Process mapping

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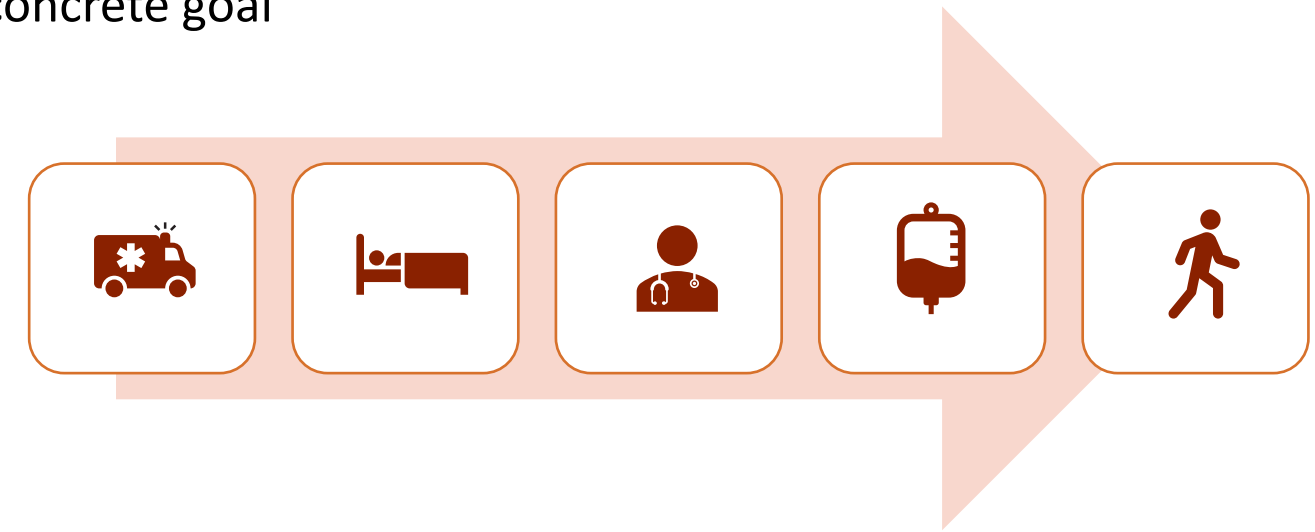
Process and process mapping

Process is a chain of interconnected activities that:

- Has clearly defined start and end points
- Follows a specific sequence
- Is aimed at achieving a concrete goal

For example, patient treatment process



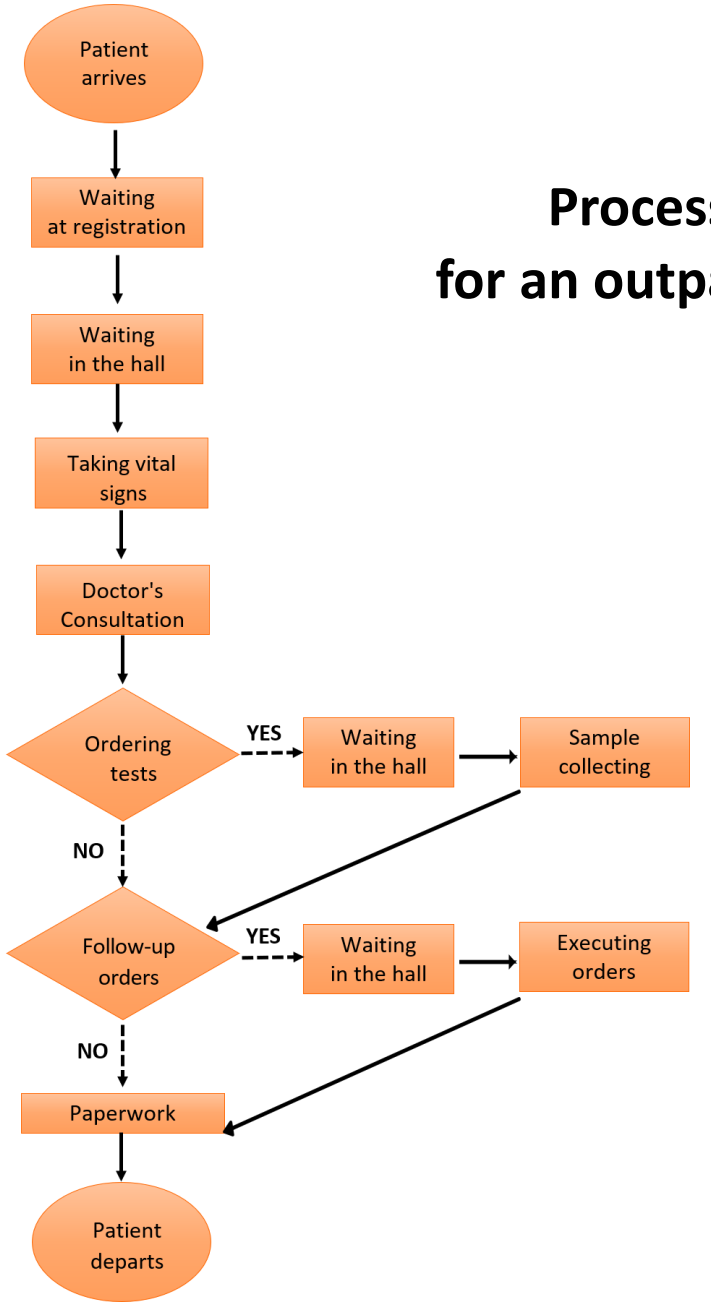
Mapping is the visualization of a process: creating a diagram that shows, step by step, how the process works.

