



Improving Communication Between Fetal Center Consultants and Referring Physicians

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Background

- Both specialists and referring physicians have expressed frustration with the poor communication around referrals/consults. 82% of specialists say they "always / most of the time" send summary of consults to referring physicians but referring physicians say they only receive this information 62% of the time.
- The Fetal Center at Children's Medical Center did not have a streamlined process in place to ensure that consultants completed consult notes in a timely manner or that referring physicians received these notes.

Aim Statement

By July 2017, we will improve the communication process between the Fetal Center physician and the referring provider such that 90% of the consulting physicians will complete consult notes within 48 hours of consultation and 90% of referring providers will receive a summary of the fetal center consult within 48 hours of the family's appointment.

Methods

Planning the Intervention

- Met with Fetal Center director, additional neonatologist, fetal center nurse, and center support staff in September 2015. Group identified need to have consult notes completed in timely manner and to ensure that notes were received by referring providers.

Intervention

- Sequential Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles implemented

Outcome Measures

- Time between appointment and completion of physician note in EPIC
- % of consulting providers completed note within 48 hours
- % of referring providers who receive summary of visit within 48 hour

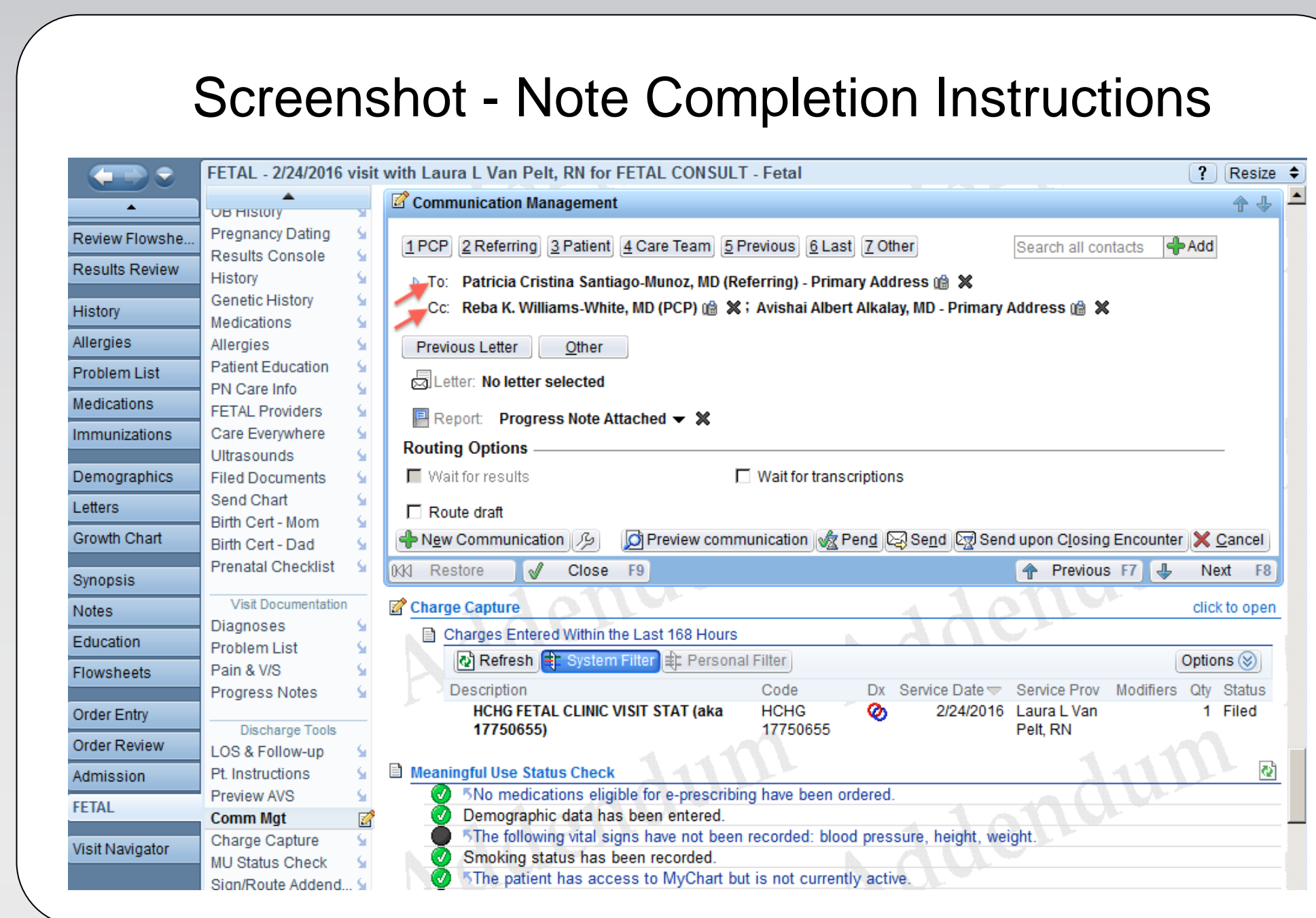
Process Measures

- % of consulting physicians who complete consult notes
- % of encounters where a referring provider is sent a consult note

