

# Reducing Missed Mental Health Appointments: A Telehealth Clinic

## Quality Improvement Project.

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### BACKGROUND

- Missed healthcare appointments cost the US healthcare \$150 billion each year. (Gier, 2017)
- The most common reasons for failure to attend appointments: Age
  - Lack of insurance
  - Holidays
  - Waiting times
  - Forgetting is the most prevalent reason.
- Reminder methods:
  - Letters
  - Appointment cards
  - Text messages or e-mails
  - Person-to-person reminders (Zhang & associates, 2020)

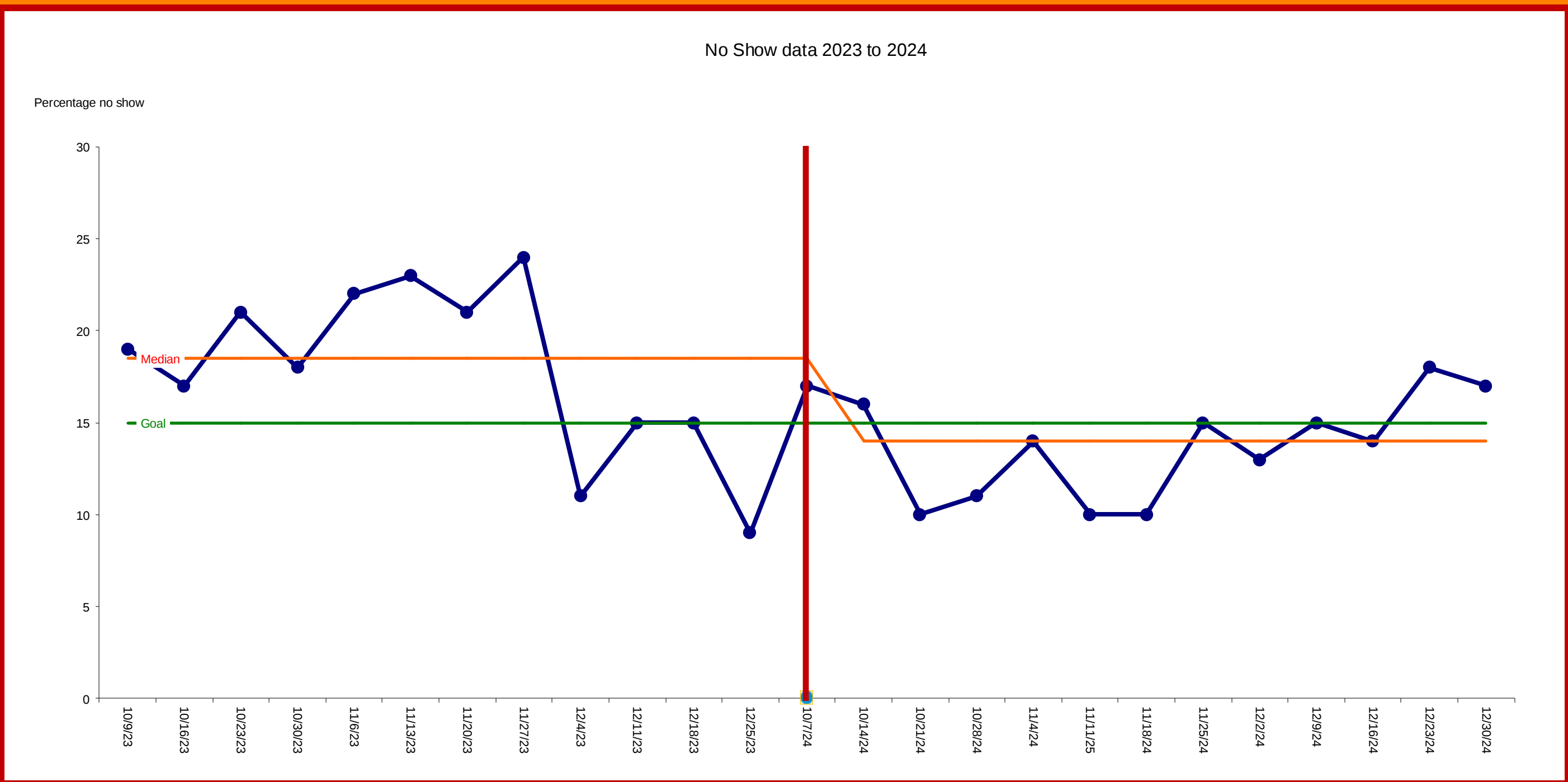
### LOCAL PROBLEM

- The site for this quality improvement project is a mental health outpatient clinic providing telehealth services throughout a northeastern state.
- All services are provided using a custom-built platform with an in-session charting system.
- This project aims to implement a person-to-person reminder to decrease the number of patients who fail to attend their scheduled mental health appointments.

