

Clinic model has addressed critical service gaps by improving access, equity and quality of care for complex paediatric patients.

Reviewing the implementation of a new paediatric audiology clinic to tackle an unmet requirement for children with complex needs.

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Background

Stakeholder feedback cited **increasing concerns** about the **high percentage of children with complex needs** attending **standard** assessments. Clinicians often felt unable to effectively assess this patient cohort leaving the **only other option** of an **Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) under sedation**.

Families expressed reluctance to sedate their children due to previous **ineffective attempts** and/or the **distress** caused by sedation.

A service review signposted the need to establish a more **appropriate environment** for **children with complex needs**, thereby **improving equity in service delivery**.

Aims

1. Establish a more appropriate testing environment for children with complex needs, thereby improving equity in service delivery.
2. Reduce the number of ABRs under sedation.

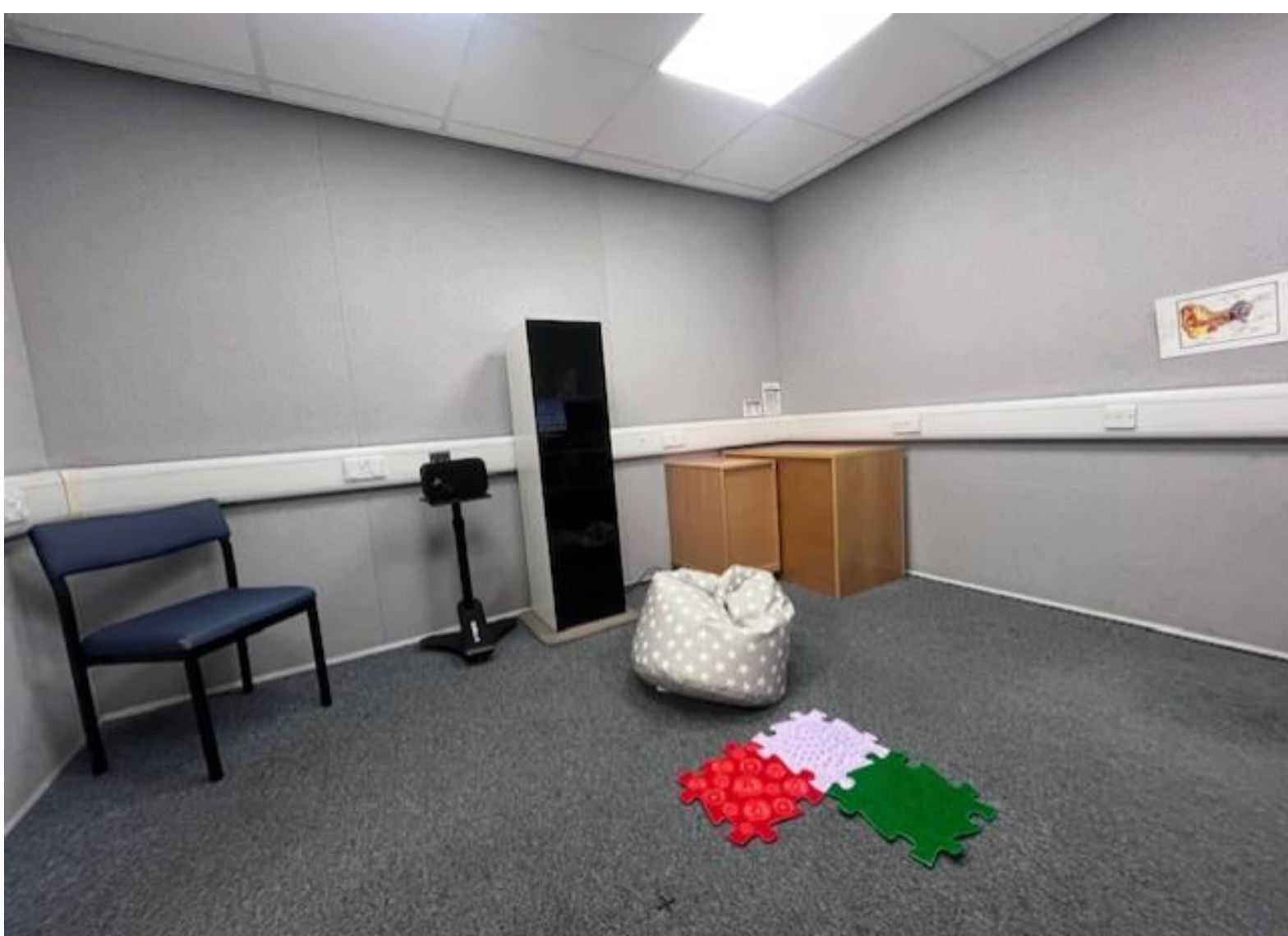
Implementation

The clinic focused on ensuring the **right facilities** were available to the patient and clinicians (length of appointment time, sensory toys and limiting sensory over stimulation).