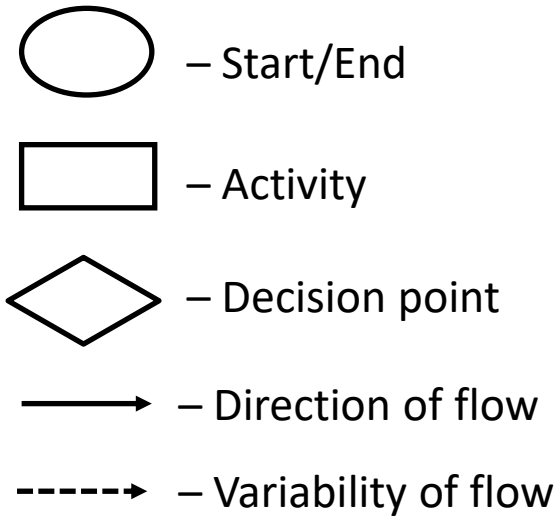
Mapping reveals the real, rather than ideal, way of working.

It enables the team to see which steps add value and where there are losses or complexities.

Creating a process map

Process map
for an outpatient visit

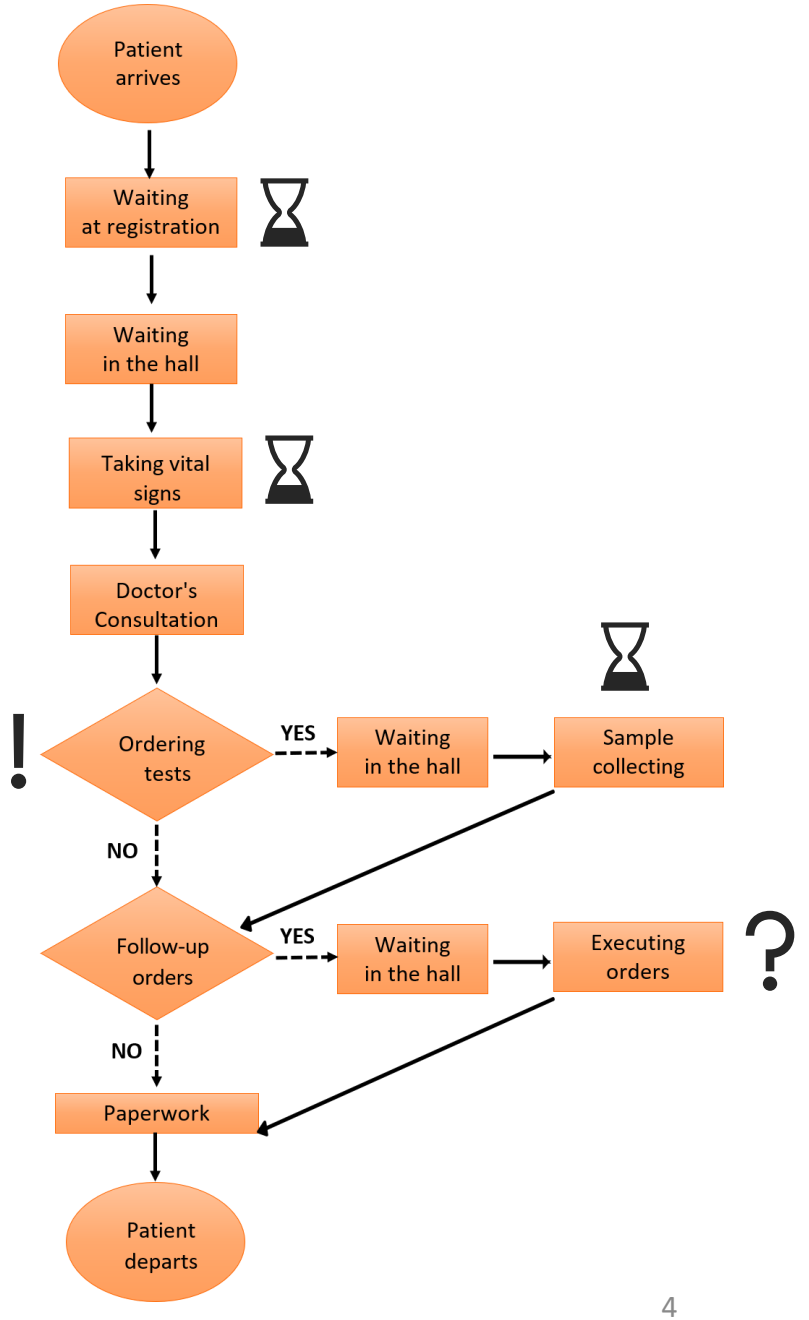




Process map analysis

Once the process map is created, it serves as a foundation for analysing key aspects:

- **Redundancy & duplication:** Identify if multiple staff perform identical tasks. Can these be streamlined or eliminated?
- **Inefficient loops (rework):** Spot unnecessary returns of documents, patients, or information to earlier steps caused by errors, missing data, or poor handoffs.
- **Bottlenecks:** Pinpoint steps that create delays and slow down the overall workflow.
- **Cycle time :** Estimate the total lead time from start to finish.



