMD
- ✓ Appointment system

- ✓ Proper and visible signage of various service areas.
- ✓ Alignment of infrastructure design to patient flow
- ✓ Patient record storage to be near reception/administration desks.
- ✓ seating arrangement that will allow privacy and patient flow.
- ✓ Organization of pharmacy to allow for easier access of medicines.



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4. ASPIRED PATIENT WAITING TIME PER LEVEL OF HEALTH ESTABLISHMENT

LEVEL OF FACILITY	PATIENT WAITING TIME FOR SERVICES	TOTAL TIME SPENT RECEIVING SERVICES	TOTAL TIME SPENT IN A HOSPITAL
Clinics, CHC	60 minutes (1 hour)	120 minutes (two hours)	180 minutes (3 hours)
Specialized hospitals	60 minutes (1 hour)	60 minutes (1 hour)	120 minutes (2 hours)
District Hospitals	120 minutes (2 hours)	60 minutes (1 hour)	180 minutes (3 hours)
Regional hospitals	120 minutes (2 hours)	120 minutes (2 hours)	240 minutes (4 hours)
Tertiary/Central hospitals	140 minutes (2 hours and thirty minutes)	190 minutes (3 hours)	320 minutes (5 hours thirty minutes)



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5. METHODS OF MEASURING PWT

- ❑ Documenting times in every patient's file to be institutionalised (use data collection tool)
- ❑ During time of reporting (quarterly), a randomly selected number of files (given sample size) to be captured in the IHF system

Daily headcount	Sample size	Daily headcount	Sample size
10	10	600	234
20	19	700	248
30	28	800	260
50	44	1000	278
75	63	1200	291
100	80	1500	306
150	108	2000	322
200	132	2500	333
250	152	3500	346
300	169	5000	357
400	196	7500	365
500	217	>10000	370



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Patient's folder/file number			
Date of patient's visit			
Has appointment	YES	NO	
Date of appointment			
Time of appointment			
Time of arrival ¹			
Triage ²			
Registry (for a file/records) ³			
Vital Signs ⁴			
Clinical service areas			
	Service area ⁵	*Arrival:	
		Departure:	
OR	Service area ⁶	*Arrival:	
		Departure:	
OR	Service area ⁷	*Arrival:	
		Departure:	
OR	Service area ⁸	*Arrival:	
		Departure:	
OR	Service area ⁹	*Arrival:	
		Departure:	
OR	Service area ¹⁰	*Arrival:	
		Departure:	
OR	Service area ¹¹	*Arrival:	
		Departure:	
	Leaving for the ward/transfer out	Departure:	
Pharmacy ¹⁴		*Arrival:	
		Departure:	

