

Theme | MECTP
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REASON WHY?

Improving time to initial assessment is critical to enhancing patient safety, ensuring timely clinical care, and reducing avoidable harm. Delays in this key metrics increases clinical risk, compromises care quality, and contribute to overcrowding, which strains resources and staff. Streamlining this process directly supports safer patient flow, reduces adverse outcomes, and aligns with national standards for emergency care delivery.



- To achieve 80% of walk-in patients triaged within 15 minutes of arrival by May 2026

PLAN

Action cards were created in workstream 1 by the senior nursing teams.

The action cards gave a structured escalation process for the initial assessment teams to recover the triage time to 15 minutes at times of patient surge.

DO

ED Senior Nursing teams worked collaboratively and created action cards through Workstream 1.

To test the action cards, a sustained week of testing week commenced 1/12/25. This was communicated to staff in the department prior to the test of change via the daily huddle, staff meetings and posters were created with a QR Code linked to the SaTH app to engage staff and enable them to see daily initial assessment performance metrics.

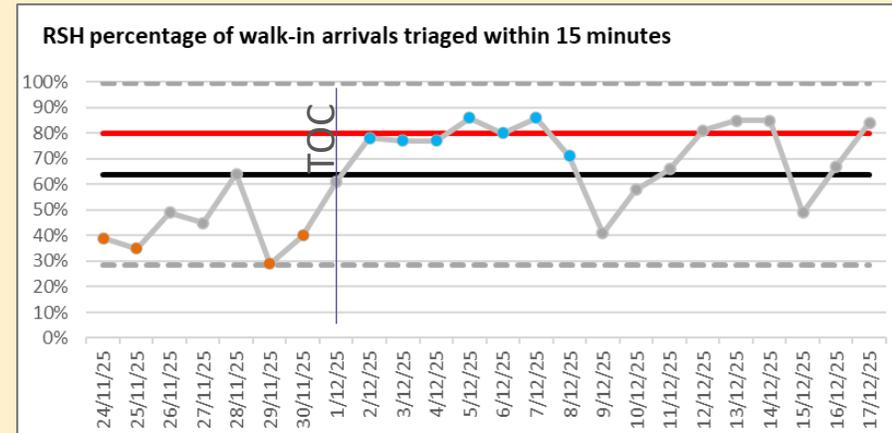
Action cards were introduced on 01/12/25; staff followed the escalation process on action cards.

| Level | Actions | Complete? |
|---|--|-----------|
| 1 Normal Workload | Triage patients to 15 minutes. 1 x Streaming Nurse allocated (0700-1930) 1 x Initial Assessment Nurse allocated (24 hours) 1 x Waiting Room Nurse (IA Competent) allocated (0700-1930) PRR IA Team not to cover Navigator/ Ebnak If patient direct specialty, sleep or call flow coordinator to manage/phase. Flow coordinator to discuss with NIC exit plan for patient. | |
| 2 Fit above plus Moderate Pressure | Streaming Nurse identifies surge of patients and/or triage exceeding 10 minutes. Streaming Nurse to escalate to Waiting Room Nurse (PRN) / FR to SR Nurse (PRN) to commence double bleed Streaming Nurse to make NIC aware – contact mobile number or bleep NIC to review staffing and mix in department to increase nurse to patient ratio, in preparation to flex triage trained RN to triage, or Department Manager / PEF prepares to flex to triage. | |
| 3 Fit above plus Severe Pressure | If not recovered within 30 minutes clinician to commence as third triage. Rapid assessment of queue to identify sickest patients and escalate to NIC. Clinician to escalate to NIC who will escalate to Department Manager and Matron NIC to escalate to Flow Managers for wider escalation via site safety call To co-ordinate a rapid system of prioritisation to manage and identify the sickest patients (include CVP) NIC to review department including CVP IA demand and skill mix. To co-ordinate a rapid system of prioritisation when the waiting time to triage exceeds 15 minutes. | |
| 4 Fit above plus Extreme Pressure | If still not recovered within 30 minutes, additional initial assessment RN flexed from department/ Department Manager / or PEF to utilise third LUTC assessment space and triage until recovered. Department Manager and Matron to oversee | |
| | NIC to escalate to Flow Manager/Matron (CSM out of hours), for wider escalation | |

STUDY

There was a sustained improvement in the 15 minutes initial assessment performance during the test of change whilst utilising the action cards. The first 2 days were impacted by short staffing and PEFs were flexed to mitigate the staffing gap.

Feedback received during the test of change by staff was positive, the team liked the structured escalation approach to recovering to 15 minutes. The teams were engaged with the process and all felt that the daily performance metrics helped keep them motivated.



ACT

The action cards will be reviewed in 30 days inline with restrictions on PEF/Ward Manager availability to flex into initial assessment over the winter period.

The department will continue testing their PDSA until sustained improvement is evidenced through weekly performance reviews where this process will then be fully embedded.

To review how to obtain daily initial assessment metrics for team.