

Munchkin Right In

Access to paediatric magnetic resonance imaging

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Case for change

1 in 4 children referred for an urgent (7 days or less) or semi-urgent (30 days or less) MRI do not have their MRI within the clinically-appropriate timeframe.

The radiology service at The Children's Hospital at Westmead (CHW) is the **only** stand-alone level 6 specialised paediatric medical imaging service in NSW. Over the past decade, the demand for MRI scans at CHW has significantly increased.

The patient journey has been **negatively affected**, reflected in **extensive delays of up to 12 months** to access MRI scans and numerous medical staff and patient **complaints**.

Families, carers, referring clinicians and medical imaging staff have also expressed growing dissatisfaction with elements of the MRI service, including **booking availability** and **communication** with the medical imaging department.

Concerns have been raised by clinicians with regards to **delayed patient care** and potential adverse health outcomes.

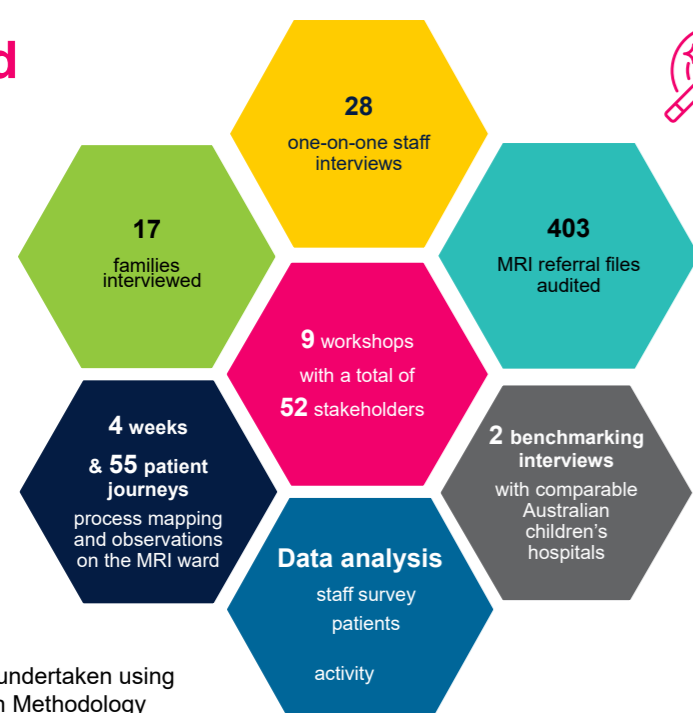
Goal

To improve access to MRI for patients referred with a clinical priority of urgent (< 7 days) or semi-urgent (< 30 days) at CHW, through a transparent and patient-focussed process, to ensure timely clinical decision making, by December 2021.

