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## BACKGROUND

As patient numbers grow and waitlists get longer, health services are increasingly using new approaches to speed up care for patients with hand conditions.

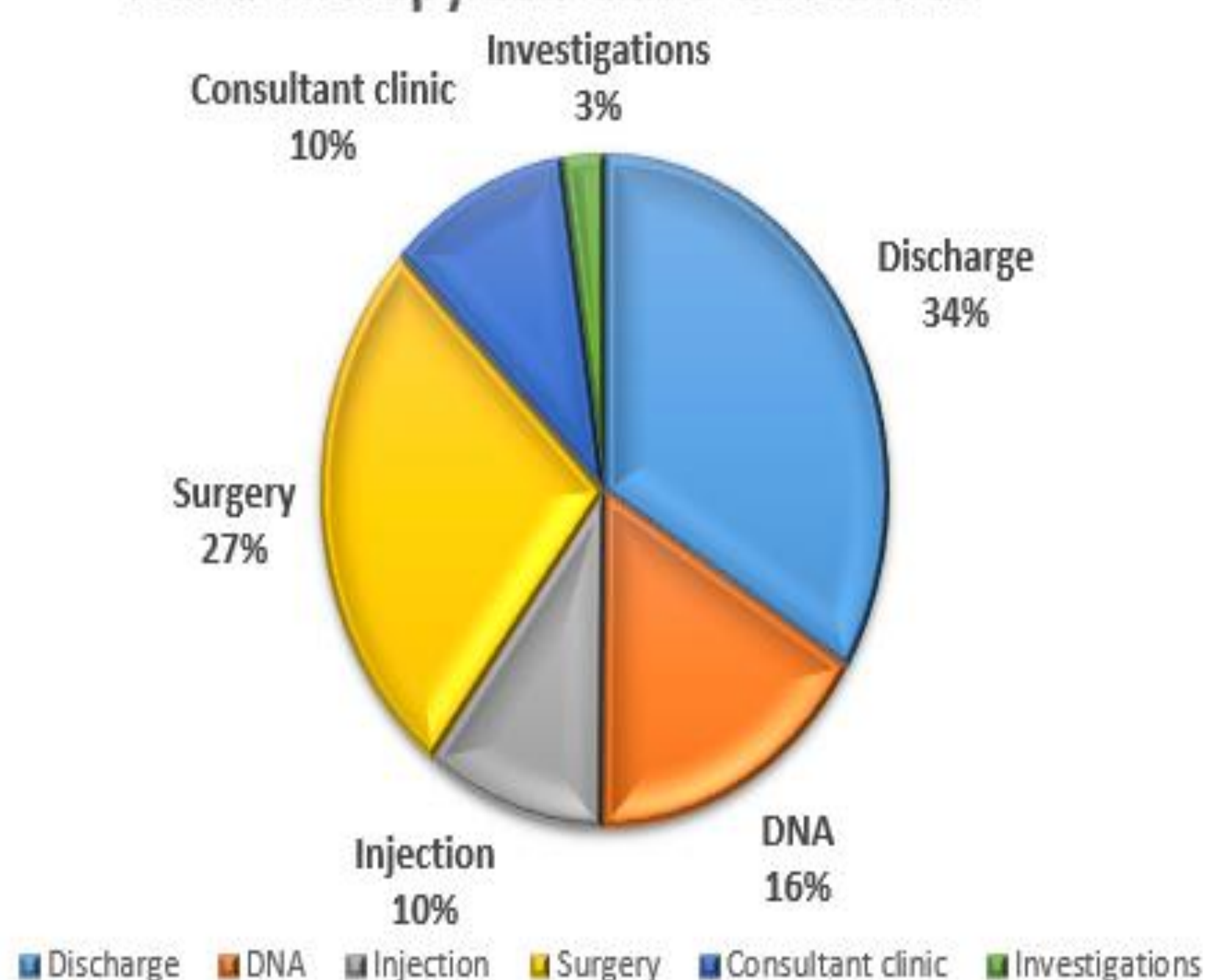
Long wait times for outpatient consultations and surgeries create significant obstacles to accessing care.

These delays can lead to worse clinical outcomes and lower patient satisfaction.

## OBJECTIVES

- Address the long wait for access to specialist hand therapy & plastic surgery
- Evaluate initial outcomes of this hand therapy led pilot

Hand Therapy Led Clinic Outcomes



## METHOD

- Hand therapist-led triage clinics were established under the clinical governance of consultant plastic surgeons, following an agreed care framework
- Initial NTPF funding approved for the pilot phase → Now transitioned to a Modernised Care Pathway, involving 0.7 WTE Clinical Specialist Physio and OT, and 0.5 WTE Clerical support.

## OUTCOMES

- ✓ **750** patients removed from plastics consultant outpatient waiting lists
- ✓ **87%** of patients managed without ever needing plastics consultant OPD appointment
- ✓ **34%** discharged following initial hand therapy assessment or followed up by hand therapy solely until discharge
- ✓ **27%** listed for hand surgery & **10%** for injection clinics

\* **Average wait time from GP referral to initial consult decreased from 95.16 weeks in May 2022 to 9.24 weeks in August 2024**

## DISCUSSION

- The number of surgeries for non-acute hand conditions expected to rise significantly.
- It is essential to plan and develop the best workforce and service delivery models to manage wait times and patient load effectively.
- Therapy led clinics have been successfully implemented in GUH, resulting in:

- ✓ **Streamlined care**
- ✓ **Reduced waiting lists**
- ✓ **Improved efficiency**
- ✓ **Better patient outcomes**

## CONCLUSION

Hand therapy models of care:

- Accelerate access to care
- Reduce duplication
- Reduce need for surgery
- Improve patient outcomes and satisfaction

\* **This increases appointment availability for patients who do need to see a plastic surgeon**