

## EHMA 2024

Shaping and managing innovative health ecosystems

# How to map and improve colorectal cancer patients' journey? A healthcare innovation project using design thinking

Ana Rita Loureiro, CNS, MSc, Unidade Local de Saúde de Coimbra

5 - 7 June 2024 - Bucharest, Romania

Politehnica University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania



#### Context

#### • What's our aim?

To map and improve colorectal cancer patients' journey undergoing surgery.



#### Methods

How do we make it possible?

An innovation project in 4 steps.

Diagnosis of the current path and identification of areas where to act

**Project** with built-in change management plan

**Implementation** 

**Assessment** of impact and results



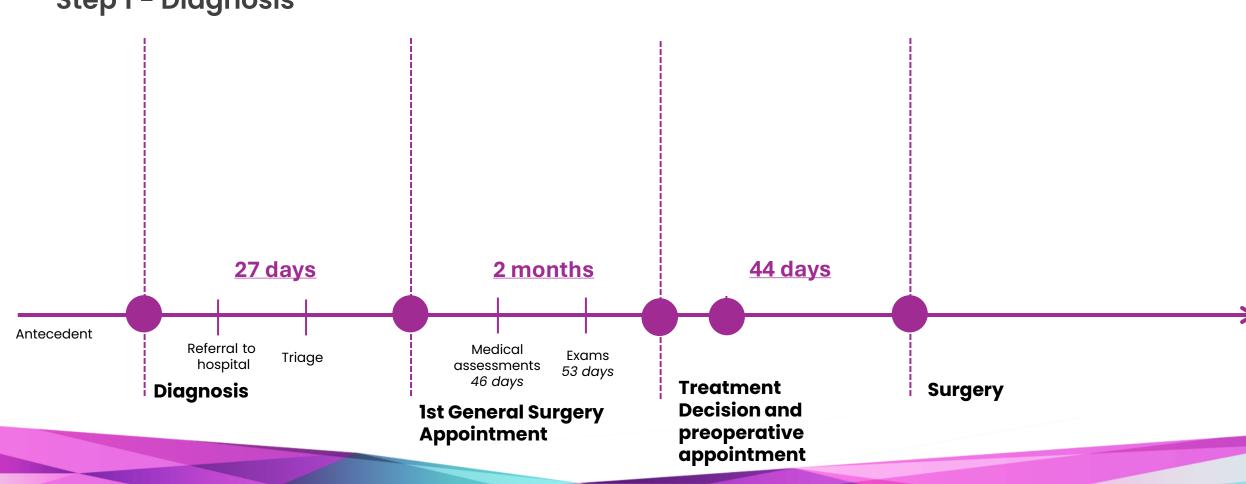
#### **Methods**

#### To get everyone on board:

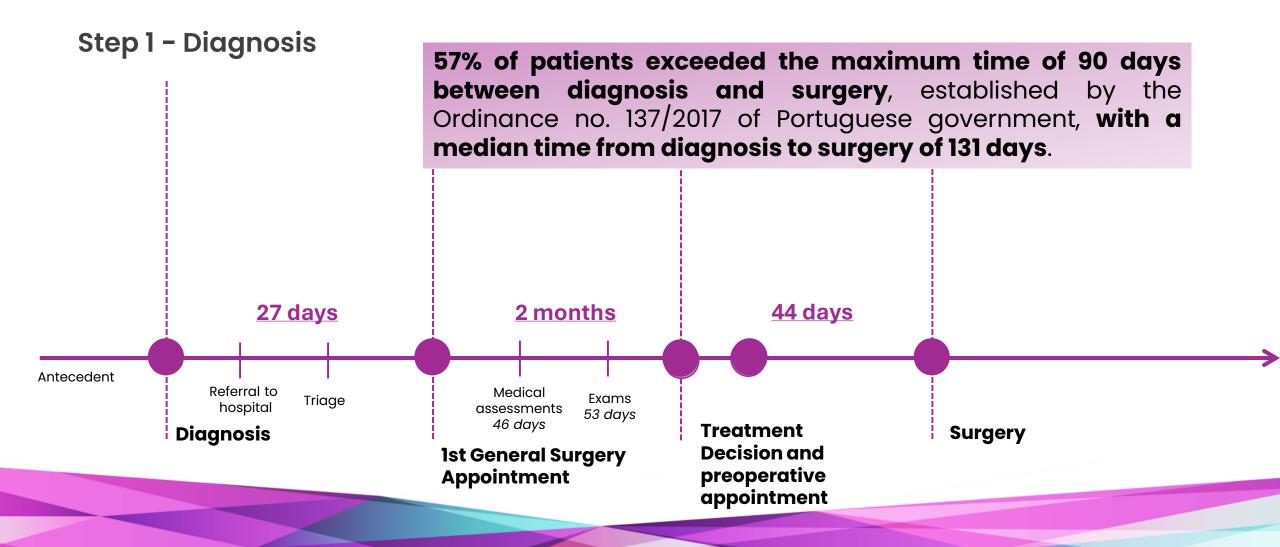
- Interviews were conducted with healthcare professionals, patients and families involved in the care journey, for a full comprehensive picture.
- This project was endorsed by the Innovation Department of a Portuguese Tertiary Hospital, with the support of a management and innovation advisory team.













