

NRGDS Qi Project

Improving the Efficiency of the Referral
Process

Team Members

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Problem Statement

“NHS England requires NRGDS to notify the referrer & service user of the outcome of their referral within 14 days of the referral being received”

In May 2024, the average time it took NRGDS to respond to a referral was 49 days.

Previous Process



Affecting Factors

- Average of 15 new referrals per week
- Referrals meeting taking place once a week
- More urgent tasks taking priority over completing Acceptance Letters
- Waiting for Nurses to complete their tasks first
- Not having sufficient members of staff
- Poorly designed Acceptance Letters

Our Solutions

Through the Qi Training Days, sharing ideas, discussions with the wider team, and experimenting we implemented changes to our processes to improve the efficiency of the referral process whilst maintaining a high-quality service.

Some of the major changes we implemented were...

Expanding the Team



- Since February 2023, the NRGDS Admin Team have been under-staffed. It wasn't until June 2024 that we became a fully staffed team.
- This allowed us to spread the responsibilities evenly between the Team and create more time for tasks which were neglected in the past, such as Acceptance Letters.



	Charlie	Christine	Pav
Mon	- Appointments - Scanning - Printing - Bloods	- Admin Inbox - Phones - Post - Acceptance Letters	- External Inbox - Formatting - Checked & Ready - Referrals
Tue	- External Inbox - Formatting - Checked & Ready - Referrals	- Appointments - Scanning - Printing - Bloods	- Admin Inbox - Phones - Post
Wed	- Admin Inbox - Phones - Post - Acceptance Letters	- External Inbox - Formatting - Checked & Ready - Referrals	- Appointments - Scanning - Printing - Bloods
Thu	- Appointments - Scanning - Printing - Bloods	- Admin Inbox - Phones - Post	- External Inbox - Formatting - Checked & Ready - Referrals
Fri	- External Inbox - Formatting - Checked & Ready - Referrals	- Appointments - Scanning - Printing - Bloods	- Admin Inbox - Phones - Post - Acceptance Letters

	Charlie	Christine	Lindsay	Harriet	Pav
Mon	- MFU Appointments - Printing 1 - Scanning - Referrals 1	- Phones 1 - Admin Inbox - Formatting - Acceptance Letters	- Ax Appointments - Bloods - Post - Printing 2	- External Inbox - Checked & Ready - Phones 2	- Support Inboxes - Referrals 2
Tue	- Phones 1 - Admin Inbox - Formatting - Referrals 1	- MFU Appointments - Printing 1 - Scanning	- External Inbox - Checked & Ready - Phones 2	- Ax Appointments - Bloods - Post - Printing 2	- Acceptance Letters - Support Inboxes - Referrals 2
Wed	- Ax Appointments - Bloods - Post - Printing 2 - Acceptance Letters	- External Inbox - Checked & Ready - Phones 2 - Referrals 1	- MFU Appointments - Printing 1 - Scanning	- Phones 1 - Admin Inbox - Formatting	- Support Inboxes - Referrals 2
Thu	NWD	- Ax Appointments - Bloods - Post - Printing 2	- Phones 1 - Admin Inbox - Formatting	- MFU Appointments - Printing 1 - Scanning - Acceptance Letters	- External Inbox - Checked & Ready - Phones 2 - Referrals 1
Fri	- External Inbox - Checked & Ready - Phones 2 - Printing 2	- Phones 1 - Admin Inbox - Formatting - Referrals 1	- MFU Appointments - Printing 1 - Scanning - Acceptance Letters	- Ax Appointments - Bloods - Post	- Referrals 2 - Support Inboxes

