

Post Operative instruction following a dental extraction

Fountain Dental Practice

Introduction

The Sustainability matrix is a Self-Evaluation Tool to allow the team to focus on improving sustainability in the practice. Using the matrix enables everyone in the practice to think about sustainability in the 7 areas or dimensions. These are laid out on a grid and will cover the following topics:

- Waste management
- Energy
- Travel
- Procurement
- Biodiversity
- Prevention & promotion
- Education & training

The dimensions are designed to raise awareness about sustainability in dental practice and the contribution the profession can make to achieving net zero.

During the Sustainability Engagement Matrix session, the dental team appointed a Sustainability Champion, Cerys and identified that there are a significant number of extractions in the practice every week. At every appointment when a tooth is extracted, the patient is given a "Post operative instruction" paper sheet which is a waste of paper and printer ink.

Paper production and disposal can also negatively impact the environment through deforestation, water and energy consumption, and pollution. The carbon footprint of an office paper from cradle-to-costumer is approx. 5g of CO₂.

Problem statement

- Every patient in the practice who has a tooth extracted is given a "Post operative instruction" paper sheet which is a waste of paper and printer ink.

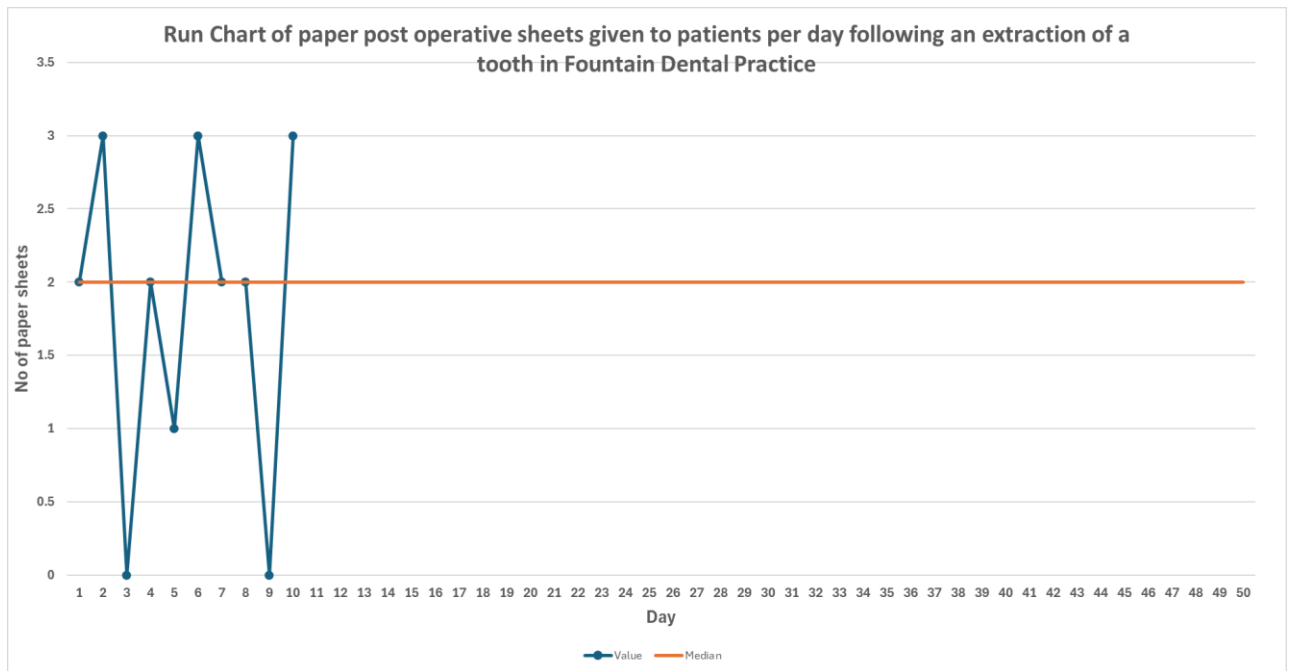
Aims statement

- To reduce the number of "Post operative instruction" paper sheets given out in Fountain Dental practice to patients who have had a tooth extracted per day from 2 sheets to 0 sheets by 31st May 2025.

Outcome measure

- The number of "Post operative instruction" paper sheets given out in Fountain Dental practice to patients who have had a tooth extracted per day.