#### Step 1 - Diagnosis

#### **Delays** in:

→ Referral from primary care
 → Administrive tasks
 → Exams scheduling

**27 days** 

#### **Need for more:**

- → Exams, tests
   → Other medical specialties
   assessments
- Administrative tasks

2 months

- → Lack of professionals
- → Need for more test or other medical specialties
- → Logistic issues in the ERAS appointment 44 days

→ Lack of inpatient vacancies

→ Lack of OR slots

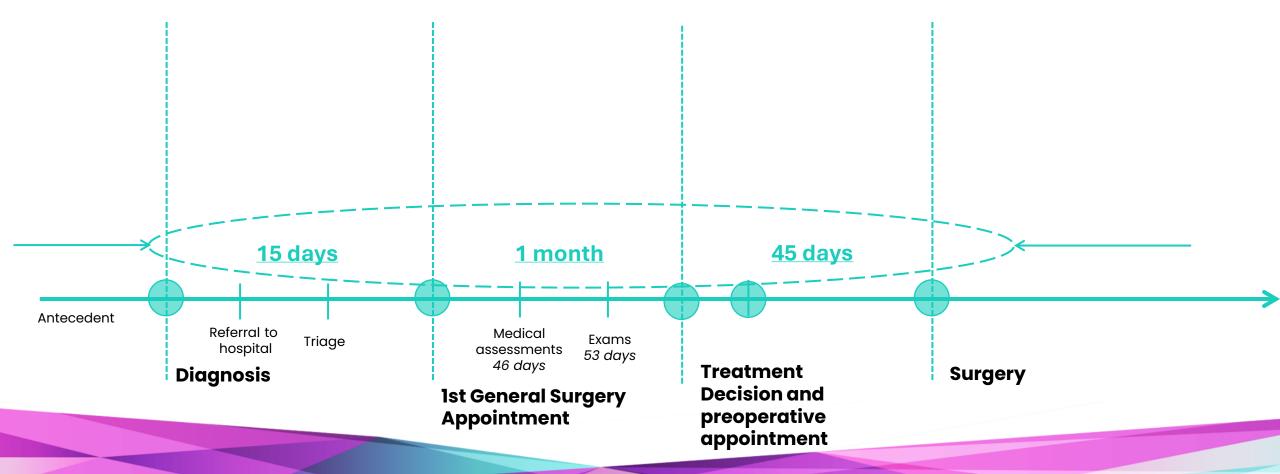
Diagnosis

1st General Surgery Appointment Treatment
Decision and
preoperative
appointment

**Surgery** 



Step 2 – A new journey for patients and professionals





#### Step 2 – A new journey for patients and professionals

- . Automation ∩f administrative tasks
- . Checklists to help referrals and decision-making

**15 days** 

**Antecedent** 

Referral to Triage hospital

Diagnosis

- . Creation of 1st appointment and exams slots
- . Checklists to help referrals and decision-making about exams

1 month

Exams

Medical assessments 53 days 46 days

**1st Appointment** 

- . Time allocation for professionals
- . Improve logistics and workflow of the preoperative appointment

**45 days** 

**Treatment Decision and** preoperative appointment . Reorganize OR slots and inpatient vacancies . **Prioritization** fo

patients severity

Surgery

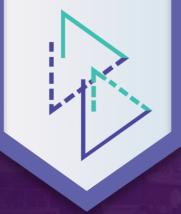


Stepping into the patient's shoes was a completely different way of understanding their experience and some of the hidden bottlenecks for high quality and timely care.

A project was designed to target each specific missing link in order to improve the waiting time for colorectal cancer surgery.

The project is now being implemented to test novel approaches engaging patients, healthcare professional and managers, to improve the patient journey and bring the waiting time under the 90 days.

Next | Step 3 - Implementation



### EHMA 2024

Shaping and managing innovative health ecosystems



# Thank you/Obrigada!

Ana Rita Loureiro, Unidade Local de Saúde de Coimbra ritaloureiro@ulscoimbra.min-saude.pt

