



IDENTIFYING GAPS IN THE PODIATRY SERVICE AND TAKING STEPS TO ENSURE A QUALITY SERVICE

Enhanced Community Care



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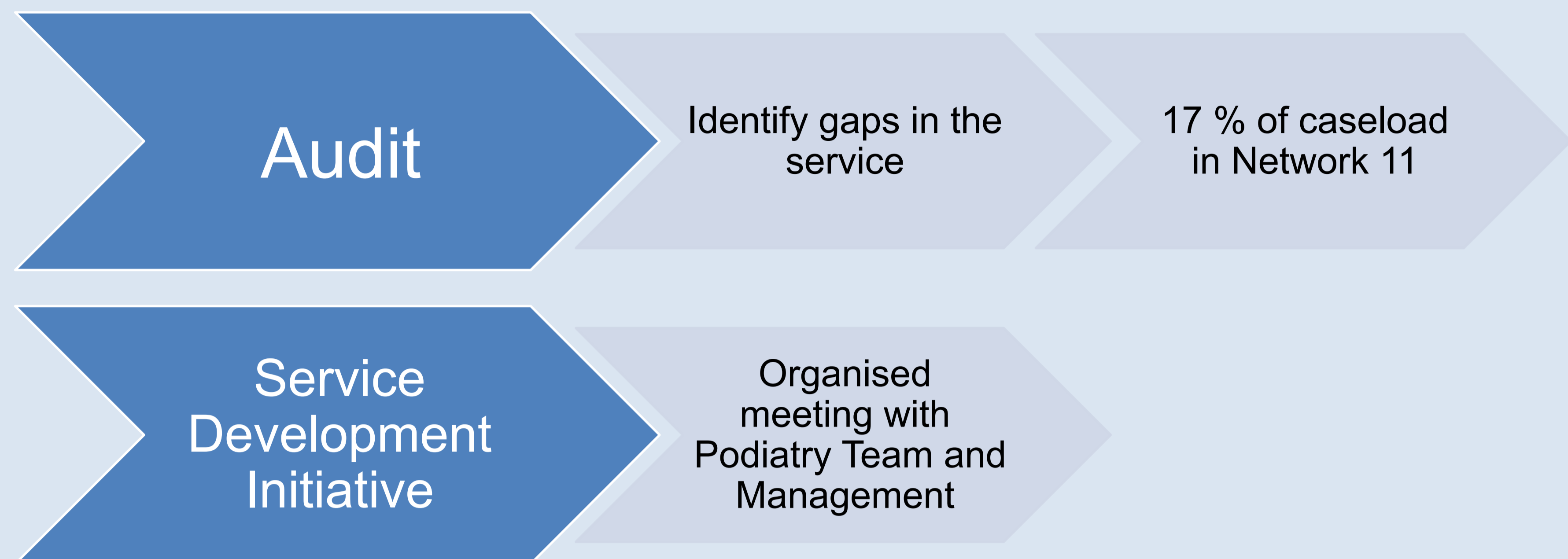
Introduction:

As a Podiatrist in Chronic Disease Management Hub, it is our duty to provide the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

Routinely seeing vulnerable clients as close to home as possible, issues can be identified and resolved in the community, reducing subsequent ED admissions. An audit was undertaken to determine the percentage of the client cohort utilising the service from varying Community Healthcare Networks. After evaluating the information gathered, an area identified as a risk for this issue was Athy, Co. Kildare.

There is a significant population of clients at a high risk of diabetic foot ulceration in this area. Transport routes from Athy to the only operational clinic at the time (Kildare Town) is very limited (3 buses per day within clinical hours).

This project was then introduced to set up and open a clinic in Athy to reduce the barriers of access to healthcare that had been outlined.



Action:

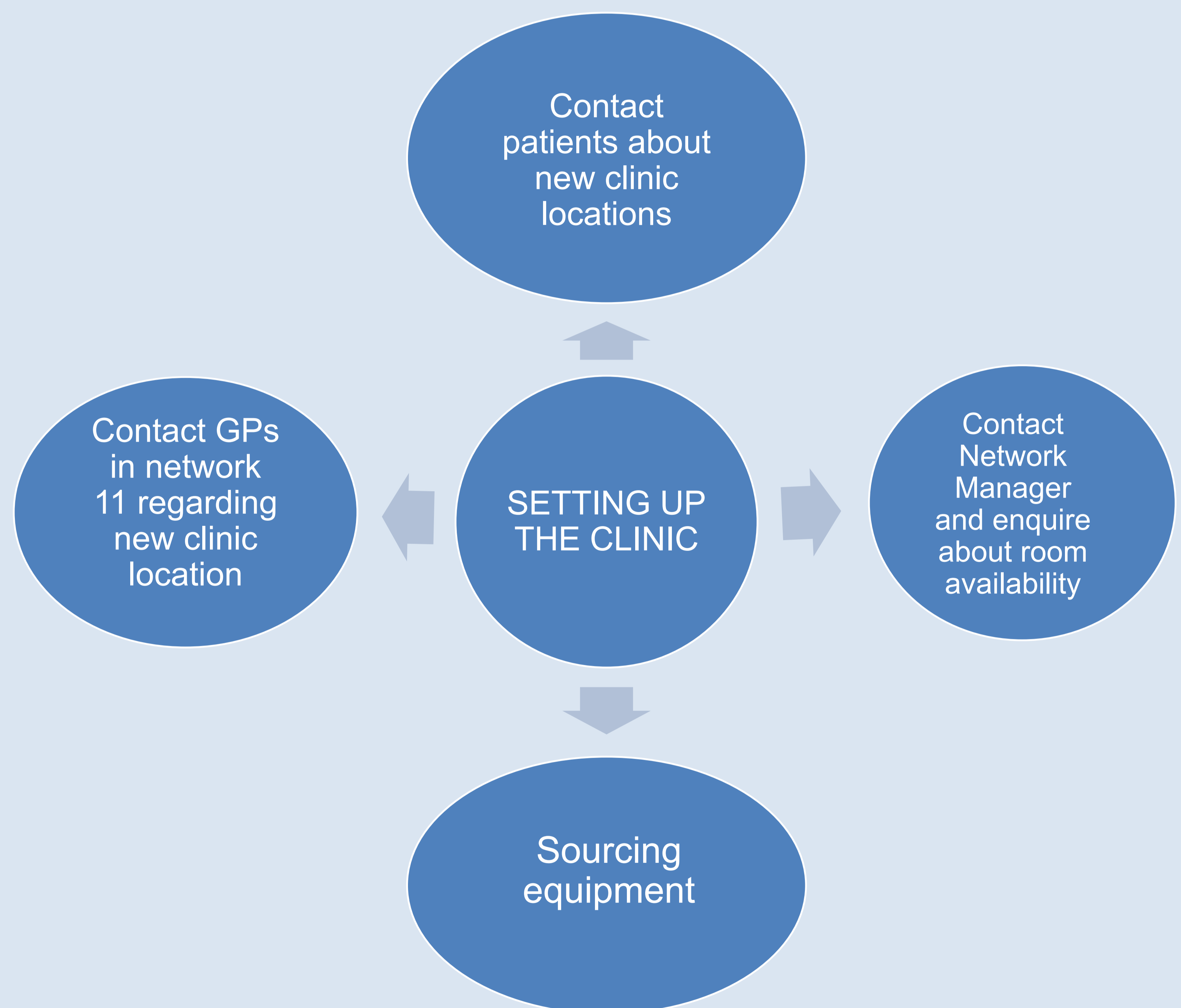
The results of the audit prompted a service development initiative. The network manager for Network 11 was contacted regarding obtaining a clinical space for podiatry. A room was obtained for two days per week to host a Podiatry Clinic.

The equipment needed was assessed and purchased within budgetary constraints.

All General Practitioners and Practice Nurses in Network 11 were contacted regarding the expansion of the service. Also, the client group in that area were contacted via phone call and/or letter informing them of the new clinic in Athy.

Aims of the Service:

- To provide a gold standard, evidence based, patient focused podiatry service.
- To reduce the rate of Diabetic Foot Ulceration through education and regular foot screening.
- To reduce hospital admissions and subsequent amputation.
- To reduce constraints on an already overburdened part time hospital based Podiatry Service (SJH/TUH).



Results:

An audit can give us a very useful insight into areas of the service than can be improved upon. We are constantly working to enhance healthcare for the benefit of service users. Using statistics and data collected, we can see where services are needed and who the target client group is.

Not only has this improved the service for users but it also helps ensure that they have the opportunity to attend their appointments at required intervals. We endeavour by facilitating this that ED admissions will be reduced.

This project has shown the success of expanding the service and we hope to develop further in our pursuit of optimal patient care. A future audit will be carried out in 12 months time.

Testimonials from Service Users:

"Very happy to have this service local to me."

"I used to spend so much money on a Taxi to get to Kildare Town, this has saved me a lot of money."

"I can walk to my appointment now! I don't need to get the train anymore, its great."

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