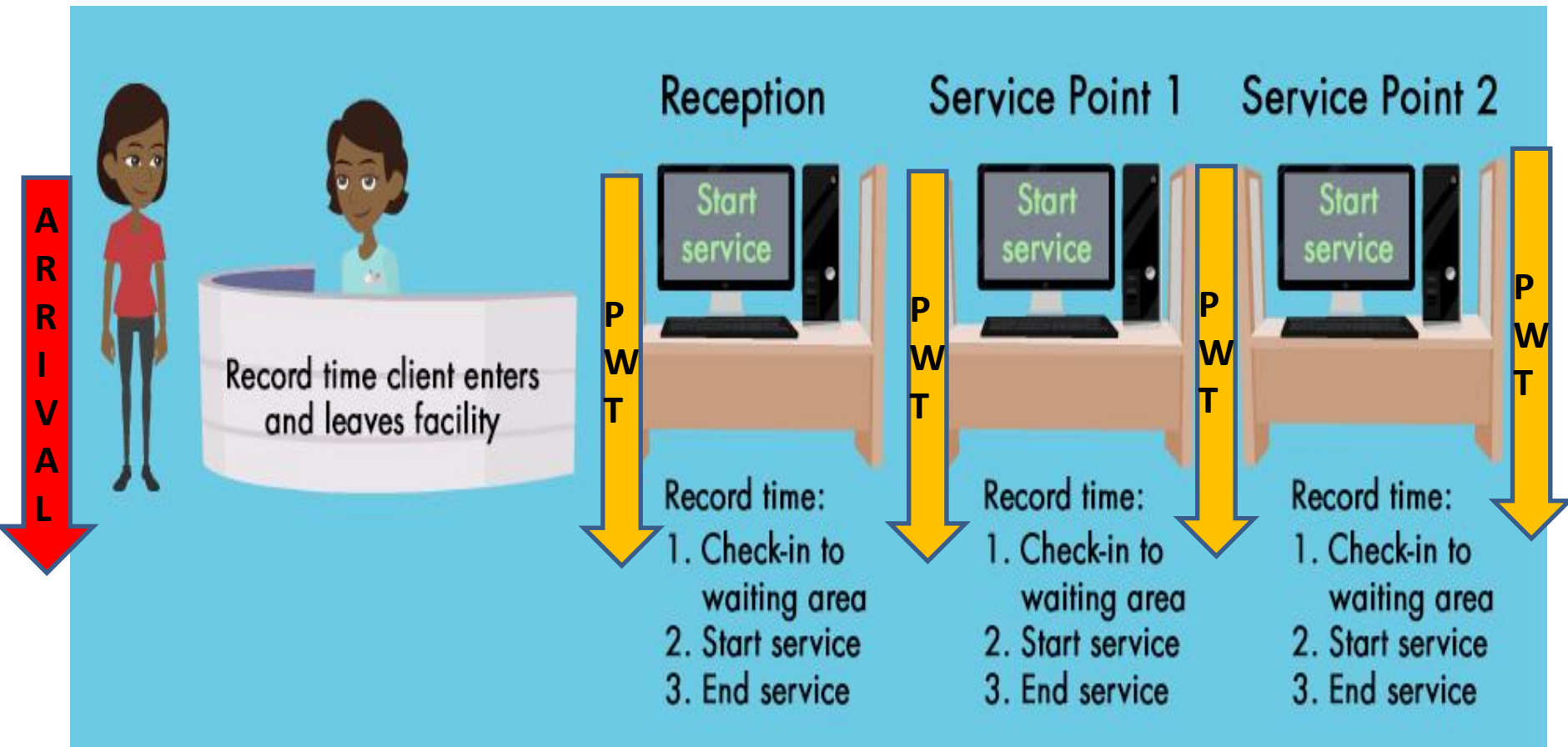


NBI Service time

YEARS
OF FREEDOM

Waiting time

6. DATA COLLECTION/CAPTURING AREAS



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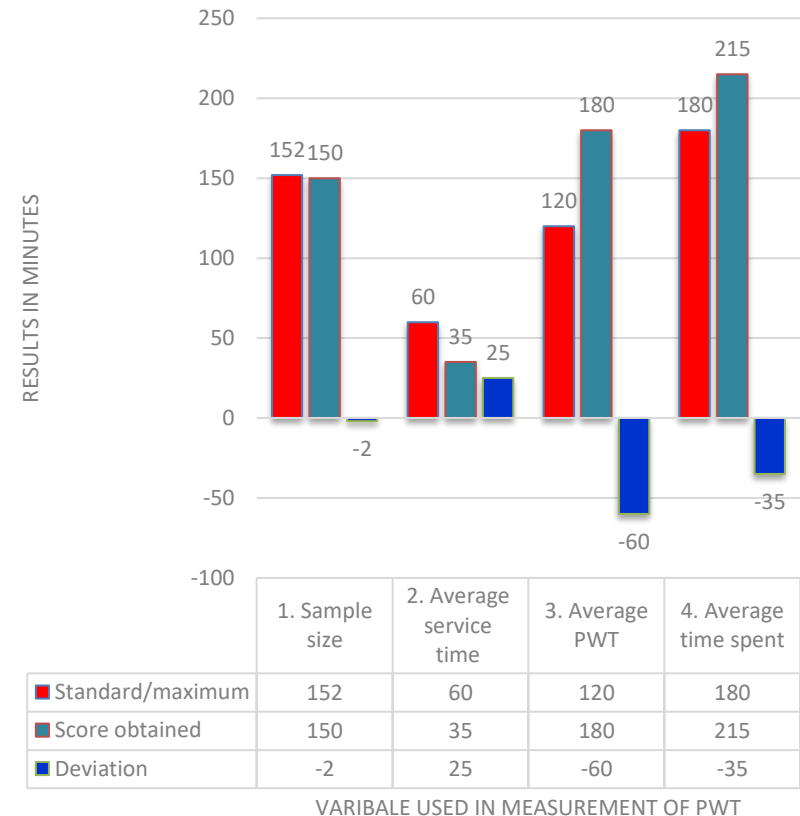
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7. PROJECTION OF RESULTS

