

# The reduction of RTT for in house paediatric dento-alveolar patients to less than 18 weeks

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Department

## Background

It was highlighted when looking at RTT figures for patients treated in the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Department that the longest waiters were paediatric patients following internal referrals from our orthodontic consultant colleagues to surgery. A retrospective case note review of all orthodontic surgeries in 2017 (n= 67) showed an average RTT of **329 days** with long waits in decision to refer date and initial consultation with Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (av 138 days), in particular that administration time was much longer than initially expected (av 40 days). Patient experience was also poor (Figure 1.1) with particular comments on missing more school for another appointment for pre-surgical consultation and also a long wait for their surgery, which extended their overall orthodontic treatment time.

## The Team

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To include: Annette Achaiah (General Manager), Orthodontic Consultants, Oral and Maxillofacial middle grades, Orthodontic secretaries, Reception staff

## Aims

1. to reduce RTT for all internal orthodontic referrals to below the 18 week target (126 days)
2. improve patient and parent/ guardian experience
3. reduction of admin time
4. more efficient use of clinical slots
5. decreased likelihood of patients/ clinical notes/ radiographs getting "lost in the system"

## Methods

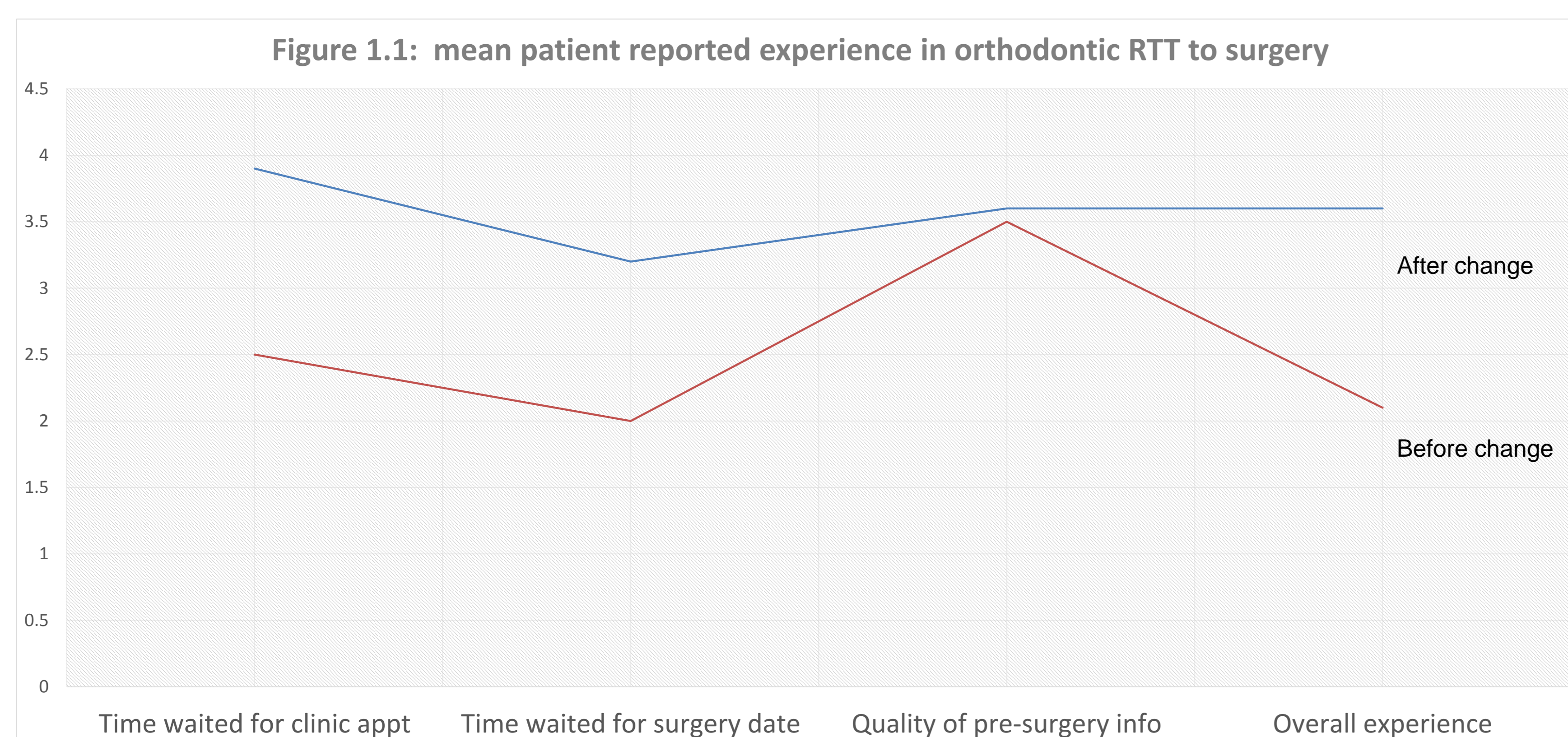
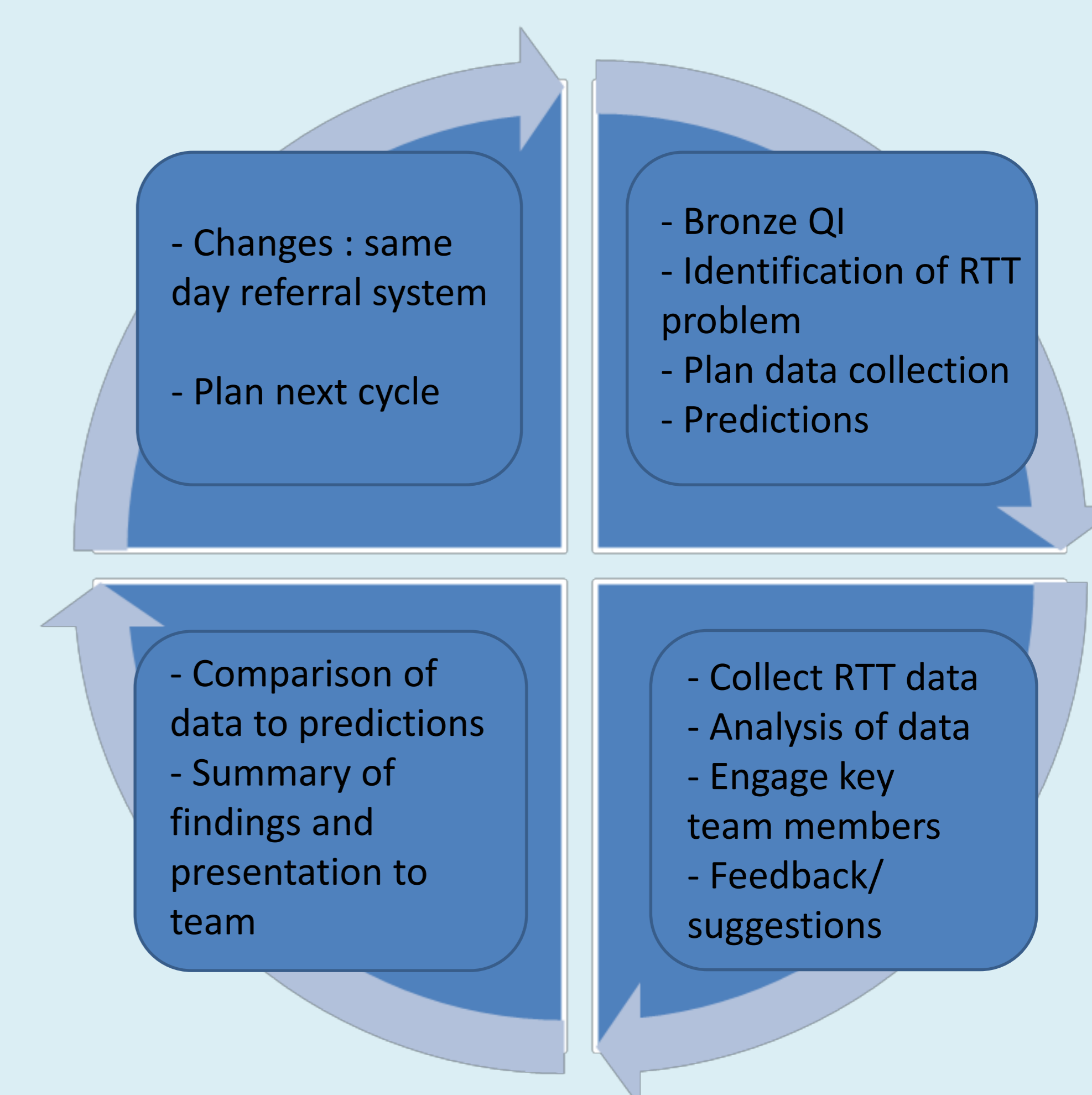
A direct referral system was devised and implemented to allow for same day referrals from Orthodontic Consultants to a member of the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery team to be absorbed on to an already booked clinic. A direct referral bundle, to include a newly designed form (Figure 1.2), radiograph and TCI form, removed the need for a dictated letter to be typed/ scanned/ vetted and booked for a subsequent clinic. This bundle was merged by a designated secretary in to the main hospital notes. Data collection was performed at the end of the PDSA cycle, plus information on patient experience after the implementation of the direct referral system was collected.

