

Improving Quality of Discharge Summaries and Clinical Coding in Paediatrics

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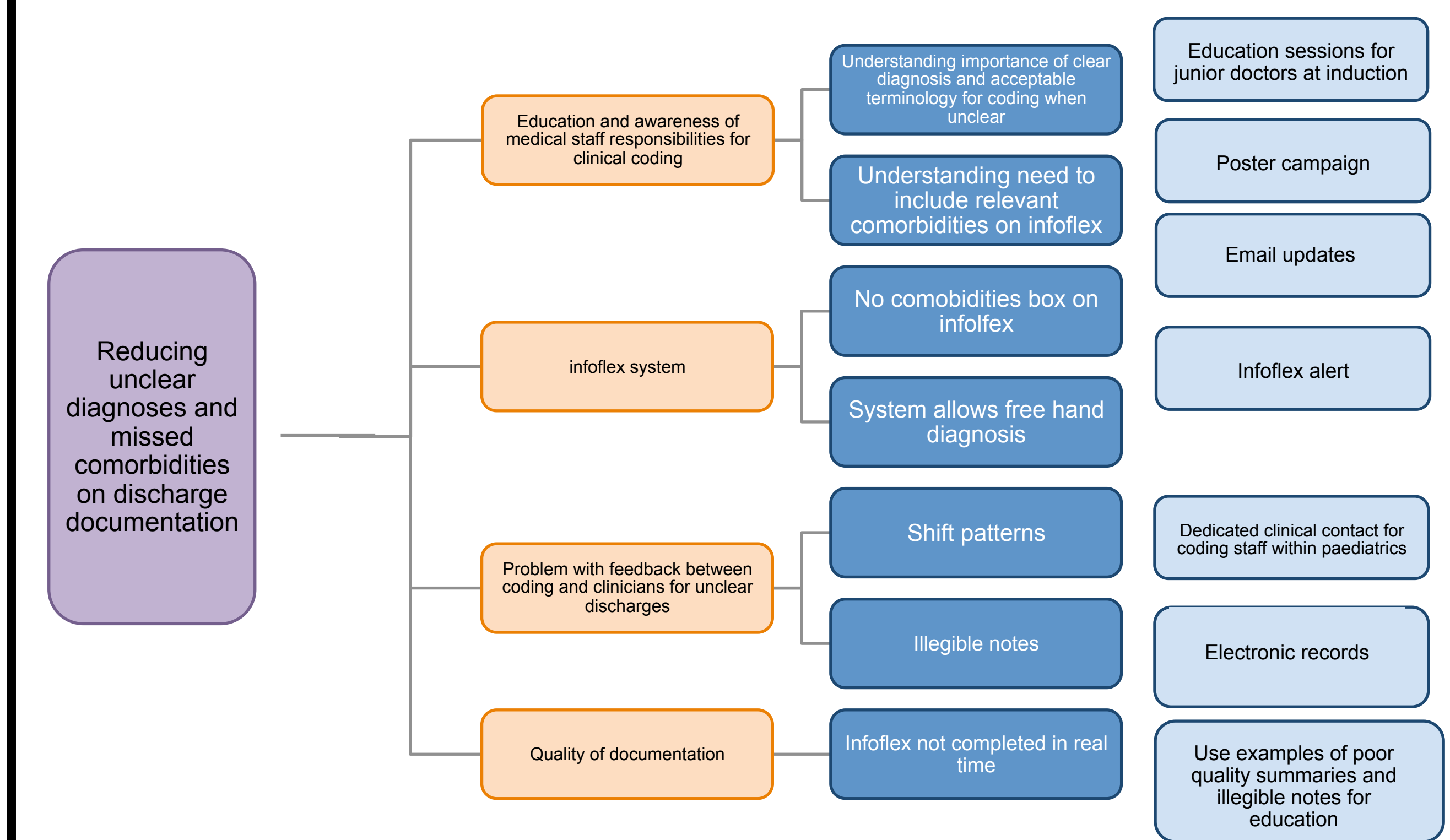
The Problem

- Clinical coding is the translation of medical terminology written by clinicians into a coded format
- Codes are used for epidemiological purposes, audit, determining service provision and to ensure departments are paid accurately for clinical activity
- There is evidence that understanding of clinical coding amongst clinicians and, in particular, junior doctors is poor (O'Dowd, 2013)
- Coders had identified that discharge summaries from paediatrics frequently contained diagnoses which were unclear or omitted relevant comorbidities
- These provide a potential clinical risk for patients and typically result in underpayment for the hospital admission