Intervention #1

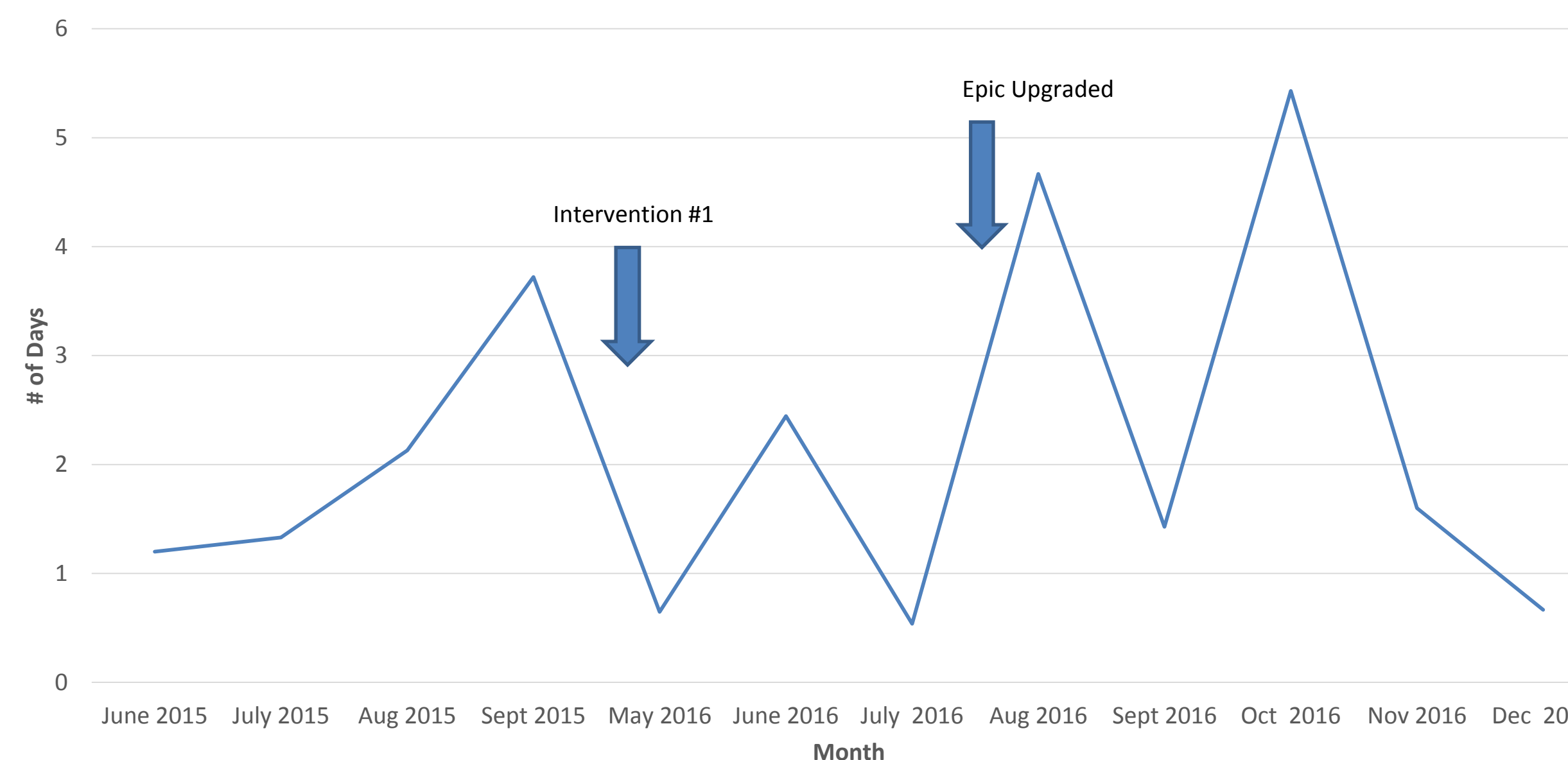
May 2016

- Consult note template created, instructions on how to complete note, and expectation of 48 hour note turnaround time disseminated to faculty

