

Aim Statement

- Empower ancillary staff to take on value-adding role through job enlargement and redesign.
- Enable Nurses to free up resources to focus on providing clinical services and perform at top-of-license.

Team Members

	Name	Designation	Department
Team Leaders	Liaw De Sheng	Snr Executive	Operations
	Ng Poh Ling	Executive	Operations
Team Members	Yan Chau Chain	Snr Nurse Manager	Nursing
	Wong Ee Eng	Nurse Manager	Nursing
Sponsor	Regina Goh	Assistant Director	Primary Care Transformation Office

Background

Consumable stores at the polyclinics had been traditionally managed by Nurses. Nurses typically spent up to half a day each week to complete various store management tasks such as inventory checks, ordering and housekeeping. This translated to less time for direct patient interactions and clinical work, resulting in sub-optimal utilisation of Nurses' clinical knowledge and expertise.



Fig 1: Consumable Store in NHG Polyclinics

Job Redesign and Implementation

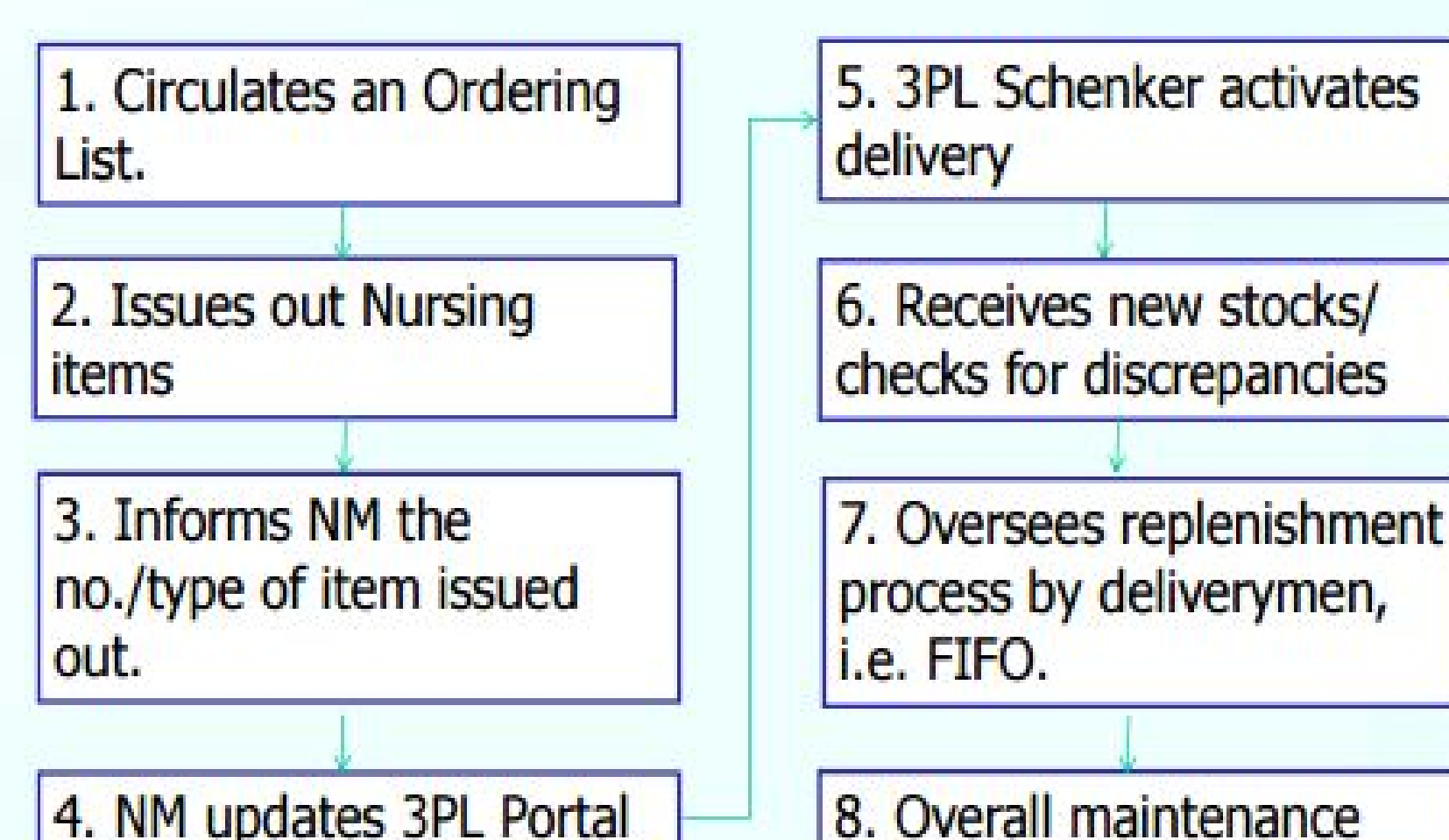
Consumable store management is mainly administrative in nature, while requiring some product knowledge and proper storage of consumable items. As part of our productivity drive, the natural question asked was whether we could empower non-clinical staff to upskill and take over consumable store management that was traditionally done by Nurses. The team looked at ways to redesign and enlarge ancillary staff's job, primarily PSA to take over this role.

