

Improving the Process for Expediting Reporting in a Radiology Service

Elliot Elwood, Daniel Edwin, Hayley Connoley, Stephen Hughes, Susan De Four, Suzanne Wakely

Introduction

Radiology receives multiple requests per day to expedite reporting. Currently there is no formal process but a reliance on 'CC to all' emails to alert radiologists of these requests. This results in notification and subsequently reporting delays as well as inappropriate notifications to both radiologists without necessary subspecialty expertise and those on leave.

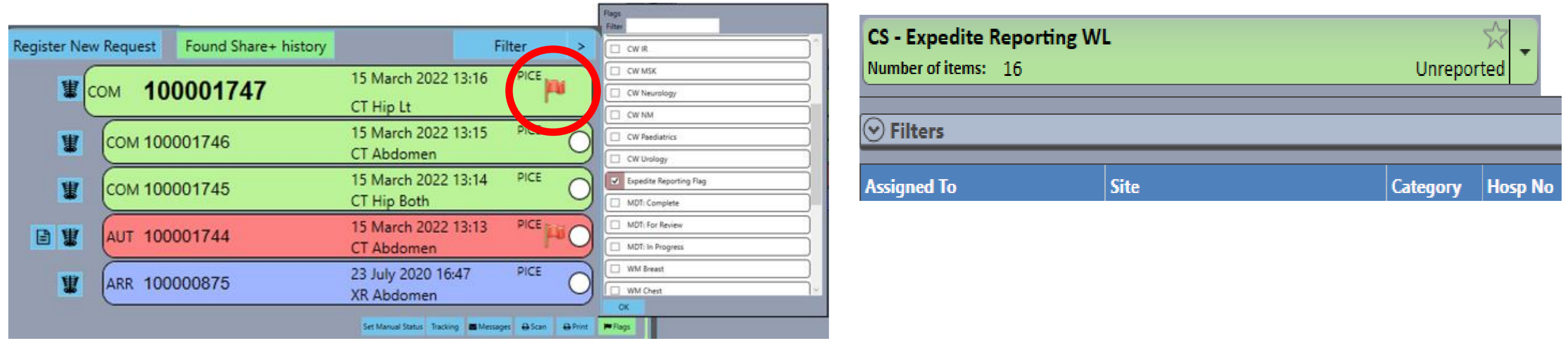
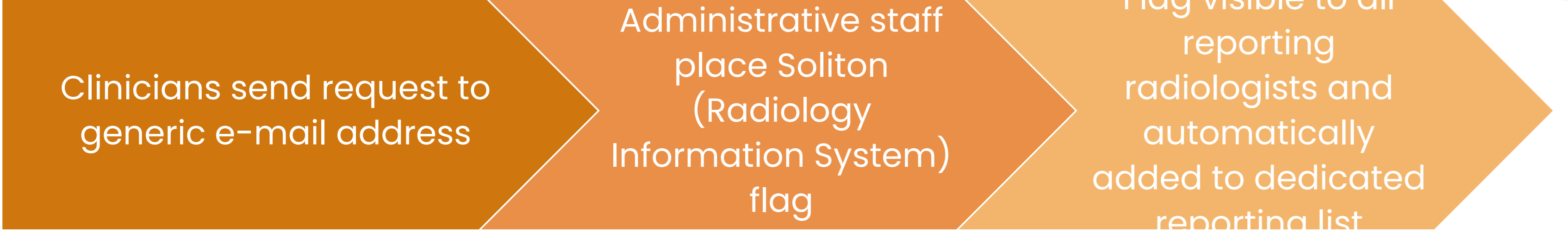
Aims

This project aims to formalize the process by which clinicians expedite reports, thereby reducing turnaround time and subsequent administrative burden for both radiologists and requesting clinicians.

Method

Utilising the Plan Do Study Act method of quality improvement, baseline data was acquired and the current process mapped to understand the problem. With the assistance of the PACS teams, a new process was then formulated.