### METHODS

- The Model for Improvement (MFI) guides the project.
- A person-to-person reminder call is provided to the patient one business day before the appointment.
- A spreadsheet was maintained to identify the number of contacts, unsuccessful contacts, and rescheduled or canceled appointments.
- A comparison of pre-intervention and post-intervention show rates was presented after three months of implementation.
- A chi-square test is used to identify the difference between the observable and expected data chance or relationship between pre- and post-intervention.

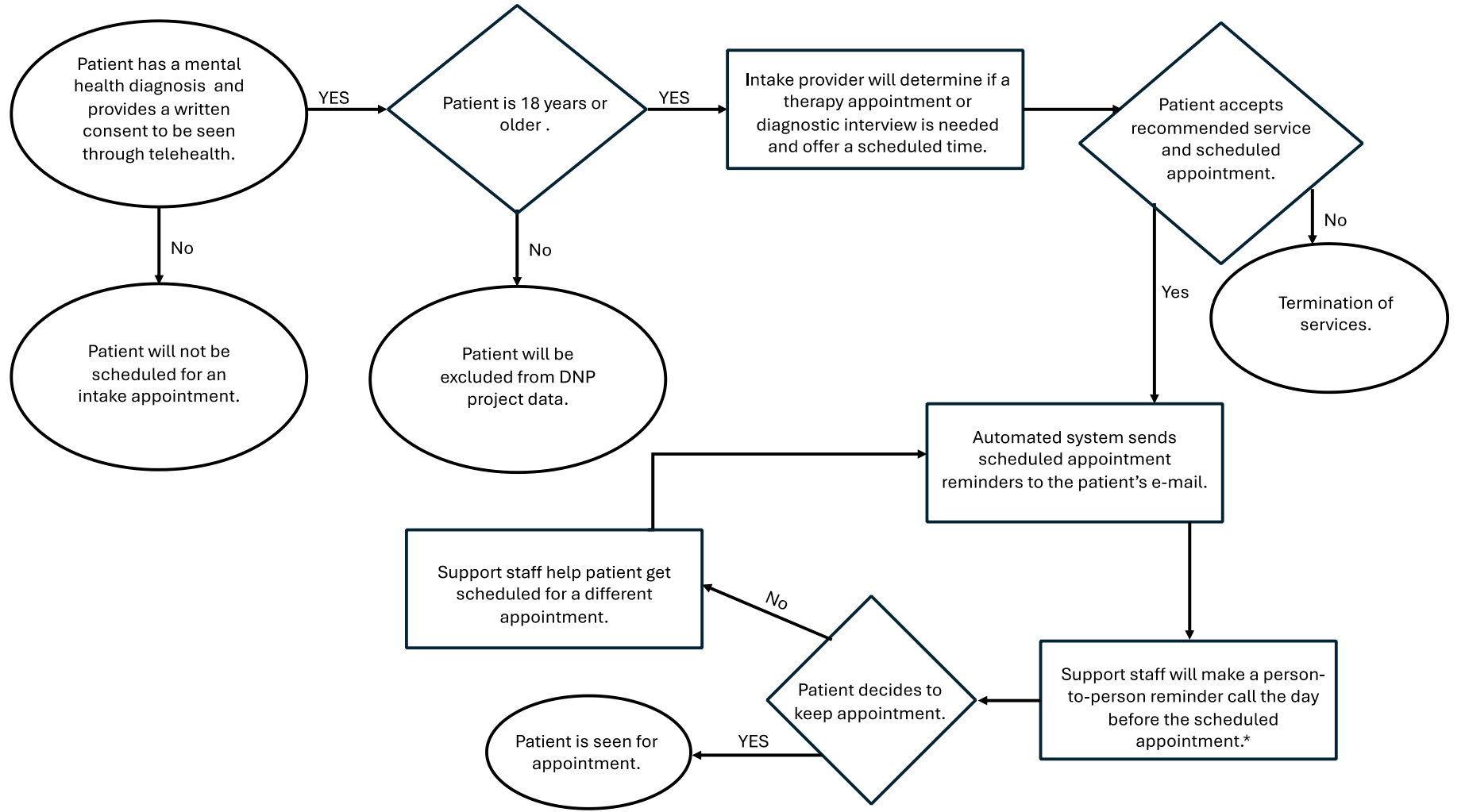
A person-to-person reminder **successfully decreased the number of no-show appointments**, increased the possibility for provider productivity, and increased the potential for financial revenue.



Scan for Executive Summary and reference list.

### INTERVENTIONS

- Implementing a person-to-person reminder call one business day before the scheduled appointment.
- Patients who could not attend their scheduled appointments were assisted with rescheduling.



### RESULTS

- The number of no-show appointments decreased from 16.5% to 15.9% across the organization after the implementation of the person-to-person reminder.
- A Chi-square test was completed using SPSS, and the difference between pre- and post-intervention was statistically significant.
- This quality improvement project yielded an 86% attendance rate from 81% the previous year.

### CONCLUSIONS

- Implementing a person-to-person reminder successfully decreased the number of no-show appointments, increased the possibility for provider productivity, and increased the potential for financial revenue.