Pilot Clinic and PDSA

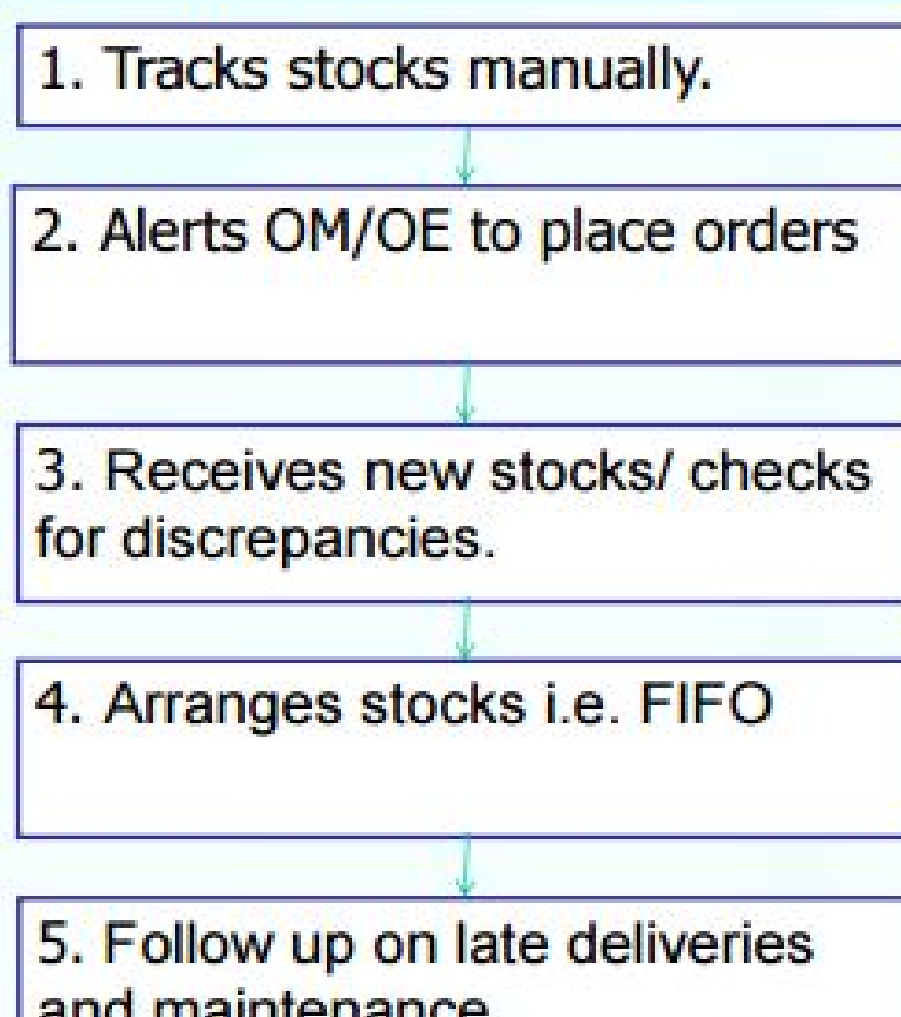
Clementi Polyclinic was selected as the pilot clinic to embark on the change. The team consisting Nurses and Operations staff went through vigorous PDSA cycles to establish processes to train and guide PSA on the job and set roles and responsibilities clearly. During the job redesign, Operations also made various suggestions to improve process efficiency, including visual management in the store and use of IT to help with ordering and tracking of stocks.

Flow Chart of Current VS New Processes

Current



New



Spread to Other Clinics

Rounds of discussions took place with other 8 clinic teams to share the plan for spreading the new practice and intricacies involved in implementation. A mutually agreed schedule was worked out by both Nurses and Operations for training and handing over of the role. Timeline was established for each clinic and closely monitored.

Results and Cost Savings

Per Year for 9 Clinics		
Tasks	Nursing Manpower Costs	Operations Manpower Costs
SAP/ST Log Ordering	\$13,376.37	\$8,492.94
Updating Schenker Portal	\$7,643.64	\$3,538.72
Receiving new stocks	\$15,287.29	\$10,616.17
Picking/Packing Consumables for distribution to service rooms	\$44,163.27	\$30,668.94
Total	\$80,470.57	\$53,316.77

Nursing Manpower Cost Required before QI (I)	\$80,470.57
PSA/OE Manpower Cost Required after QI (II)	\$53,316.77
Savings = (I) - (II)	\$27,153.80

Table 1: Annual manpower cost savings

Table 1 shows a calculated total manpower cost savings of \$27,153.80 annually deriving from Operations-managed consumables store.