Value analysis

The process map also reveals the value of each step.
The goal: Keep only what is essential and eliminate waste.

Three types of activities

1. Value adding – steps where the patient sees direct benefit.
Criteria (ALL three must be met):

- Advances the process towards the final outcome
- The patient (or insurer) is willing to pay for it
- It is done correctly the first time (does not require rework)

Example: medical consultation, surgery, medication therapy, diagnostics.

2. Non-value adding but necessary – steps that do not create value in the patient's eyes but are required for the system to function.
Example: paperwork, instrument sterilization, waiting for test results.

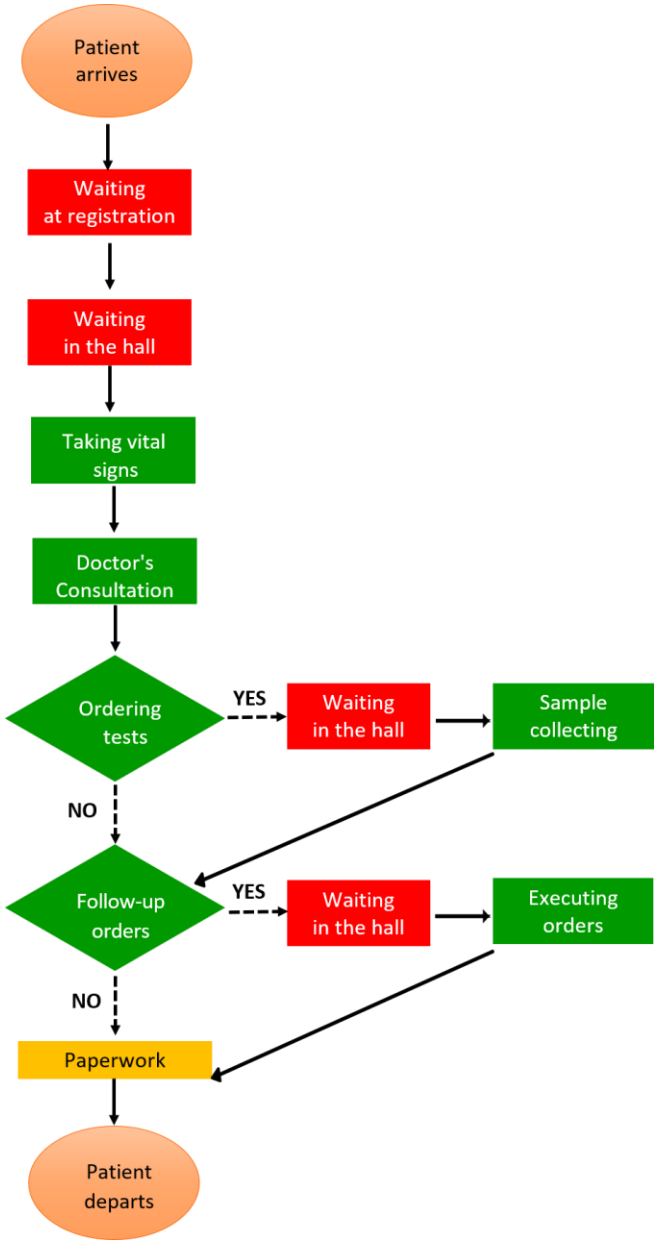
3. Non-value adding – steps that create no value and are not necessary.
These are pure losses that should be eliminated.

