A e-Hospital project to enhance the efficiency in retrieving the lung function report in the hospital chart

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Introduction
As initiative for improvement of medical record management, episode-based record filing was introduced since early 2014 with all the clinical notes and investigation reports being filed within the episode Lung function test is an important laboratory investigation in TBCU patients and one often needs to refer to the previous lung function results. With new filing practice, front-line medical and nursing staff found difficulty in retrieving lung function tests reports performed at previous admissions. Currently, lung function tests cannot be accessed in the CMS system. Much time was spent with frustrations in trying to find the lung function results in the hospital chart during ward rounds and case reviews

Objectives
To find ways to facilitate the retrieval of lung function reports in the hospital chart.

Methodology
changing the paper colour of the report was thought to be most effective. The change process: Step one: to verify the initial impression: A study was done to compare the time it takes to retrieve the lung function report in the hospital chart when the report was printed in white paper vs yellow paper. Sixty staff from 4 wards were recruited to participate in the study. They were randomly asked to retrieve the lung function report on white paper and yellow paper being filed in the hospital chart separately on two occasions and the time recorded. 54 out of 60 staff spent less time to retrieve the report when it was in yellow paper. On average, it took about 1/3 the time for one to retrieve the report when it was in yellow paper. The mean actual time saved was 17.4 sec ( range: 1 to 134 sec )

Result
1) Efficiency: Time to retrieve the lung function report was shortened as demonstrated
in the verification process. 2) Response of staff: 40 staff were questioned on their view on the change in colour of the lung function report. All (100%) welcomed this new change and they all thought this would make it easier for them to retrieve the lung function reports