New Process



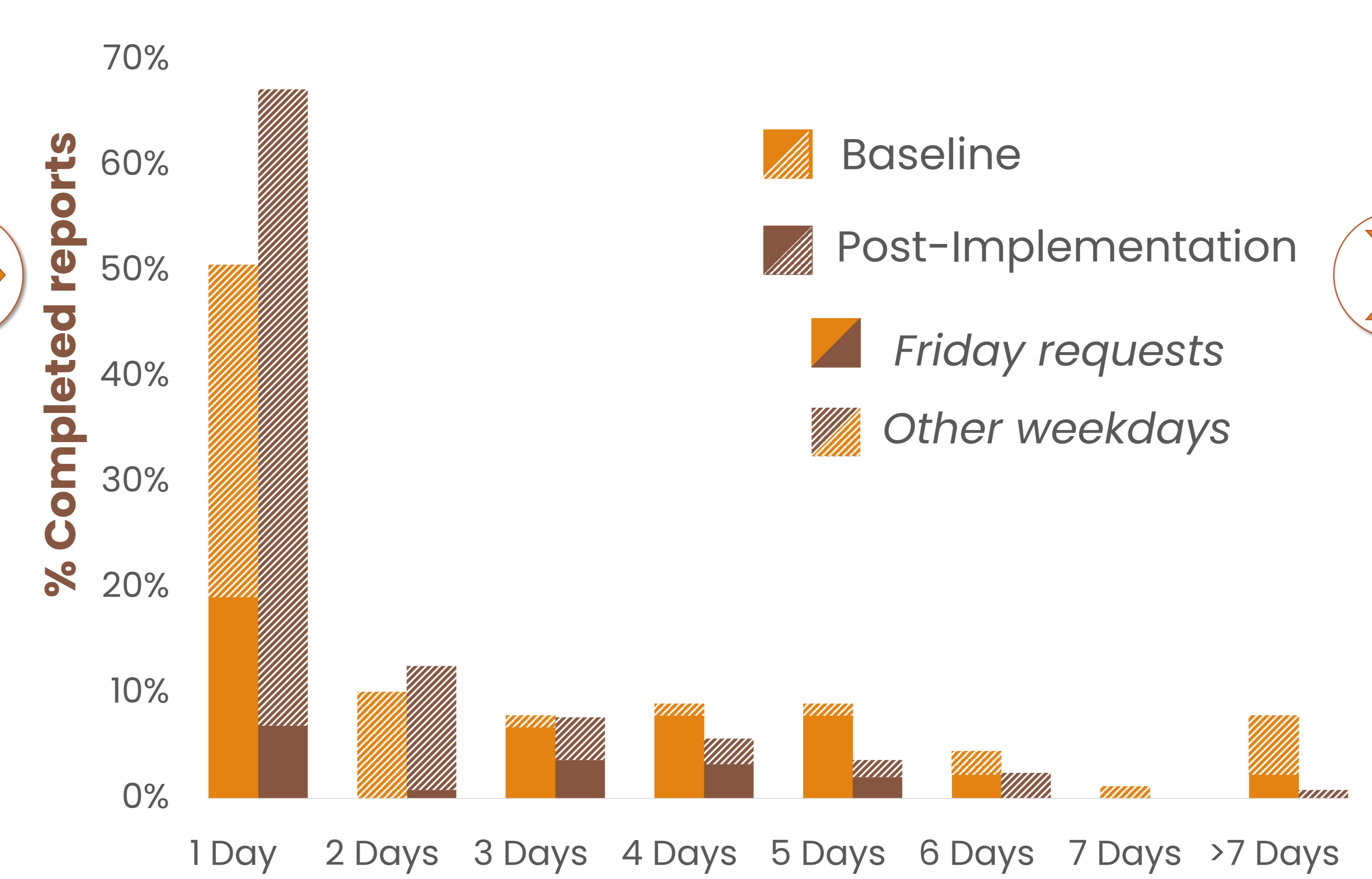
Following testing, the process was implemented in May 2022 with training support for admin staff, radiologists and Cancer Services (most frequent requestors). The new process is also supported by instructions and an SOP with escalations. Post implementation, further data was acquired, including volume of expedited requests and turn around time.

