

Winter is Coming: Extending Pharmacy Service Weekday Hours in a NSW Metropolitan Hospital

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Background

Pharmacy weekday services operate from 8:30am-5pm. Afterhours pharmacy enquiries filters through the After-Hours Nurse Manager (AHNM) and medications are accessed via the Emergency Drug Cupboard (EDC) or pharmacy. Once approved by the on-call pharmacist, security must accompany AHNM to access pharmacy. This process requires co-ordination and requests are often batched due to competing demands; batching affects timely medication access. During winter, there is anticipation of increased pharmacy service demand. A review in the pharmacy service hours is required.

Objectives

- To assist in anticipated increased service demand over winter and in AHNM workload
- To enable afterhours pharmacy service change from a batching to a one-piece flow process

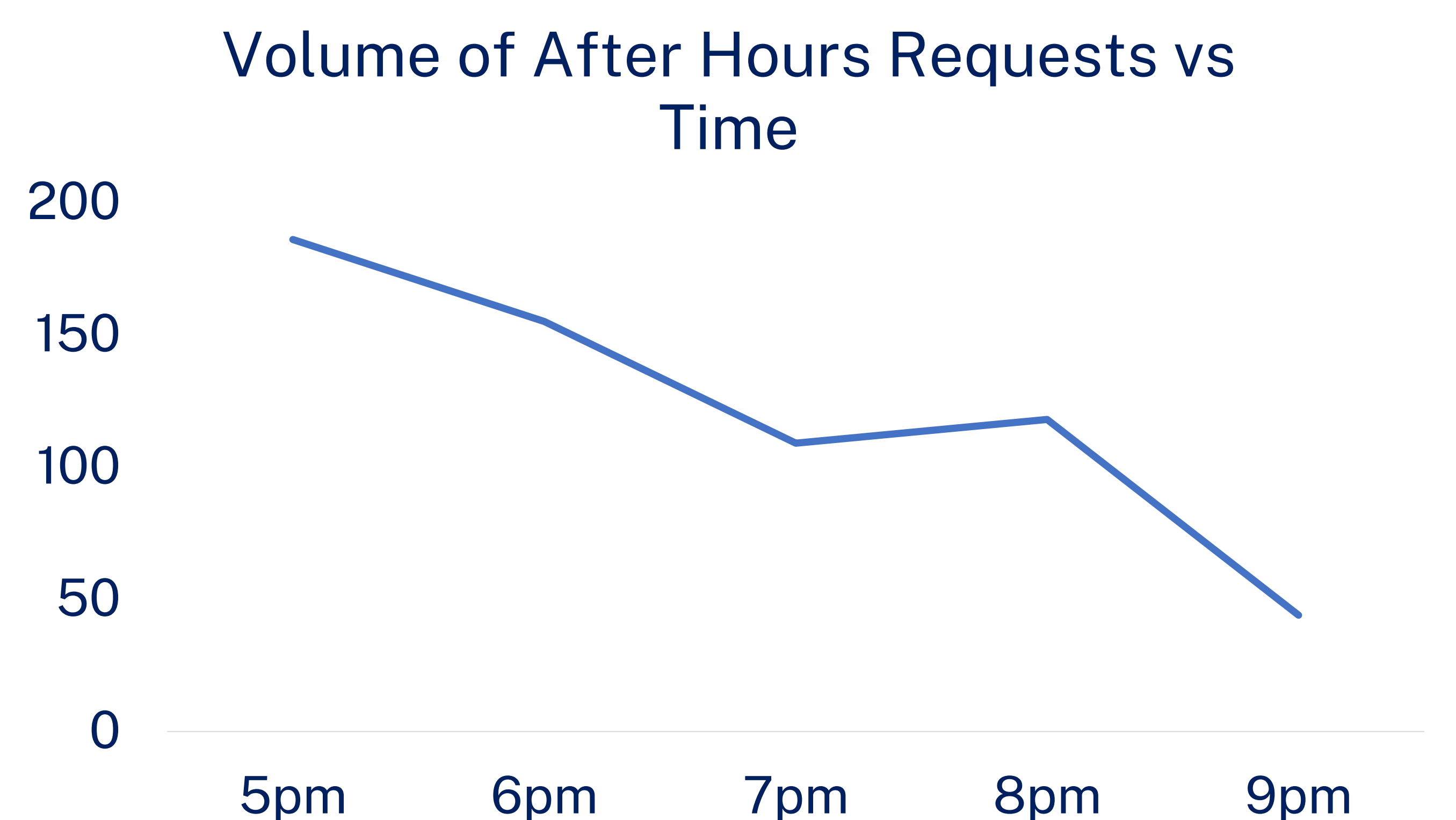
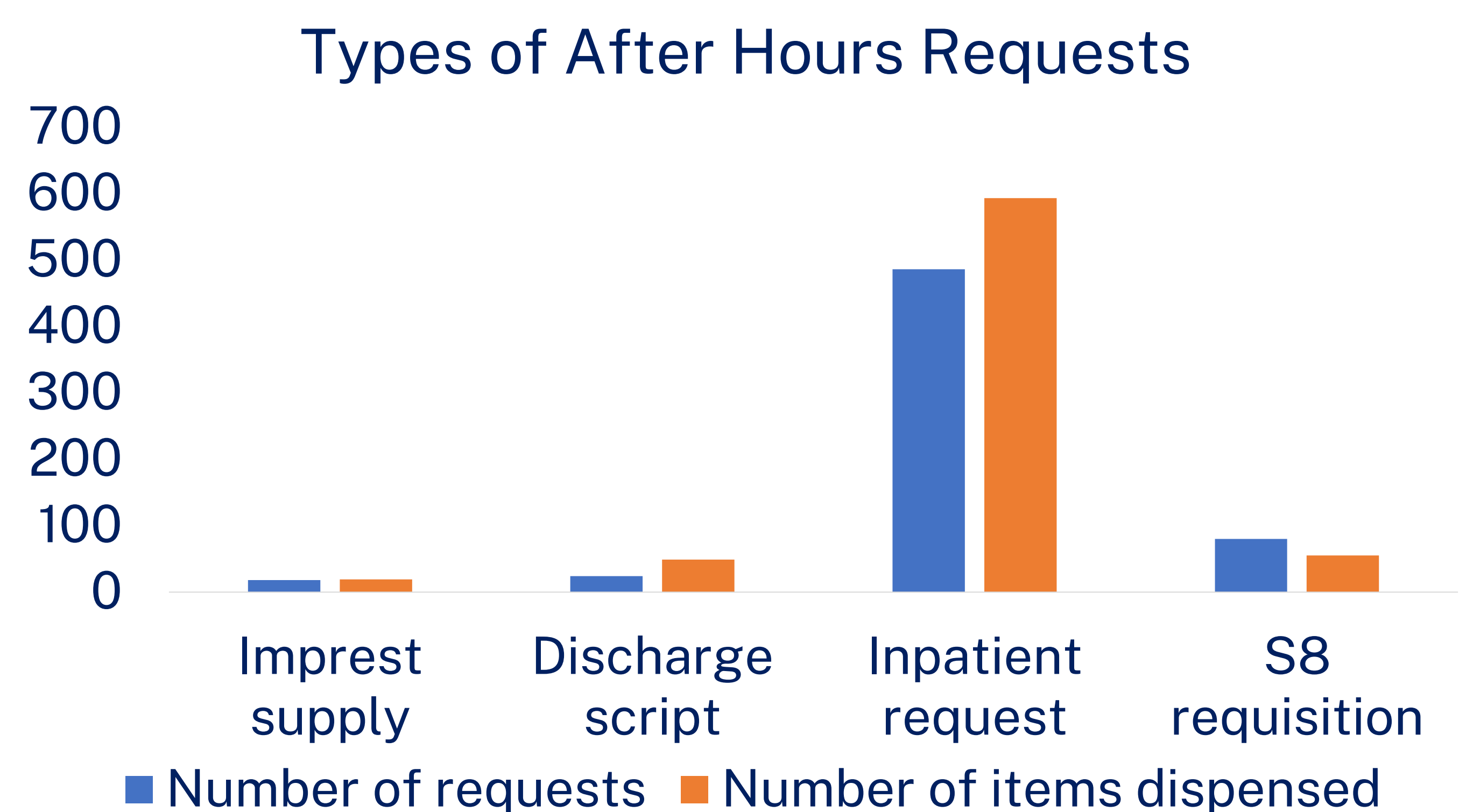
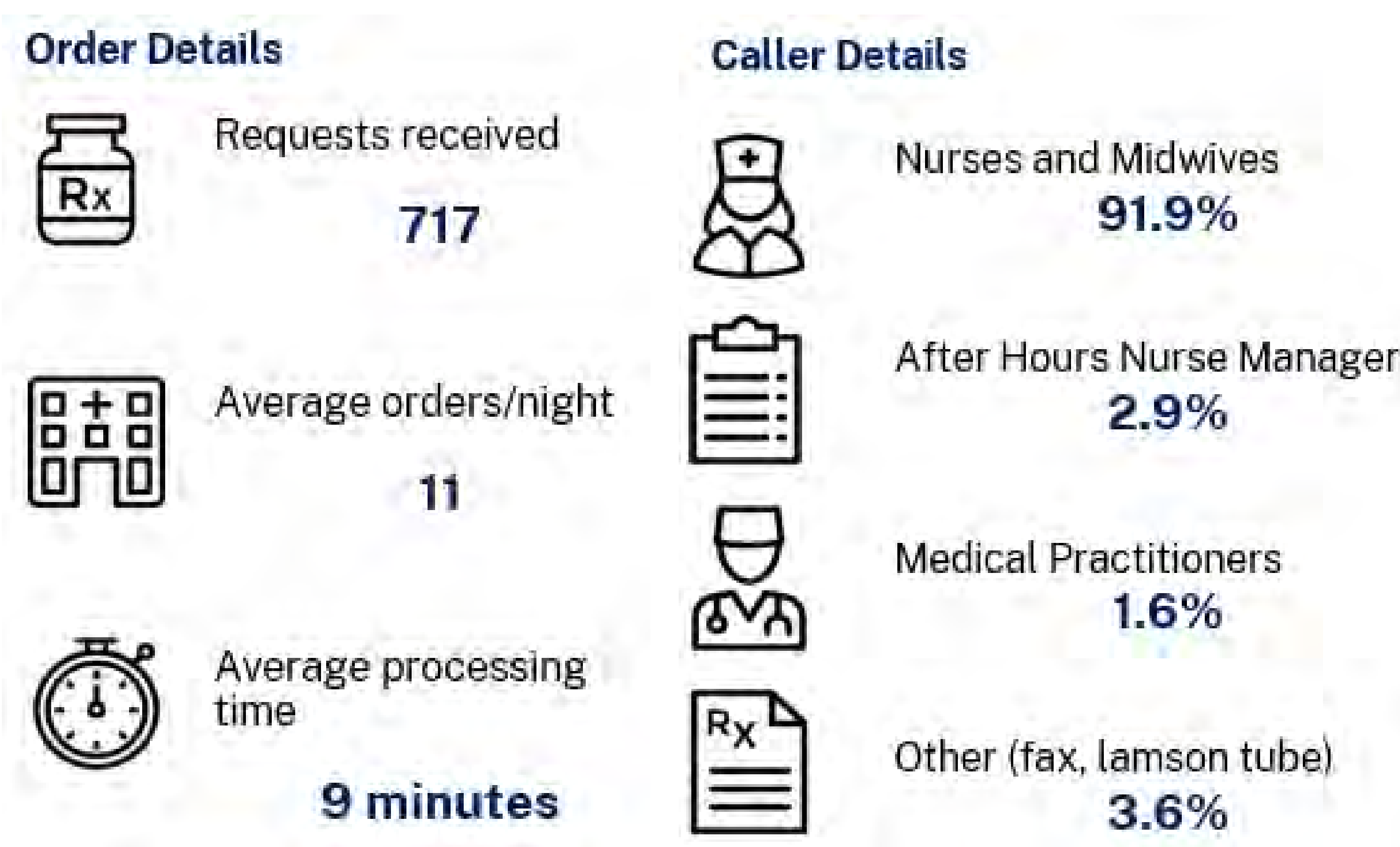
Action

- Funding allocation for onsite pharmacy service operating 5-10pm between 26/06-30/09/2022
- AHNM and ward team leaders (TLs) would contact the onsite afterhours pharmacist via a dedicated afterhours pharmacy mobile phone

Evaluation

Specialties which used the pharmacy service most

- Respiratory ward 94 requests
- Emergency ward 75 requests
- Renal/Gastroenterology ward 68 requests
- Haematology/Oncology ward 63 requests



Discussion

Extending onsite pharmacy hours reduced AHNM's workload, improved medication access and increased timely provision of the clinical pharmacy service. Medication provision became a one-piece flow, eliminating batching, need for information handover and reduced access to pharmacy. The implementation was positively received by AHNM and TLs. There is interest and consideration in extending the pharmacy service hours permanently.