

Community Palliative Care Triage- Reviewing and Revamping an Established Practice

Prepared by **Sandra Sullivan & Renee Cooper**

Palliative Clinical Nurse Consultants

Bankstown and Fairfield Community Health Centres

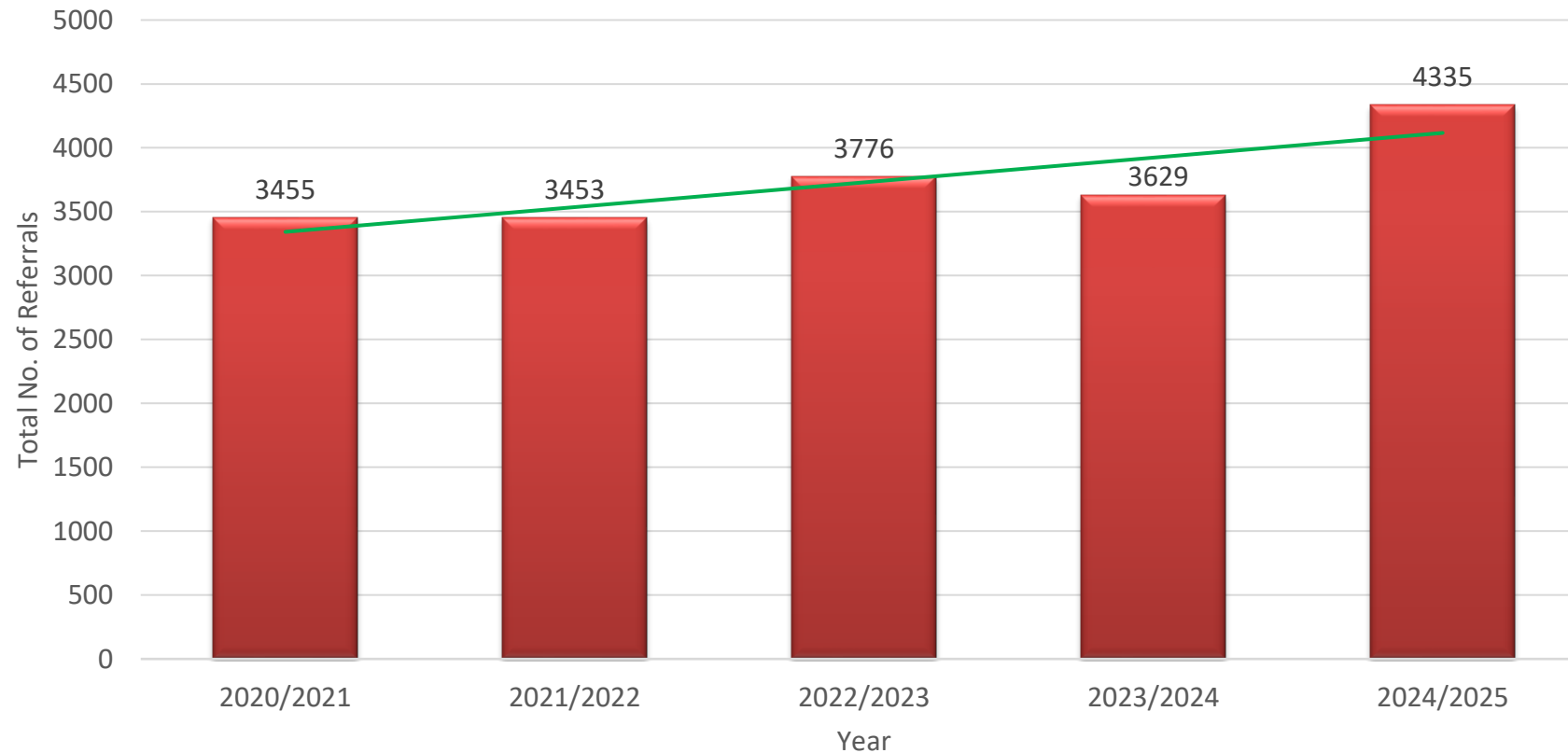
June 2026

Our Service