Fig 2: PSA managing stores

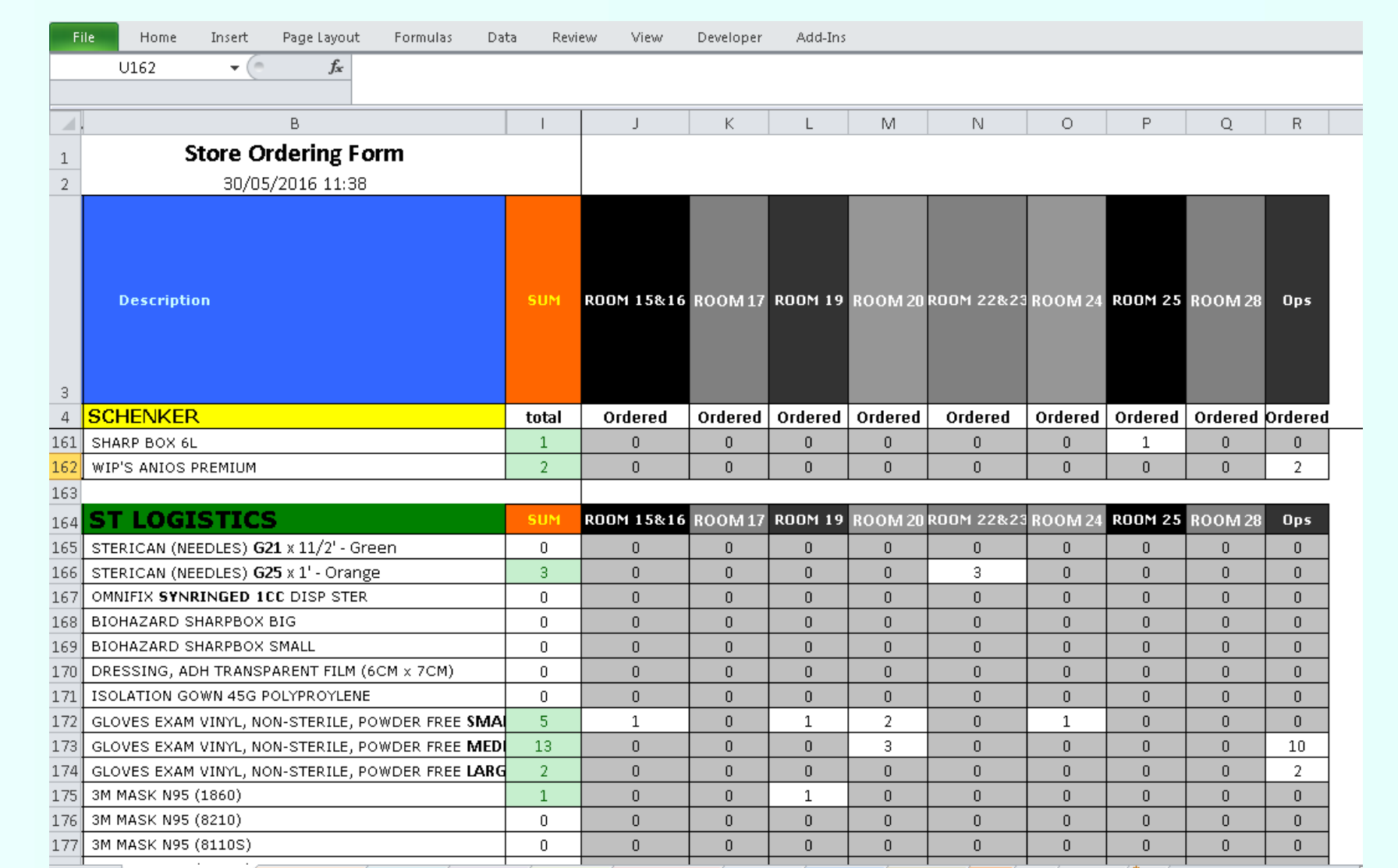


Fig 3: Excel developed by PSAs to help their job

Staff Satisfaction

Operations staff involved felt they can contribute towards delivering a higher quality of care for our patients by relieving Nurses from administrative work to better focus their valuable resources on their core - attending to patients' clinical needs.

Staff also felt that opportunity to take on a broader and variety set of work tasks helps break the monotony of their daily routine frontline duties. This also helps their career progression and personal development.

Mindset Changes

Job redesign was not well accepted by everyone at first. Some Nurses had reservations about capability of Operations staff and having another party manage their consumables that is crucial for smooth daily operations. Operations staff, on the other hand, were also apprehensive to take on the role. In fact, some staff even viewed the job enlargement as an add-on to their list of duties. The teams proactively managed the concerns by making small pilots and demonstrating the benefits to staff.

Strategies to Sustain

Audit Framework

A quarterly audit checklist for the store was established and audits are jointly conducted by Nurses and Operations staff.

Staff Engagement

Continued engagement with staff to hear their feedback. Feedback are taken for process review and for further improvement to streamline their work.