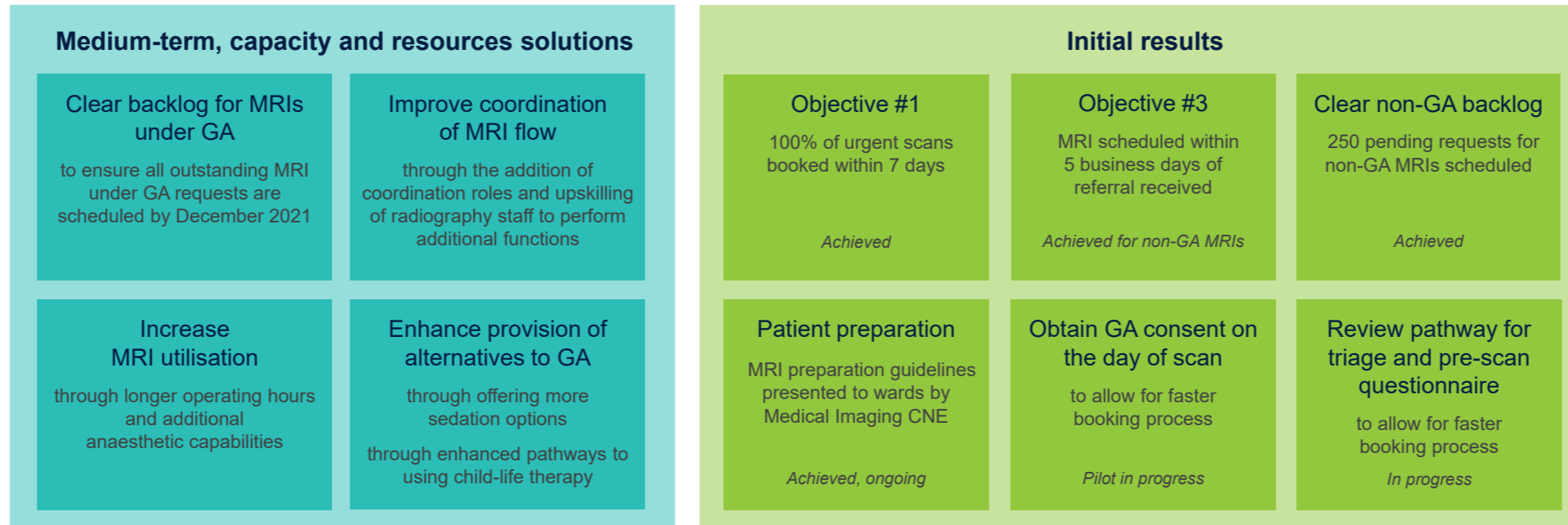
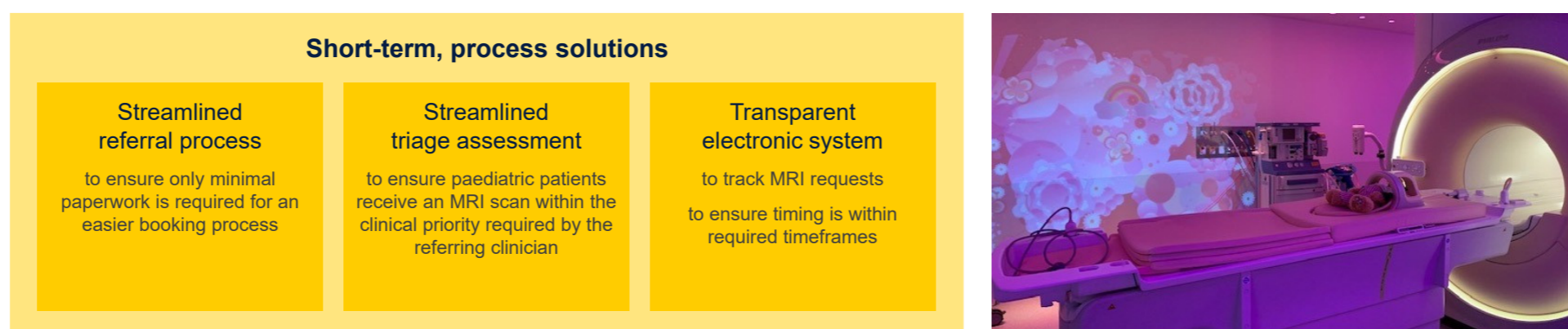
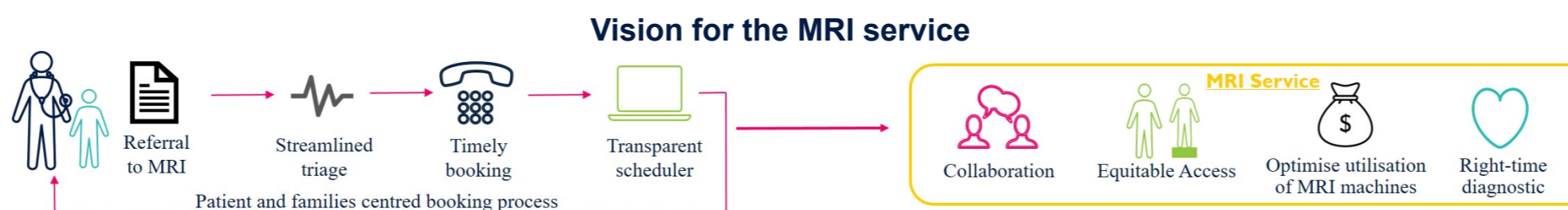
Objectives

- 100% of patients referred to an MRI with a clinical priority of 'urgent' to have an MRI within 7 days, compared to 93%, by December 2021.
- 80% of patients referred to an MRI with a clinical priority of 'semi-urgent' to have an MRI within 30 days, compared to 50%, by December 2021.
- 80% of patients referred to an MRI with a clinical priority of 'urgent' or 'semi-urgent' to be scheduled an MRI scan date within a week (5 business days) of a referral received, compared to 34%, by December 2021.

Method



Implementation



Conclusion

The redesign of the MRI service at CHW is one of the priorities of SCHN. This project has been the first building block in working towards the overall MRI Service vision: an MRI state-wide that will facilitate access to care, ensure paediatric patients are booked within their clinical priority and allow for improved communication between the Medical Imaging department, referrers and families.

The MRI project showcases the importance of broad stakeholder engagement to ensure the experiences and needs of patients are considered. Throughout the development phases of the project, the project team interviewed 17 families, 28 staff and ran 9 workshops with 52 key stakeholders. The views expressed by the stakeholders were consistently around the desire for this project to deliver significant change to the MRI process and ultimately the care delivered to the patients.

The project is in implementation phase with key outcomes from the clinical redesign expected to be seamless referral, triage and booking processes. The approach taken to diagnose root cause issues and resulting solutions could be replicated to other MRI services.