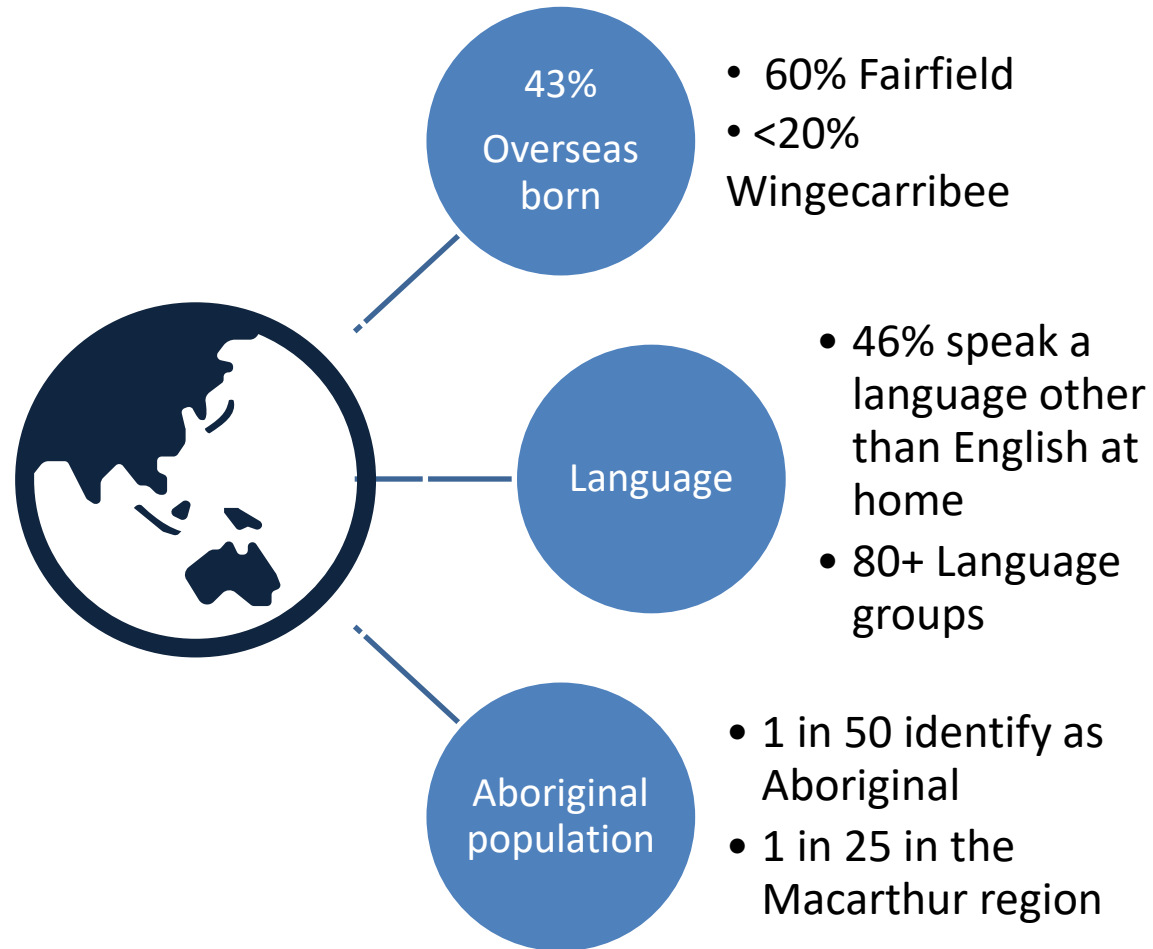


Community Palliative Care Referrals

Community Palliative Care Referrals 2020-2025



SWSLHD CALD population



Background

COVID 2020



- Structured approach to initial contact
- Script to introduce triage process
- Utilisation of PROMSNAMES assessment guide