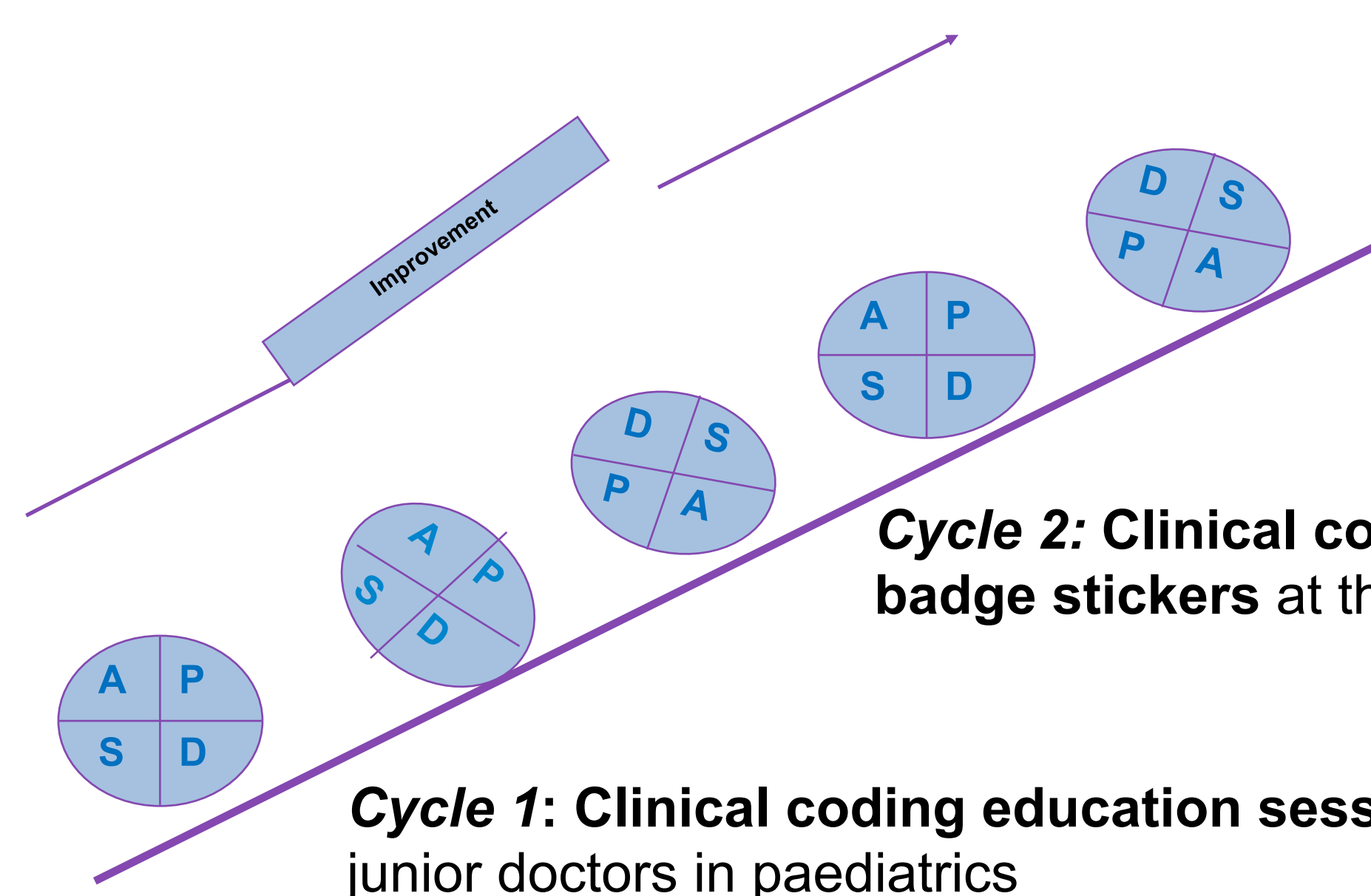
Improvement Aim

- Reduce the rate of discharge summaries with unclear diagnoses or missed comorbidities by 50% in 3 months

Driver Diagram



PDSA Cycles



Cycle 3: Addition of 'coding feedback loop' i.e. named clinical contact for coders to email to resolve an unclear diagnosis

Cycle 2: Clinical coding induction and quick reference ID badge stickers at the start of rotation in paediatrics

Cycle 1: Clinical coding education sessions and poster campaign for junior doctors in paediatrics