Value analysis

Value adding activities

Non-value adding but necessary activities

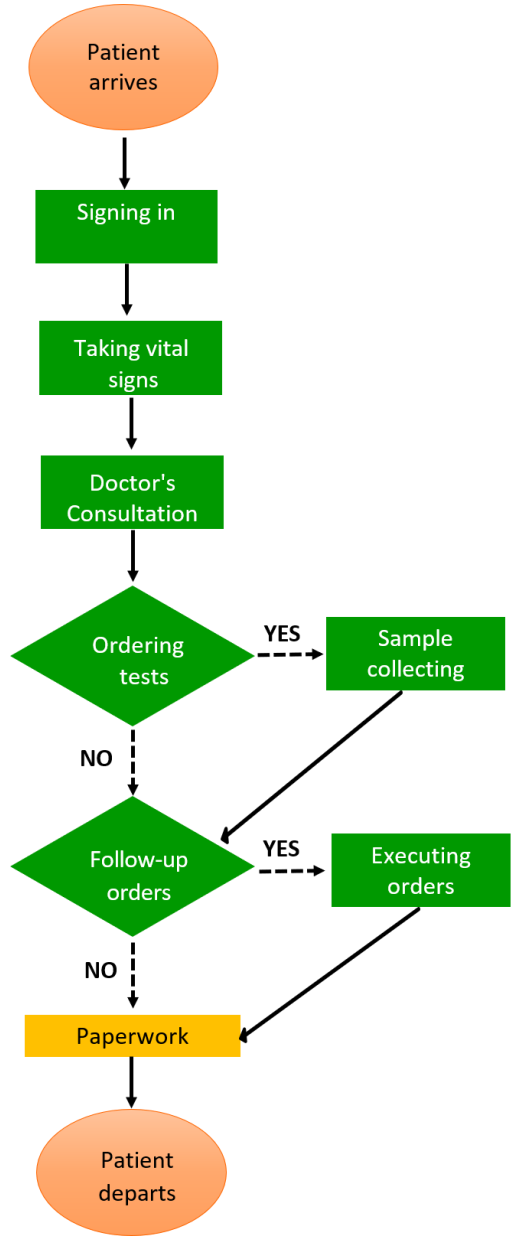
Non-value adding activities (pure waste)



A process close to ideal might look something like this

Zero pure waste: Complete elimination of non-value adding activities

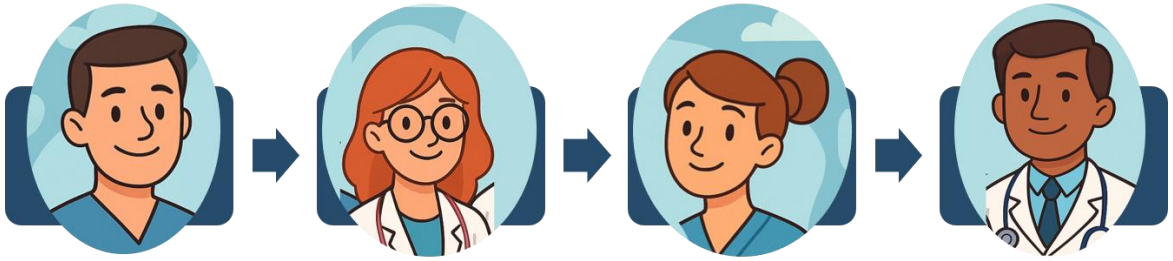
Minimal necessary non-value: Drastic reduction of non-value adding but necessary activities



Process mapping is a team effort

No one knows the process better than those who work in it every day.

The map should be created by those who participate in the process and those who are responsible for it.



Collaborative Mapping

- Creates a common language: Everyone begins to use the same terms and to understand completely the whole process.
- Increases accuracy: The map reflects actual practice, rather than formal instructions.
- Generates solutions during the analysis stage: Some necessary adjustments become obvious immediately.

Important

- Process mapping provides a common language for the team and ensures safety for patients.
- It enables a view of the entire system, as well as the gaps and losses within it.
- It allows for the creation of unified protocols and pathways that reduce the risk of errors.
- It frees up staff time for the patient by eliminating useless work.

! The map is just the plan; improvement happens through action

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