Embedded as standard practice

- ACI local initiative project
- Formalised part of orientation

Triggers for reviewing triage practices

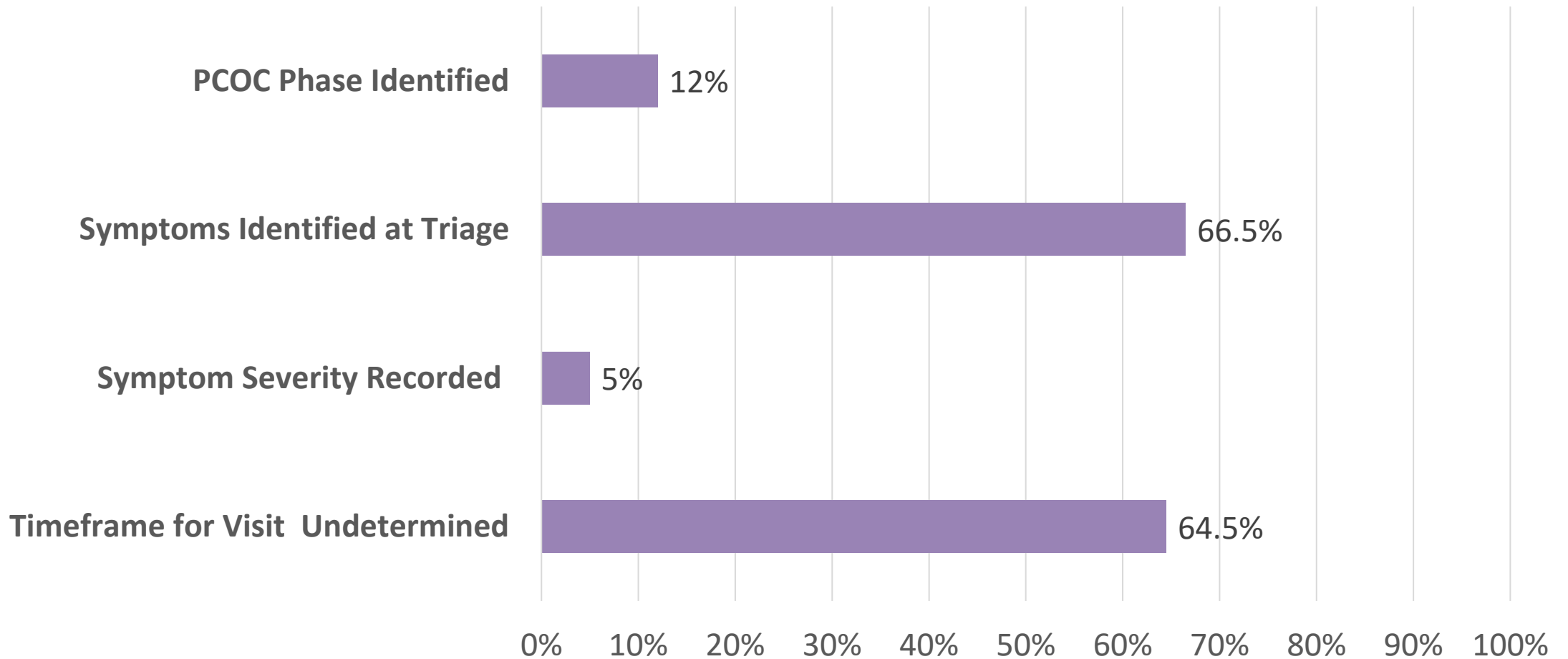