INDICATOR	DESCRIPTION	aspired maximum time	Score obtained	DEVIATION=Comparison of achieved score and aspired maximum time
1. Sample size	Number of patient's files sampled in entire Clinic/CHC/OPD	152	150	-2
2. Average service time in minutes	Sum of all time spent receiving services in service areas divided by the number of captured service times	60	35	25
3. Average patient waiting time in minutes	Sum of waiting times in service areas divided by the number of respective service areas.	120	180	-60
4. Average time in minutes spent in the health establishment per patient's visit	Convert % scores of items 2 and 3 into whole numbers, add them together then calculate the average time spent in the health establishment.	180	215	-35

RESULTS



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8. IMPROVEMENT OF PWT

NB! PRINCIPLES OF SDI

- ✓ Delegation to be assigned to a person by name
- ✓ Delegation must be explicit and measurable
- ✓ Must have time frame i.e. target data and or time for completion
- ✓ Monitoring of such delegation to be continuous and comments be written after the completion date

SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT

1. Aim

2. Objectives

1. Service area	2. Target/Required average waiting time	3. Average waiting time	4. Tasks (manager must delegate operational tasks/activities) i.e., the task must commence with a "VERB"	5. Person responsible for item 4. (Name and area of work)	6. Due date (day, month, and year) for completion of tasks in column 4.	7. Comment (to be completed after the date indicated under columns 6 has passed.
Reception ¹						
Patient records area ²						
Vital signs area ³						
Service area ⁴						
Service area ⁵						
Service area ⁶						
Service area ⁷						
Leaving for the ward/transfer out						
Pharmacy/Dispensary ¹⁴						
Overall patient waiting time in a facility						



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9. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUIDELINE

- All health establishment to implement the guideline from 2024/25
- Managers at all levels to facilitate implementation of the guideline.
- Use the IHF to capture, report and develop improvement plan on PWT

10. Conclusion

- The guideline is a culmination of over a decade inputs from various stakeholders for which we are thankful.

STAKEHOLDERS	DATE OF INPUTS	FOCUS AREA OF INPUTS RECEIVED
LEAN Institute Africa	03/05/2010	Piloting of techniques for improving patient waiting time and measurement system
International Training Programme on Public Service Management Professional Management: Sweden	05 November 2010	Objective and automated measurement system
NDoH: Facility Improvement Team. Ministerial report	28/02/2013	Measures to improve patient waiting time
Operation Phakisa: Health	17/11/2014	Technical content and automated measurement system
South Africa President at the launch of Operation Phakisa: Health	18/11/2014	Pronouncement of standard patient waiting time in PHC
Operation Phakisa: Lab report	20/11/2014	Determined factors contributing to long PWT and suggested improvements and automated measurement system
40 th International Hospital Federation	31/10-03/11/2016	Automated measurement system
Measure Evaluation SIFSA	11/2016	Measurement system and a video Public to educate on improvement of PWT
Health System Trust	10/08/2017	Assessing patient experiences of care in primary health care facilities in South Africa: suggested the use of "MEDIAN" patient waiting rather than average
National QA workshop	07/12/2017	Technical and measurement systems
WHO	08/2017	Regulated Norms and Standards applicable to different categories of health establishments: need to have a national guidance on management of patient waiting time
School of Public Health: University of the Western Cape.	2017	Dr Gavin Reagon: Conducting and interpreting patient waiting time surveys.
NDoH: Primary Health Care branch	October 2018	Technical content, grammar, and type setting
HoD: WC provincial inputs	January 2019	Suggested areas for improvement and clarification of terminology
NDHSC	21/02/2019	Technical content and measurement system
Individual follow-up inputs from some NDoH SMC committee members	25/03/2019	Technical content
International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF): Taiwan	26/06/2019	Improving patient waiting time using the electronic record management system
International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua)	22 October 2019	Paper on Improvement of PWT in SA
NHISSA	05/02/2020	Indicators and measurement system
HISP	21 October 2020	Patient Satisfaction Assessment Status Report: including PWT
NDoH: SMC and EXCO	23/05/2022	Technical content
NDoH: Cluster: Trauma, violence, EMS and Hospital services	09/06/2022	Structure, technical content and inclusion of measurement system