Results

	No. of requests	Reported <7 days	Mean turn around time
Baseline	79	89.8%	3.0 days
Post-implementation	247	99.2%	1.7 days

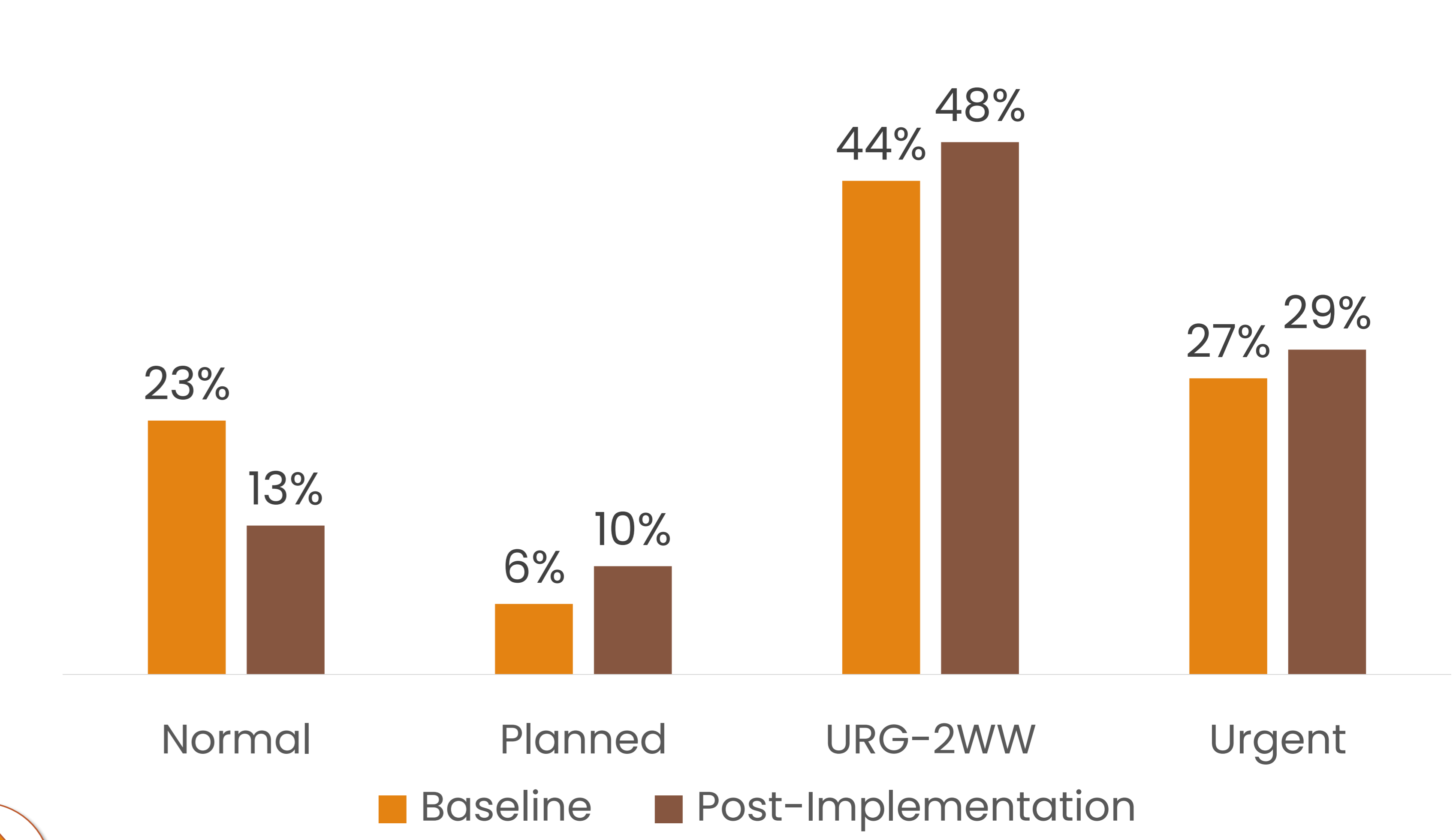
The large increase in requests post-implementation likely represents, at least in part, baseline under-sampling due to the difficulties in identifying expedite requests where no formal process previously existed.

Turn around time for expedite report requests- Baseline and Post-implementation



Relative increase in proportion of reports completed on most days post-implementation. Requests made on a Friday remain a challenge as weekend work prioritises urgent reporting however, improvements are demonstrated.

Pre-existing urgency of expedite requests



I love the flag, it is so simple to use: Office Manager

It helps me to prioritise the workload in an efficient manner: Radiologist

I feel it is easier to pick up these cases and report them: Radiologist

The cc to all emails with the requests have been eliminated: Radiologist

Conclusion

The expedite flag implementation has been successful in reducing turn around time. The process is simple for clinicians to access and reduces disruption for reporting radiologists. The process is now business as usual.