Inconsistent
practice across
teams

Time frame for
initial visits not
being met

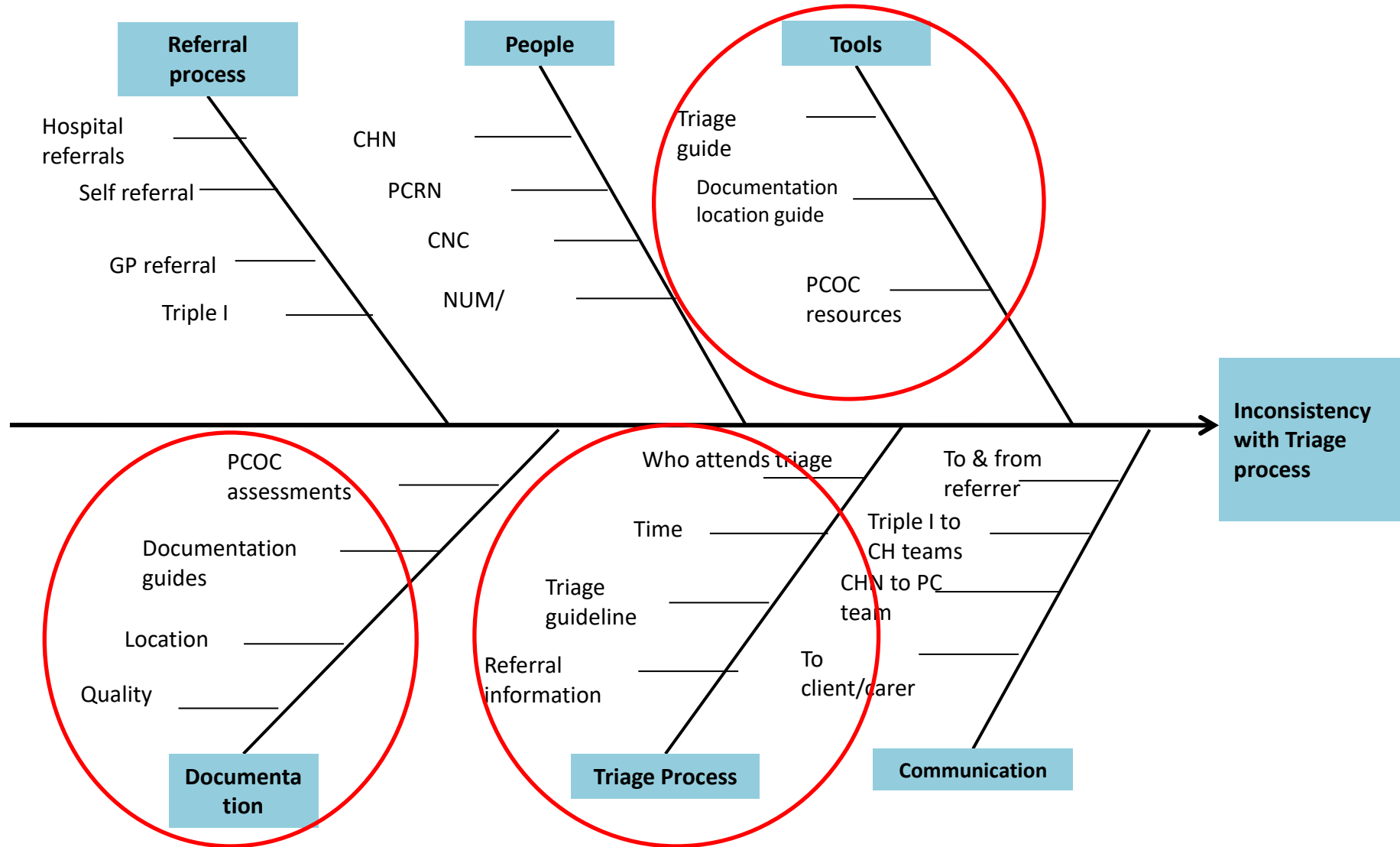
Inconsistent
quality of
documentation
triage call