Sustaining change

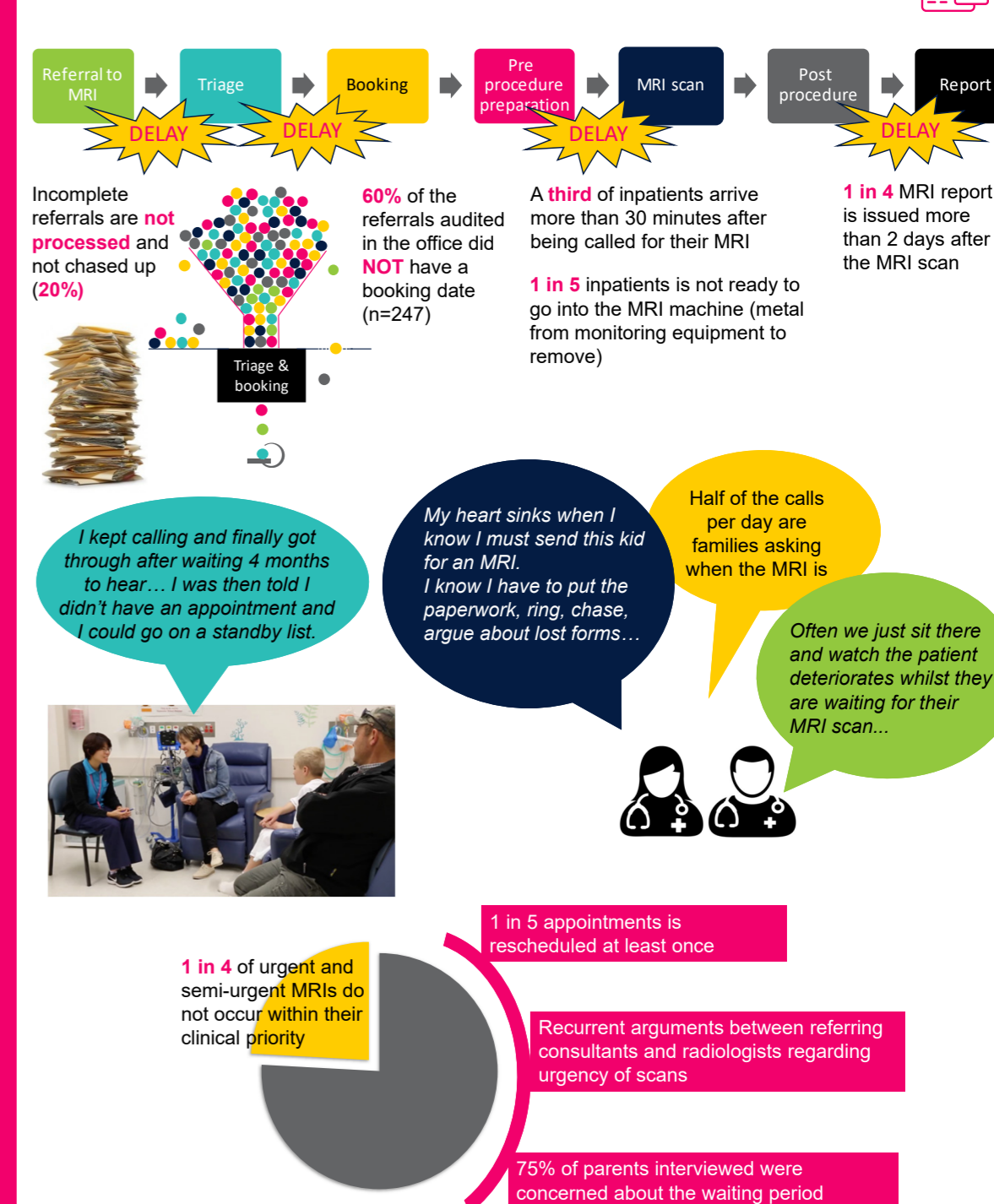
The project has strong medical engagement and is overseen by a Steering Committee comprising the CHW Heads of Department for Medical Imaging and Anaesthesia. The solutions were co-designed with key stakeholders from the Medical Imaging Department and across CHW to ensure improvements were tailored to the service and addressed the root causes of the issues identified during the Diagnostic phase.

Working groups representing all relevant specialties have been established to implement and communicate these solutions to front-line staff and referrers across CHW – supporting the sustainable implementation of the solutions.

- Other key factors to sustain change are:
- the development of approved triage criteria
 - the review of the MRI referral form to ensure consistent triage and expedite booking process
 - the implementation of a transparent electronic system to support the referral, triage and scheduling functions
 - SCHN executive commitment to implementing the solutions and improving access to paediatric MRI



Diagnostic summary



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- Christie Graham, Strategic Change Manager, SESLHD

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