Parents received a preparatory phone call **to manage expectations** and **discuss individual concerns**, enabling the clinicians to **appropriately tailor** the appointment to the **child's needs**.

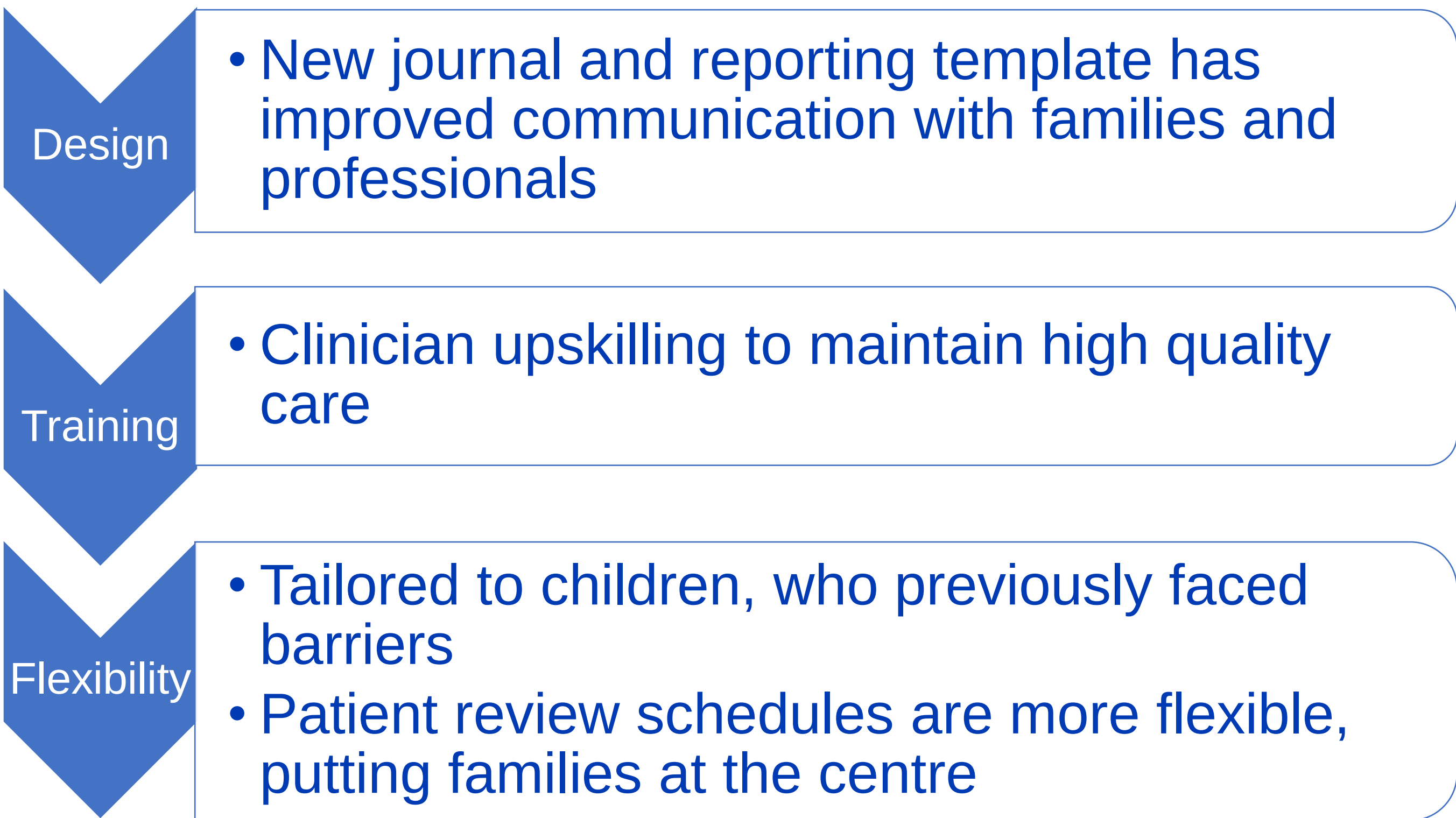
Goals varied depending on the **child's needs** and **parental expectations**.