Baseline data



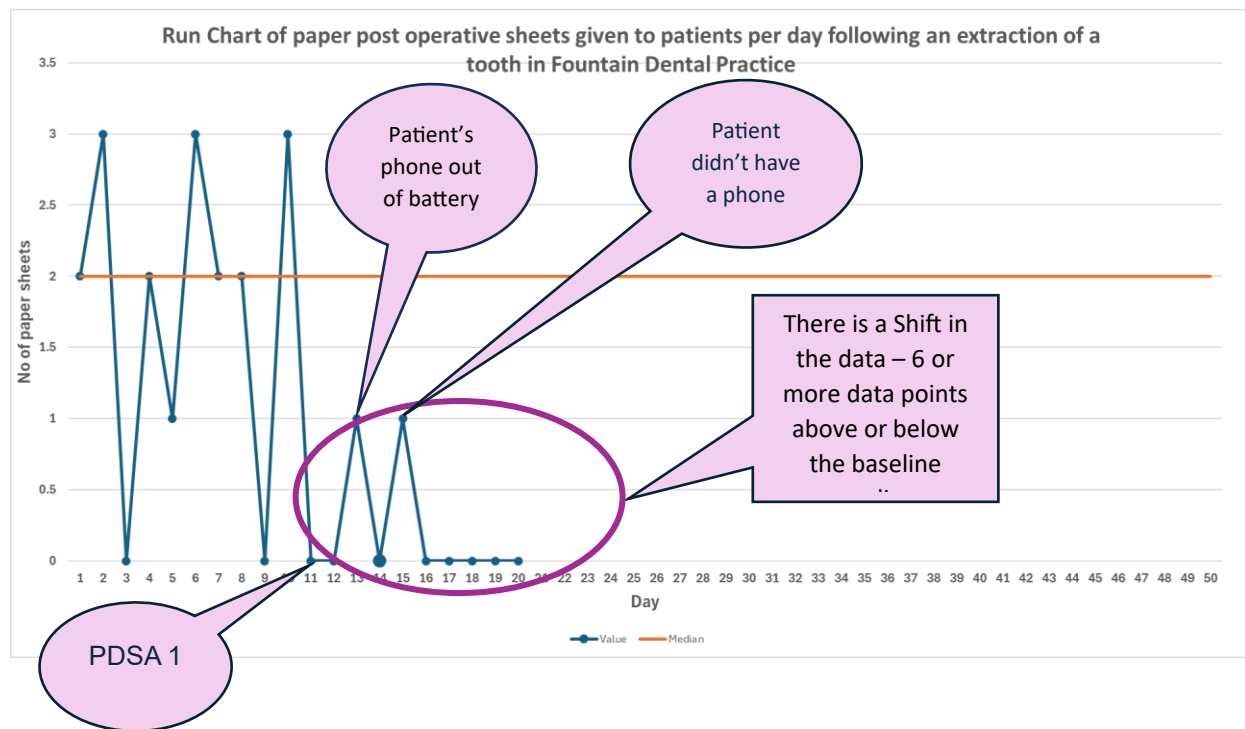
The data shows random variation, and the median is 2.

PDSA cycle 1

- To introduce a QR code in Fountain Dental Practice to allow patients who have had a tooth extracted to download “Post operative instruction” sheet to the patient’s mobile phone.



Run chart following PDSA 1



- The two astronomical points on the run chart after PDSA 1 were due to patient's not having access to a phone.
- PDSA 2 will be to email or text the post op extraction sheet to the patient.
- There are ongoing Wi-Fi issues in the practice which can impact on patient's ability to utilise the QR code.

Conclusion

The aim of the project to reduce the number of "Post operative instruction" paper sheets given out in Fountain Dental practice to patients who have had a tooth extracted per day from 2 sheets to 0 sheets by 31st May 2025 was achieved.

Reflection by the Sustainability Champion, Cerys

At Fountain Dental, our project was to introduce a QR code for post extraction instructions, replacing paper form.

I started by having a team meeting explaining what I intended to do and to ask my colleagues to help me execute the plan. Initially we gathered data on how many times we gave out a paper version of the post-operative instruction to use as our base data. Next it was time to introduce the QR codes. I printed out the QR designed by our head office and placed them on every surgery wall, so it was easy for the patient to access. With this I also designed a chart to help tally the number of patients who received the QR code or papered form, also asking for a small reason as to why we needed to give the papered form. This was measured over a two-week period. Thankfully the paper form only got issued twice in this

period, one being the patient didn't have battery on their phone and another didn't bring theirs.

I did have small barriers I had to overcome, the main barrier was to get every one of my team on board, they were reluctant at start, however after a lot of persuading and persistent nagging they started to comply. Patients seemed very happy with the new method using the codes, I made constant effort to ask patients for feedback, everyone responded in a positive way. They said they found it easier to retrieve the information especially after screen shot, they could always refer to them. They had issues with paper form either getting lost, thrown, or damaged.

Along with the QR code, I've also implemented small changes in the practice to help comply with sustainability. The first change was placing two small bins in each surgery for non-clinical/ non contaminated waste of plastic and paper, such as sterilisation pouches before they get contaminated. This is then emptied into recycling bins at the end of the day. This has dramatically freed up a lot of space in our orange clinical bags. We've also had a huge reduction in ordering plastic cups, instead of having the patients rinse their mouths after having treatment, we use a 3-in-1 tip and suction. The patients are pleased with this many expressing being too embarrassed to rinse. My team have also expressed positive feelings about this change, as it's freed a lot of clean up time, and risk of having patient's fluid over them.

In conclusion, the QR instructions has been hugely successful, we've managed to reach the target of zero papered forms printed in the whole of June month, we will be carrying on implementing this change from now on. Our sister practices Bryant's and Cefn Coed have also been using this method proving positive there also.