Symptom
severity scores
poorly
understood

Baseline Audit findings -November 2023



Cause & Effect Diagram



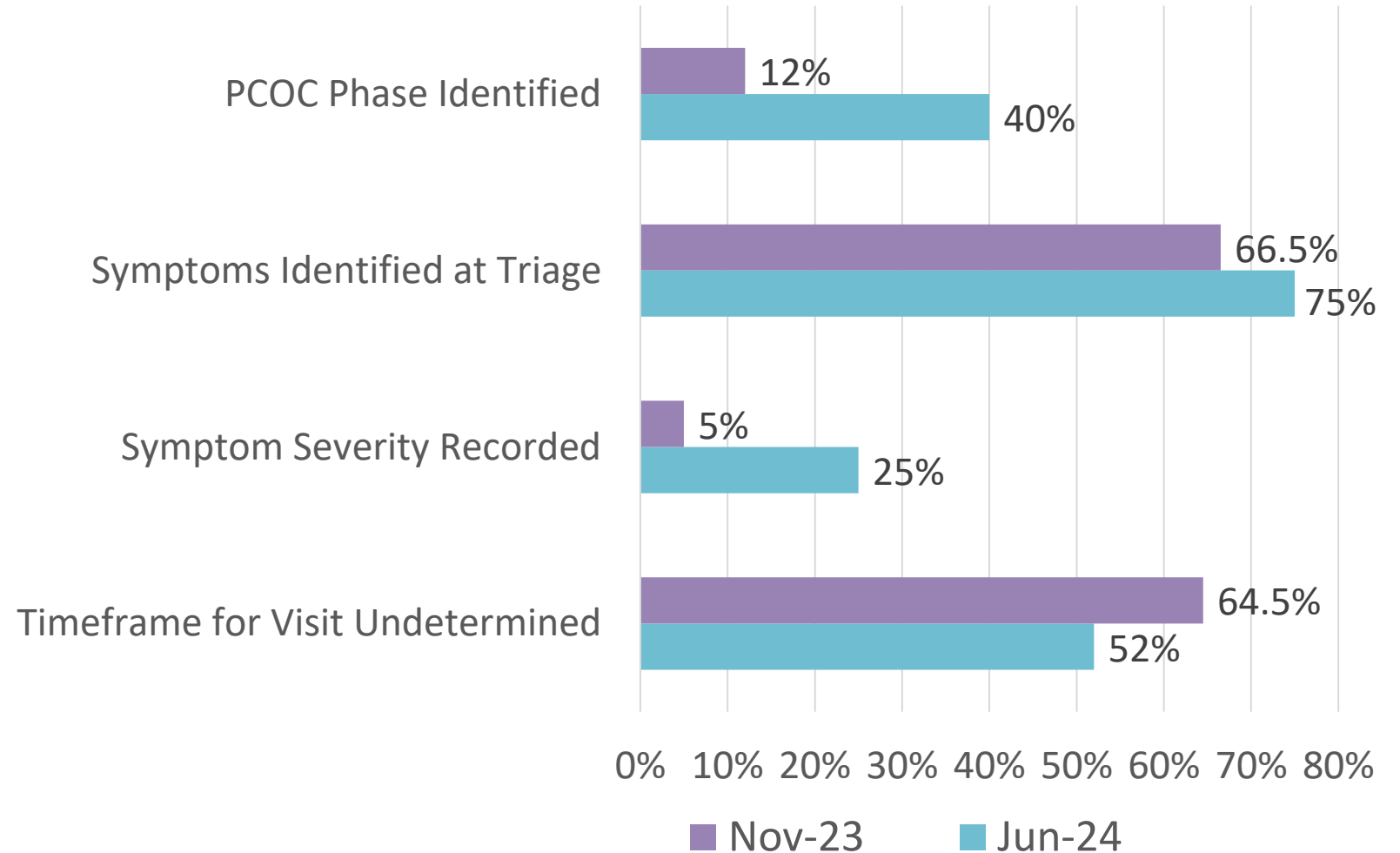
Response to Baseline Audit Findings-PDSA 1

RESPONSE

- **May 2024-** Palliative Care Nurses took over responsibility for triaging

Rationale

- To have better oversight of the process to identify gaps in the process/practices
- To see if there were improvements if palliative care nurses were undertaking triage



PDSA 2: The Development and Implementation Of the Triage Documentation Template

- Documentation template developed based on existing triage guidelines
- PCOC phase, symptom severity ratings and AKPS were included
- The template was emailed to all palliative care nurses, and an online education session was provided
- Template implemented in July 2024

