Ensuring Psychotherapy Service Users are seen for an assessment within 11 weeks of referral

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Aim

Our aim was that by December 2016 100% of service users will be seen within 11 weeks for assessment and be sustained by May 2017

Why is this important to service users and carers?

It was important to work on this aim as service users were waiting on average about 19 weeks before they received an assessment, having a massive impact on the flow through the service and the ability of service users to be treated efficiently.
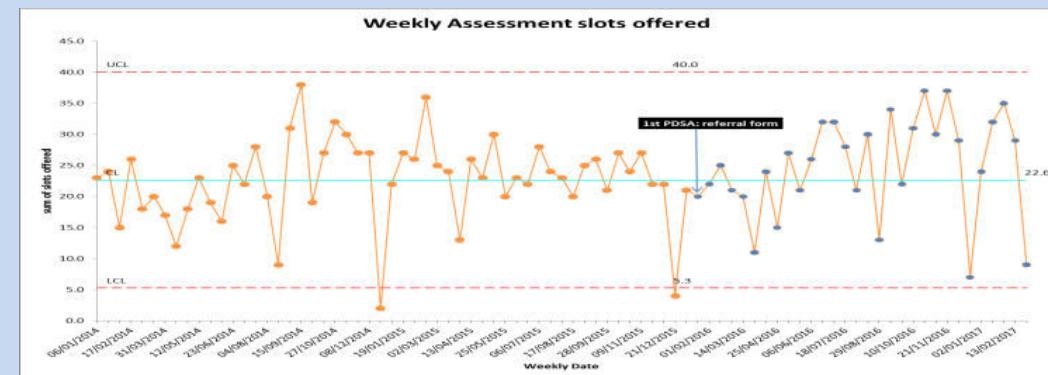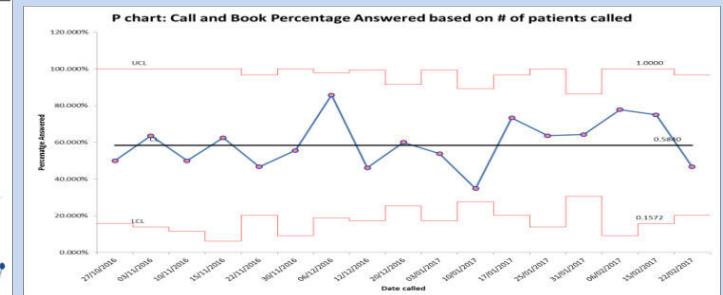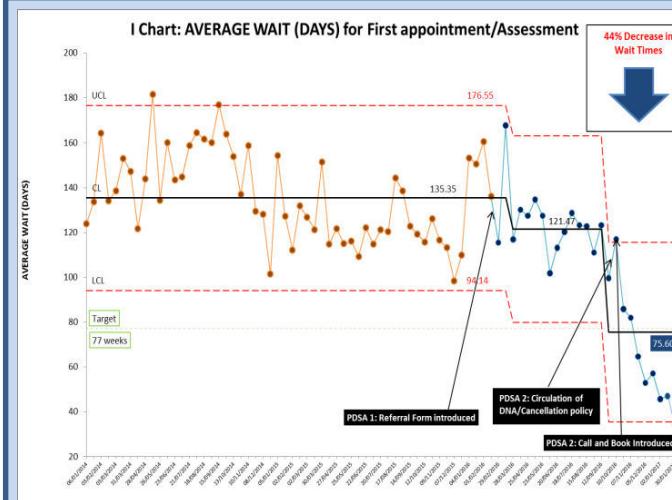
Driver diagram
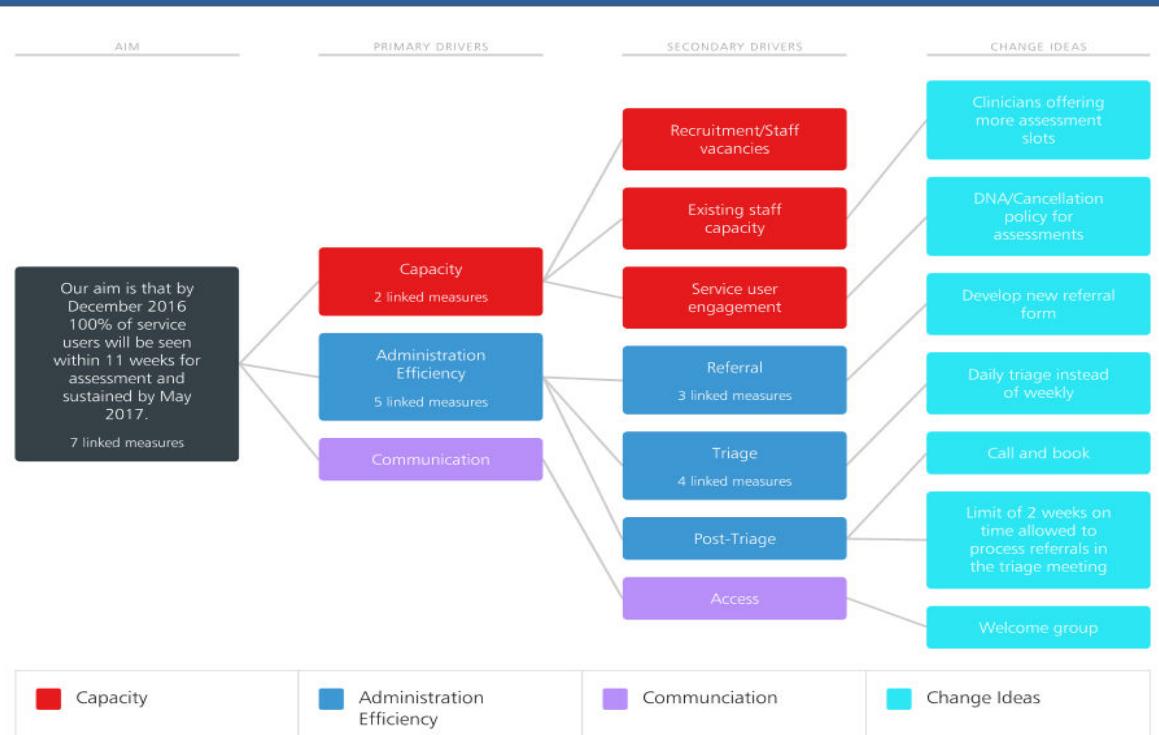
Tests of Change

