

Background: Wellbeing Problem/Issue

Sendout lab in Department of Pathology routes patient material to reference labs for outside testing

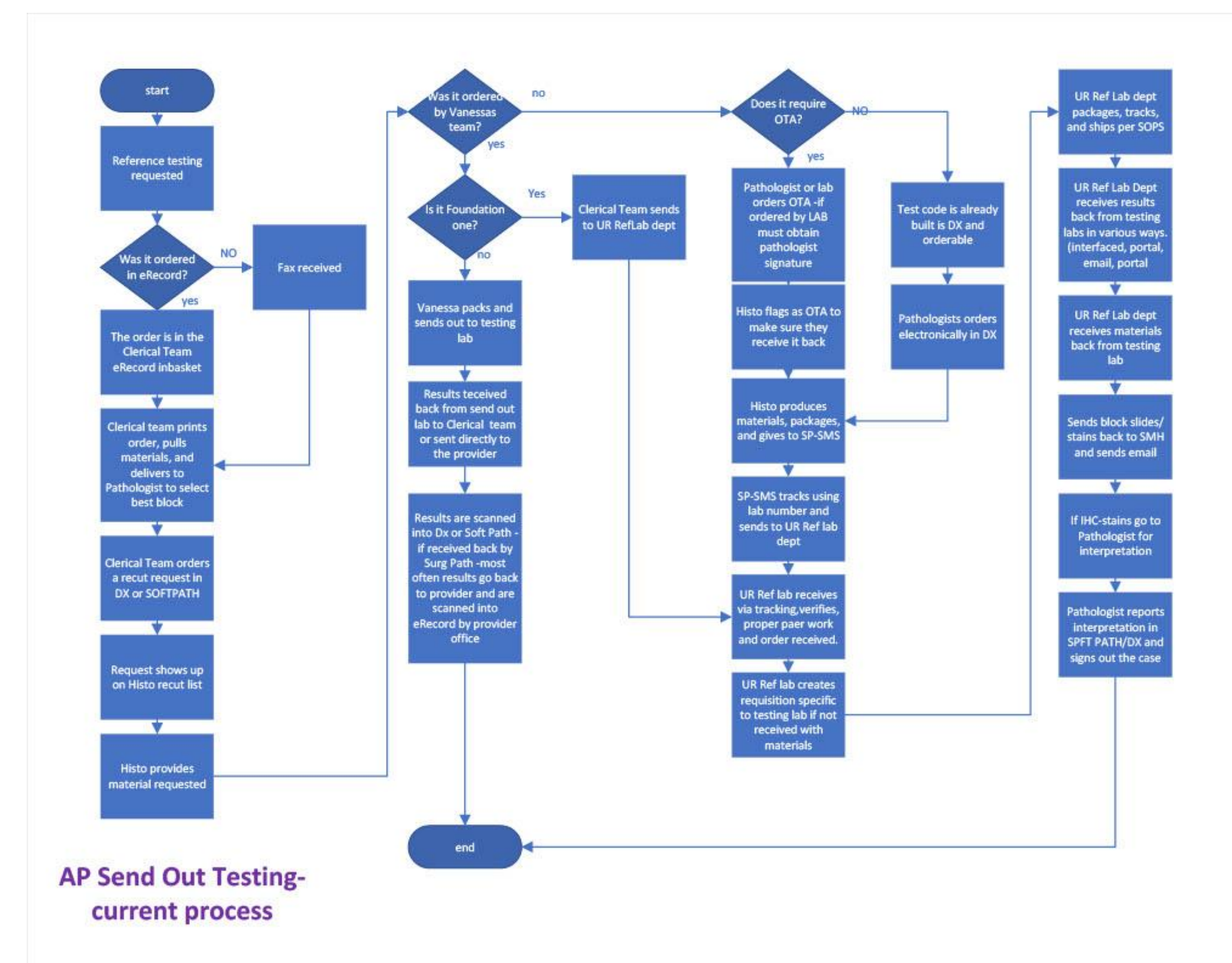
Two main pathways for sendout test

- Bloodwork and reference labs (sent directly from clinicians) – Clinician Sendouts
 - Process initially designed with these in mind
 - Essentially works well
- Biopsies and surgical specimens (sent by pathologists) – Pathologist Sendouts
 - These sendouts can be ordered by clinicians on pathologist-handled tissue, or directly ordered by pathologists
 - Process not intentionally designed for these sendouts
 - Numerous extra steps which each add delays
 - Results are difficult to track and not automatically linked to pathology reports
 - Several pain points for pathologists and clinicians
 - Data is not systemically recorded or analyzed

Methods/Model

- Stakeholders identified and project timeline decided based on stakeholder needs and availability
 - Major laboratory information system (LIS) upgrade with global impact on department workflow scheduled in summer 2025
 - Time needed for LIS adoption and initial workflow adjustments
- Process map outlined based on workflow
- Focus groups with key stakeholders to identify concerns and needs

Figure 1. Process map highlights convoluted and inefficient process which is essentially a “black box” for pathologists and clinicians who are its main users