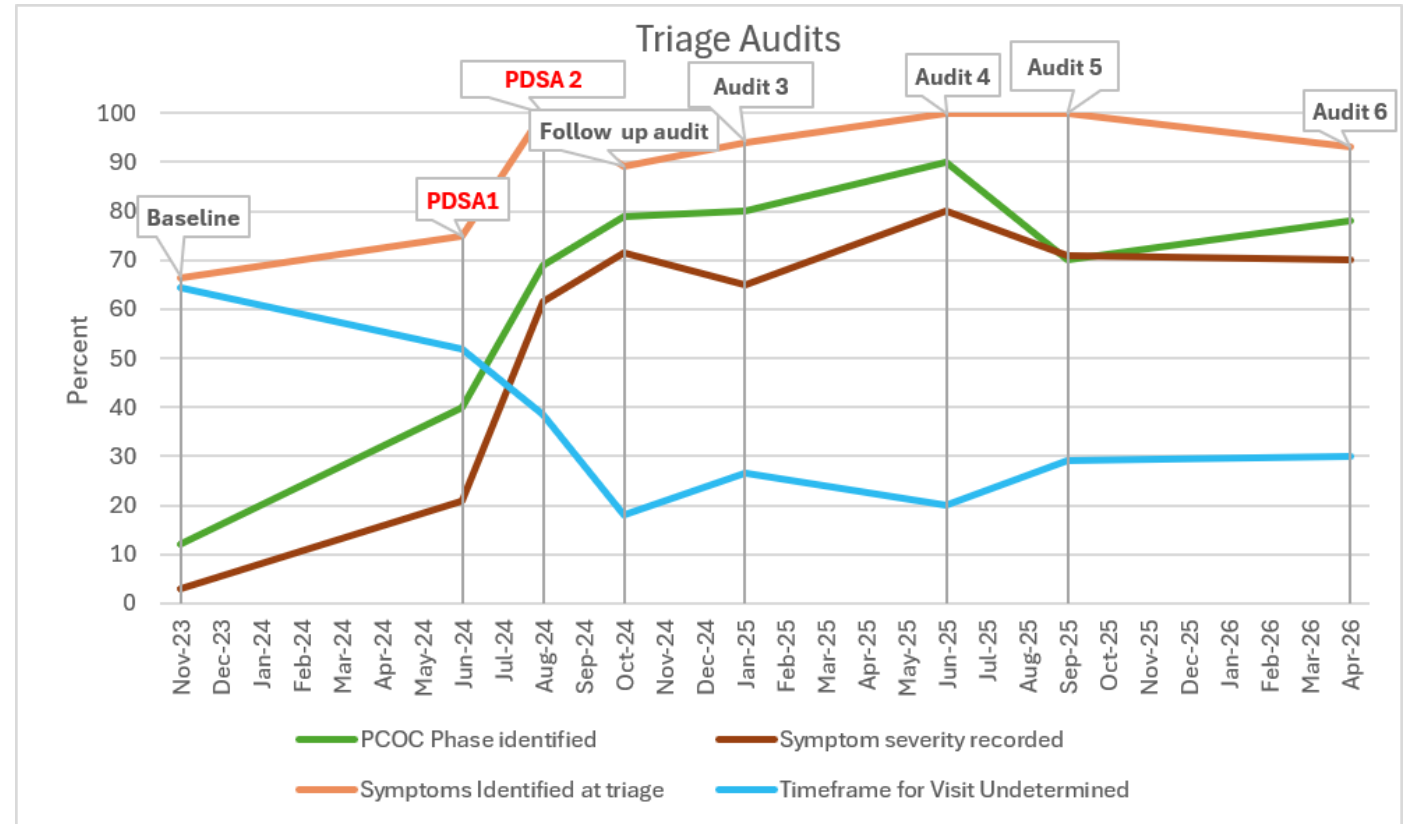
Adjusting initial visit time frames

- Timeframes from triage to 1st home visit were extended to reflect PCOC response times based on severity of symptoms

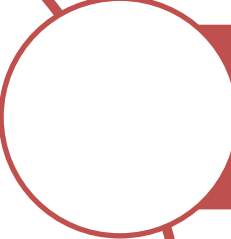
Symptom Severity Rating	Time from triage to initial assessment (previous)	Time from triage to initial assessment (current)
Absent	HV within 72hrs or as per client request	HV within 7 days or as per client request
Mild	HV within 72hrs	HV within 5 days
Moderate	HV 48-72hrs	HV within 72hrs
Severe	HV within 24hrs	HV within 24hrs

Post Documentation Template Improvements

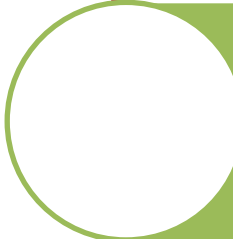
- Template introduced July 2024.
- 1st audit after implementation (August 2024) showed improvements in documentation



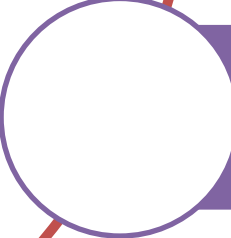
Non-Triages



In the process of auditing, we recognised that there were clients who did not proceed to triage



Clients discharged from service less than 14 days are no longer triaged (this was a change). Clients still contacted within 24hrs of referral and seen within 5 days of 1st contact



Non triages are now audited to ensure that reason triage did not occur was appropriate

Outcomes and some lessons learnt...