OLD Rota

vs

NEW Rota

Re-designing Acceptance Letters

Old

vs

New

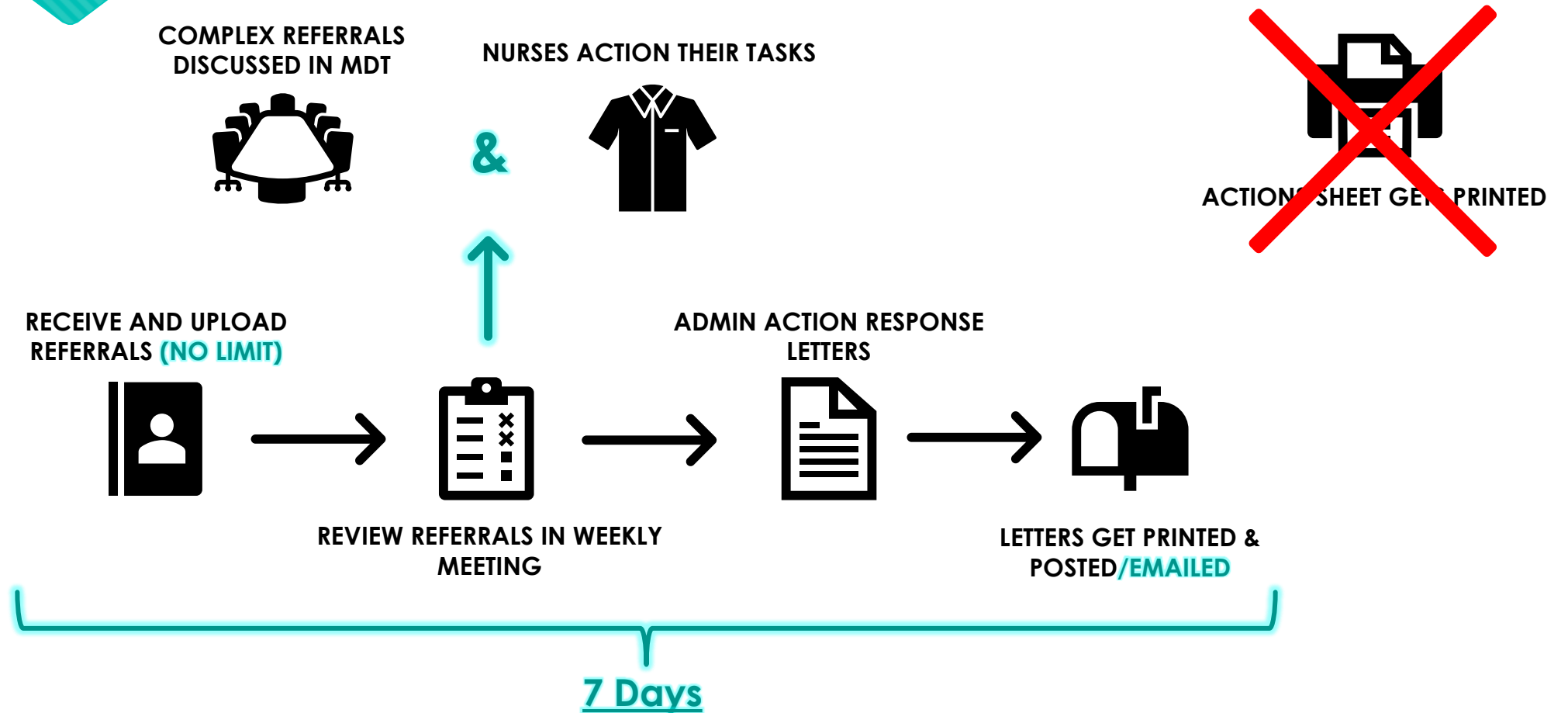
1. Amend font style & size
2. 'Sentence Case' the patient details & address
3. Amend line spacing
4. Sign-off with your name
5. Remove extra blank page
6. Upload to RiO as 'Response to GP/Patient'
7. Add Progress Note with document details

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- ~~4. Sign-off with your name~~
- ~~5. Remove extra blank page~~
2. Upload to RiO as 'Response to Referral'
- ~~7. Add Progress Note with document details~~

Removing ~~Unnecessary~~ Tasks

- 'Additional Lines' for complex letters:
 - Signposting to 3rd Sector Services
 - Harm-minimisation Information
 - Endocrine Queries
- Additional Information request letters include the referral form
- Enclosures are one, combined document
- Referral Sheet is a 'tick box' template

New Process



FINAL OUTCOME

CHANGES IMPLEMENTED



Referral Week Commencing:

Other Positive Outcomes

- Saved 40 minutes of Admin work per Referral Meeting.
- Taking workload away from the Nursing Team.
- Not only meet, but **half** the 14-day target.
- Quickly cleared backlog.
- Reduced the stress around this task.
- Inspired other tasks to be completed in a similar way.
- Taught the Team new skills.
- More Eco-friendly through less paper waste.
- Spread the responsibility equally.

**Thank you
for listening!**

Any Questions?...