Results

- Identified challenges:
 - Inefficient process with many extra steps and limited standardization
 - Specimen tracking is insufficient
 - Process is not made with pathologist or clinician input

Conclusions and Discussion

- Improvements to specimen tracking capabilities and data analysis can identify and target inefficiencies
- Process and procedures should be matched to pathologist and clinician needs
- Test menu standardization is opportunity to improve awareness of in-house vs sendout test availability, and standardize common orders
- Limitations of approach include limited data collection abilities and ongoing changes to recently upgraded LIS with impact on workflow

Future Directions/Scalability

- Conduct surveys and focus groups with key stakeholders (pathology staff, pathology faculty, and clinicians who interact with process)
- Evaluate necessity and feasibility of coordinator or liaison role(s) for pathologist sendouts
- Work with pathologists and clinicians to ensure pathology reports incorporating sendout results meet the needs of our patients
- Structured education and orientation process for pathologists to streamline sendout ordering

Hypothesis

- Project aims
 - Build capability of the sendout lab to support and coordinate pathologist sendouts
 - Improve results tracking for both pathologists and clinicians
- Stakeholders to engage include pathology faculty, pathology staff, and clinicians
- We will track progress by surveys and focus groups in pathology and oncology, and tracking data such as turnaround time from order to result

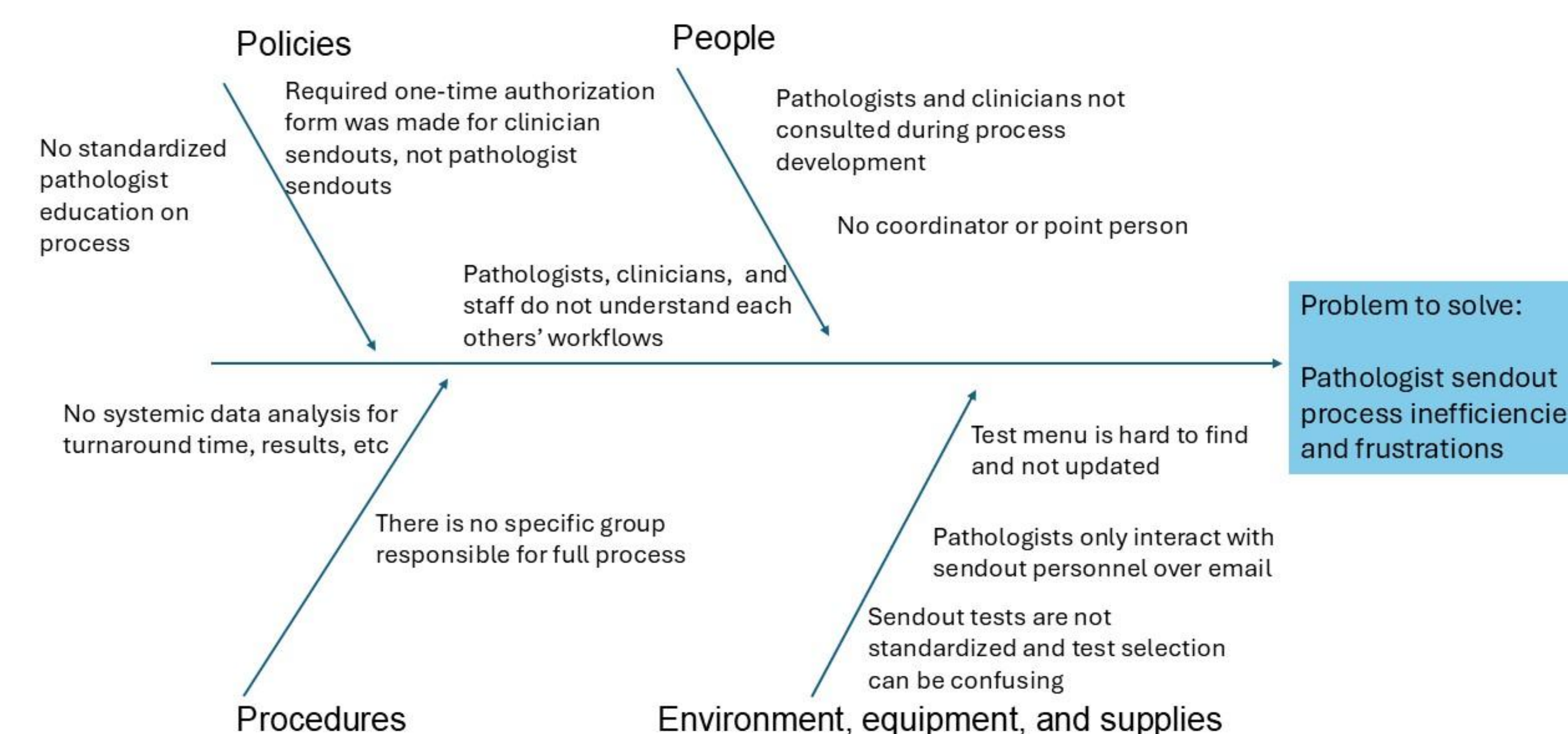


Figure 2. Fishbone diagram shows key challenges which must be addressed to improve the pathologist sendout process

Acknowledgements/References

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