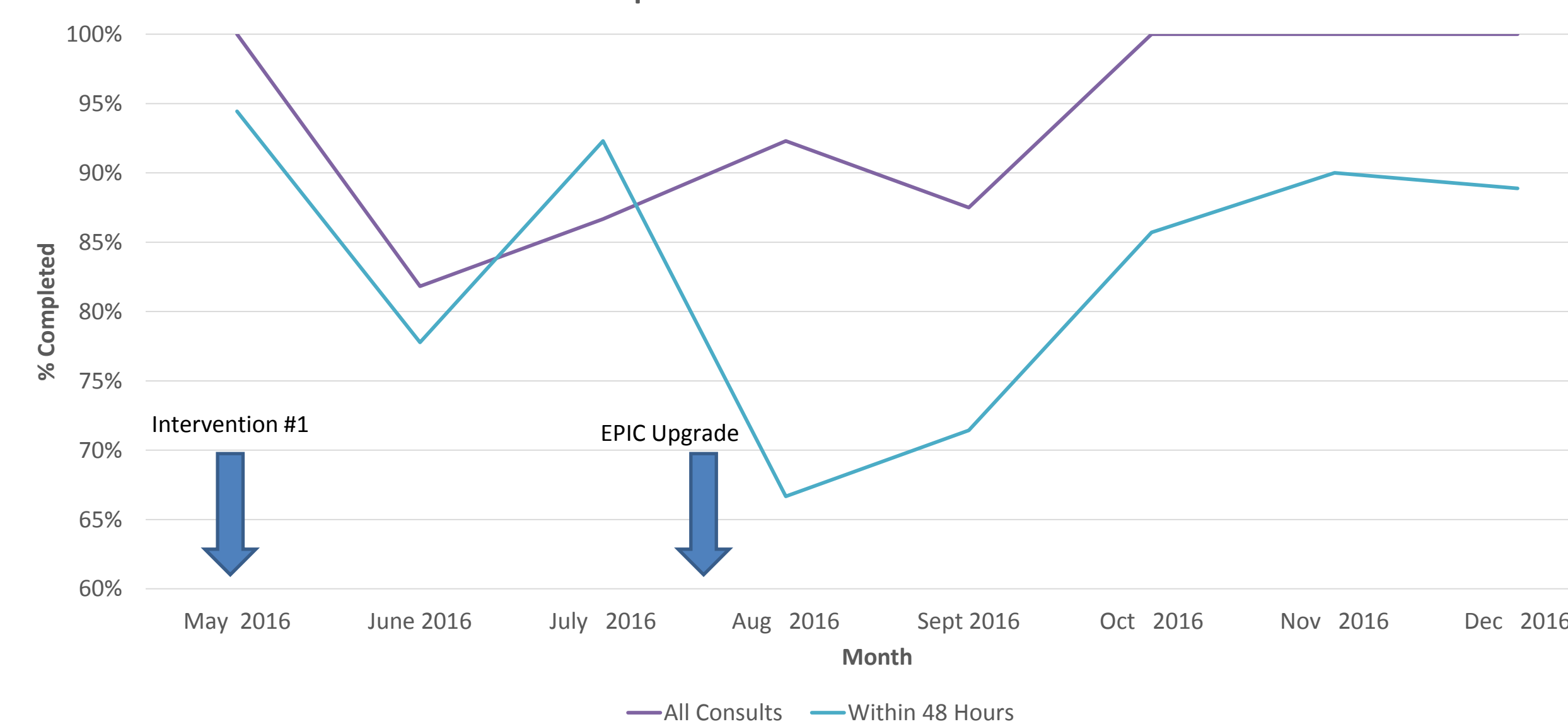


Results

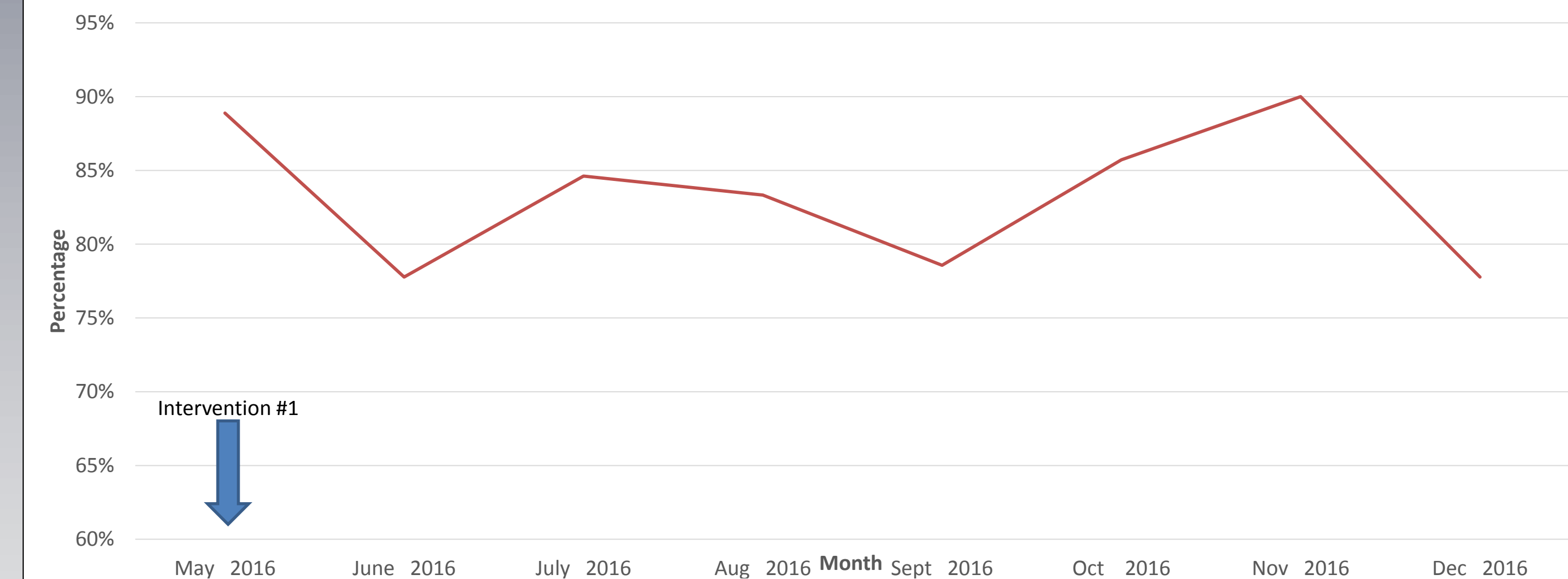
Average Days to Note Completion (Excluding Incomplete)



Percentage of Consults with Completed Notes and Percentage Completed within 48 Hours



% Completed Notes Faxed and Received



Intervention #2

March 2017

- Updated templates for efficiency/ease of use.
- New tip sheet created for completing FETAL consult documentation with instructions and screenshots
- E-mail 24 hours before and 24 hours after consult
- E-mail if consult not completed within 7 days

Conclusion

- Initial post intervention results show increased turnaround time for note completion - likely due to Epic upgrade. Since October, 100% of notes have been completed with 88% completed within 48 hours. On average, 83% of notes are received by referring doctors.
- Consultants are now aware of 48 hour turnaround time and also have access to instructions on how to complete notes as well as note templates. E-mail reminders are also now being sent.

Next Steps

- Evaluate effectiveness of intervention #2 in July 2017
- Begin collecting data on when consult note is received by referring physician
- Create and disseminate survey to referring physicians evaluating satisfaction with consult notes