- Referral form.
- The DNA/Cancellation policy on assessments was more clearly laid out.
- 'Call and book' calling service users to book in an assessment rather than sending opt in letters.

Data

I Chart: AVERAGE WAIT (DAYS) for First appointment/Assessment

P chart: Call and Book Percentage Answered based on # of patients called

Weekly Assessment slots offered

Learning

- *We have learnt a lot as a team about how our service works*, from developing flow diagrams to using PDSA cycles We have come together as a team and have a shared vision and goal in terms of improving care for our service users.
- *We have achieved our aim* and seen a big change from an average wait of 135 days from referral to assessment, to 121 days after the first implementation to 75 days after the second implementation and PDSA. There has been a large 44% percent decrease in wait times.
- *Within our call and book PDSA*, we found that the average number of people who answered the call for choose and book is 58%. We are continuing to gather data and are looking to now move into the second cycle. To see if we can increase this percentage.
- Studying the dramatic decrease in assessment wait times we also considered alternative explanations such as the number of assessments slots that we offered as a service on a weekly basis,. The data shows that there are no average increase in assessment slots over the time period considered. This would seem to support the hypothesis that our implementations and PDSA's were the main factor in wait times decrease.
- We are looking at ways to clarify how to measure the process of increased adherence to the DNA cancellation policy.
- This result has had a big impact on the service, it is very beneficial for patients that they are seen more quickly and for referrers to know that their patients will seen. This has a big impact on managing risk and makes it much more enjoyable working for a service knowing that patients can been seen more quickly, it enthuses us to keep perusing and improving the system in other ways.