## Measures

- Outcome : to reduce patient waiting times
- Process : complete direct referral for all patients
- Balancing : patient reported experience remains the same (or improves)

## Results

Our results show that since the implementation of the same day direct referral system in July 2018 the RTT has improved compared to the 2017. The mean RTT at the current time for internal orthodontic patients to surgery is **62** (range 9-104 days) compared to **329** for 2017. Since it has been implemented 9 patients have received their surgical treatment. All patients had completed direct referral bundles.



Patient experience has improved overall as demonstrated by Figure 1.1 (above) which shows the patient satisfaction of 9 patients after initiation of the direct referral system compared to 10 patients asked to complete the patient experience questionnaire seen in the traditional system. Patient perceived time waited for clinic appointment and for surgery was improved after the direct referral initiation compared to before. No patient notes or radiographs were lost.

Pleasingly, the quality of the information received before surgery in both groups of patients was comparable indicating that even when patients were overbooked on to a clinic when directly referred they felt they received the same quality of consultation.

Figure 1.2 : direct referral form

## Summary

- Direct same day referral system improves the RTT of orthodontic patients referred for surgery with Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery in the small number of patients we have been able to include
- Reduced overall orthodontic time and may reduce teasing/ bullying and improve self confidence
- Patient experience has improved after implementation of direct referral system with comments on less school/ college missed particularly in GCSE years
- Good uptake and feedback from other key team members and those seeing patients on their clinics
- Reduced pressure and workload on orthodontic secretaries reported

## Further work

- Plans to continue direct referral system indefinitely
- Consideration to the creation of more paediatric theatre space to reduce wait from clinic to theatre