



Siti Umairah Abu Hassan¹, Manoontri A/L Tian², Nur Amalina Alias¹, Jurisma Che Lah¹, Mohamad Syafuan Fadzil¹, Tan Xiu Quan³

¹ Hospital Tuanku Fauziah, 01000 Kangar, Perlis
² Klinik kesihatan Beseri, Jalan Kaki Bukit, 02400 Beseri, Perlis.
³ Hospital Sultanah Bahiyah, Alor Setar

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Introduction

- Patients **spend substantial amount of time** in the outpatient department waiting for services to be delivered by physicians and other allied health professionals. (Oche and Adamu, 2013)
- A study done by Erhun and Afolabi in 2003, concluded that patient's level of satisfaction with services provided strongly influenced by the quality of the waiting experience.
- For the purpose of this study, patient waiting time is defined as the length of time from when the prescription received by the pharmacist until patient received their medication.

Objective

- To determine factors influencing dispensing delay in Outpatient Pharmacy HTF.
- To measure actual time taken in each step of prescription processing in Outpatient Pharmacy HTF.

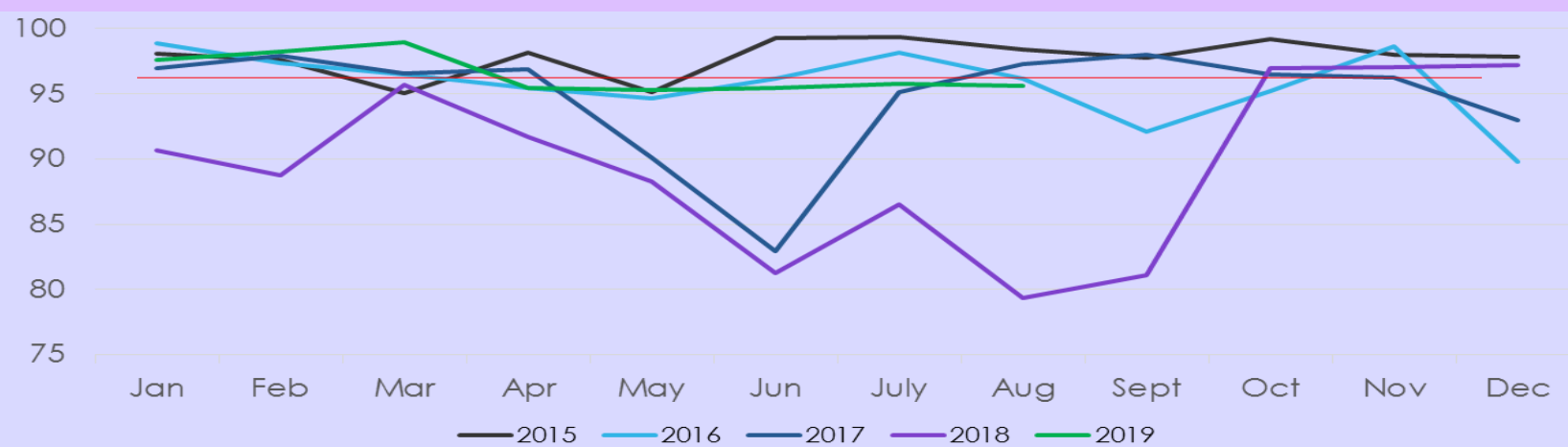
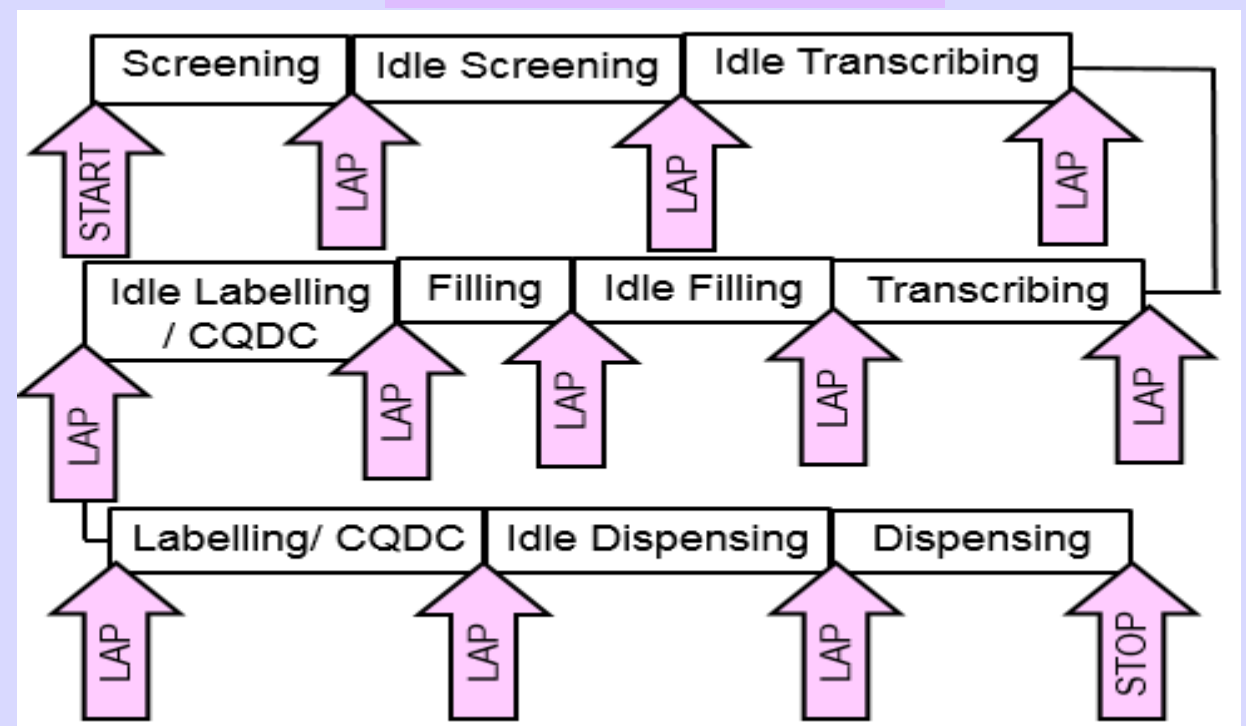