5 Top Tips for Writing infoflexes – help us improve accuracy of clinical coding



Do use on infoflex

- Treat as
- Probably
- Presumed
- Symptoms where no definite diagnosis is made

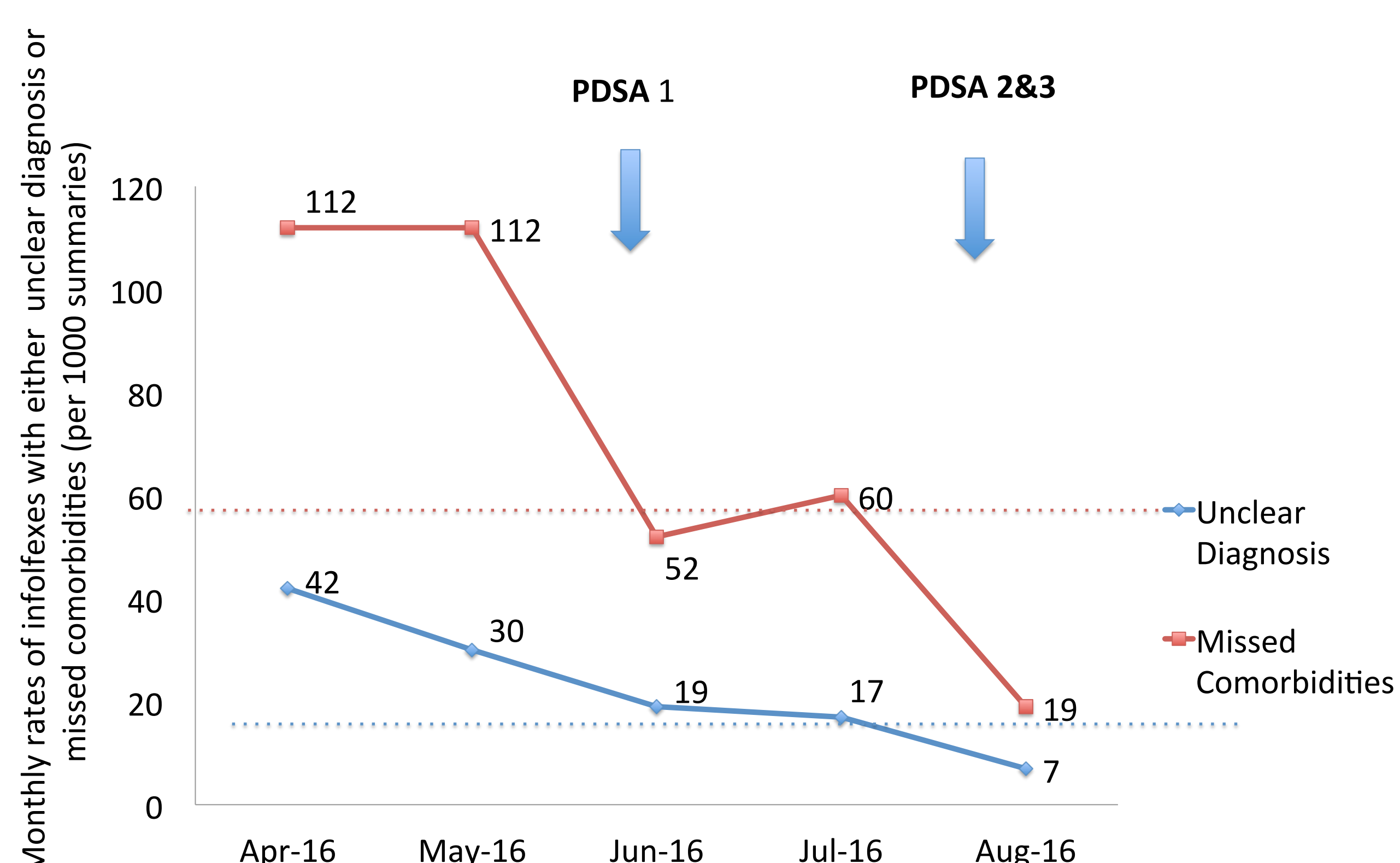
Don't use on infoflex

- Differential diagnosis
- Possible
- Likely
- Maybe
- Suspected
- ?
- Impression

Remember Comorbidities!

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Results



Lessons Learnt

- The education campaign and introducing coding awareness at departmental induction were successful in reducing unclear diagnoses and missed comorbidities on discharge summaries (81% and 83% reduction over 3 months respectively)
- Addition of a coding feedback loop provided a useful addition safety net to minimise unclear summaries
- All of these initiatives require ongoing commitment from enthusiastic clinicians within the department
- Information technology solutions may provide a more attractive long-term solution to the problem