Figure 1. Percentage of prescription dispensed within 30 minutes (%)

Materials & Method

Study Design	Prospective study
Study Setting	Outpatient Pharmacy HTF
Study Population	All Patients with Prescription in Outpatient Pharmacy HTF
Sample Size	340 prescriptions
Sampling Method	Convenient Sampling
Inclusion Criteria	Valid prescription and waiting patient
Exclusion Criteria	Value added service, Pickup later & Extemporaneous preparation
Study Instrument	Stopwatch, Data Collection Form

Data Collection Method



Result

Dispensing process	No of Sample (n)	Time Spent (min)	
		Median	(IQR)
Screening			
Processing	329	0.4	(0.31)
Delay	329	1.44	(2.21)
Transcribing			
Processing	325	2.32	(1.79)
Delay	328	4.51	(4.13)
Filling			
Processing	320	2.24	(1.75)
Delay	320	1.48	(2.06)
Labelling / CQDC			
Processing	319	2.12	(1.79)
Delay	318	2.03	(2.11)
Dispensing			
Processing	316	1.39	(1.1)
Delay	314	3.1	(3.97)
Total Time			
Processing		8.47	(6.74)
Delay		12.56	(14.48)

Table 1. Total Time (min) Spent during each stage of dispensing process

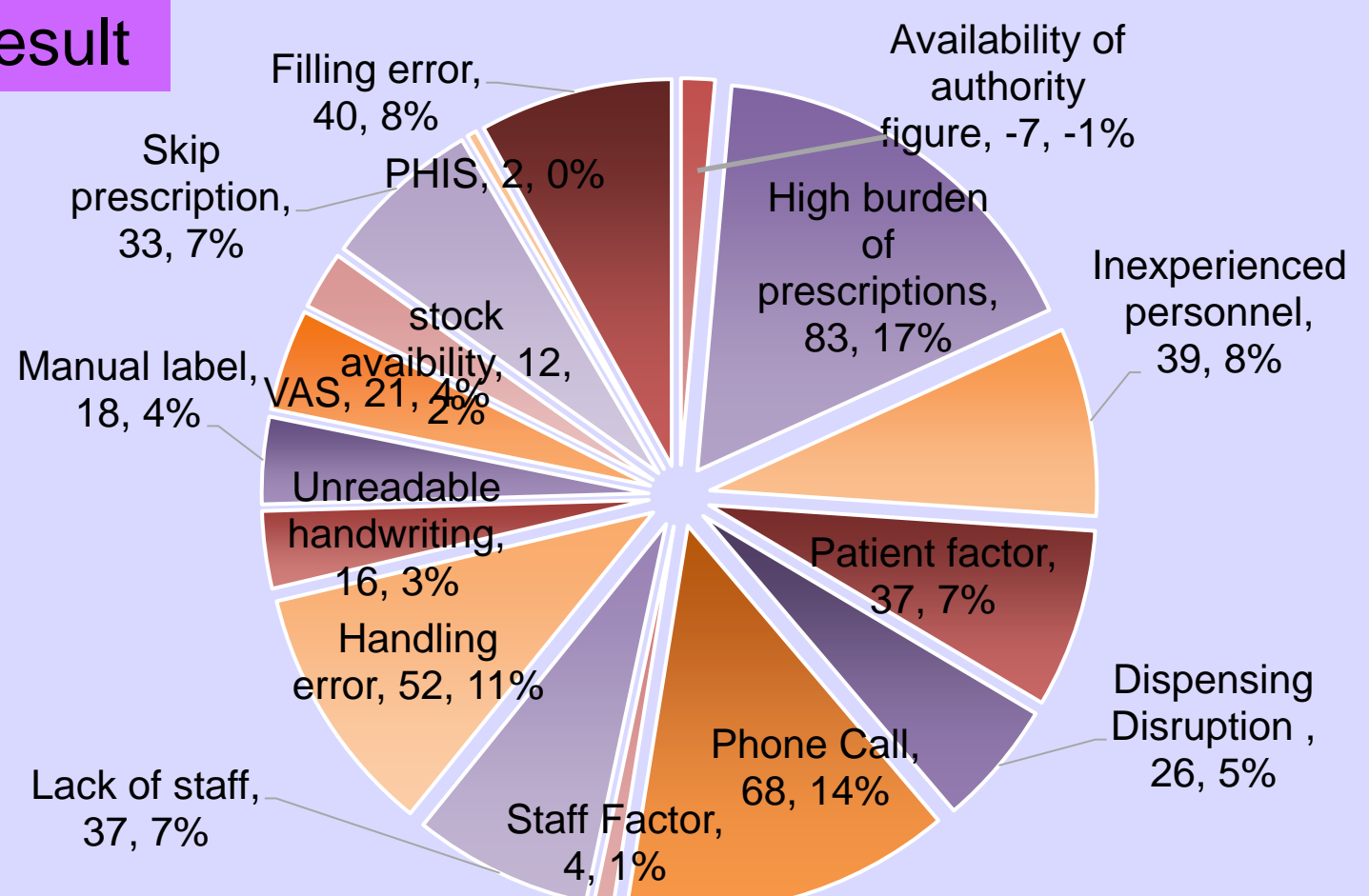


Figure 2 Factors Affecting Dispensing Delay in Outpatient Pharmacy, HTF

Discussion & Conclusion

- From the result in Table 1, it was found that majority of the prescription sat idle during transcribing and dispensing process.
- Factors contributing to the delay in transcribing process;
 - **High burden of prescriptions** when multiple clinics were in operation led to congestion (Loh et al., 2017).
 - **Phone call.** More than million calls from pharmacists to physicians and nurses, asking for clarification which is a time consuming process (Institute for Safe Medication Practices, 2000).
 - **Handling error.** Prescribing error and interpreting illegible prescription is a major cause of delay in the transcribing process (Ker et al., 2013).
- Factors contributing to the delay in dispensing process;
 - **Interruption.** Patient come to claim their medication (Pickup Later) or demand VAS soon after they received their medication.
 - Interruptions can be disruptive and can often hinder healthcare professionals from successfully completing their tasks (Rivera and Karsh, 2010).
 - **Filling error**, for example wrong quantity of medication. Handling prescription errors would propel a longer processing time (Loh et al., 2017).

References

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