For some, the initial aim was simply to **enter the room without distress**.

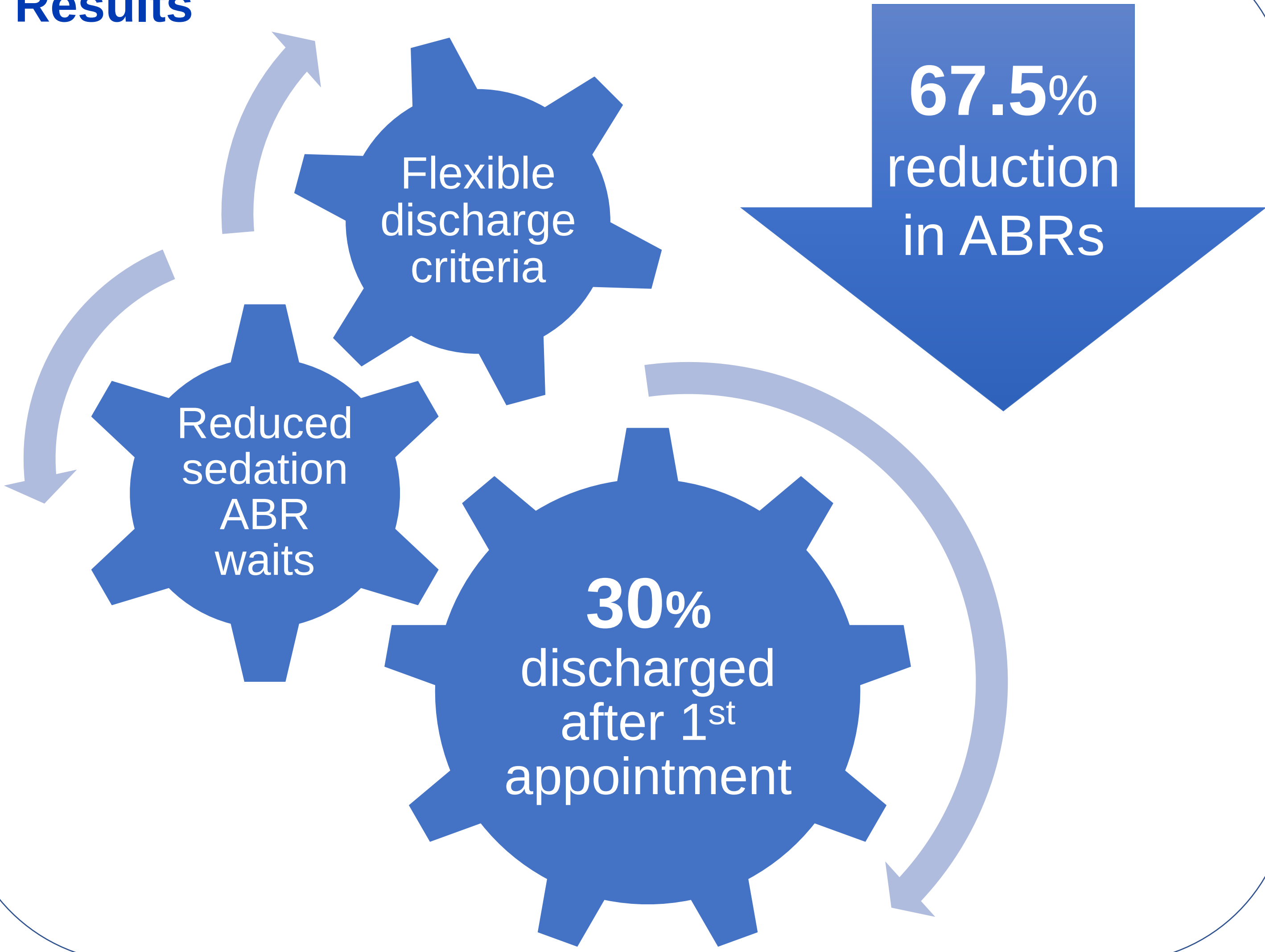


Photograph of clinic set-up

Delivering Equity Through:



Results



Conclusions

Implementing a complex needs clinic has facilitated access for families who are unable to access traditional models of testing.

It has **significantly reduced** sedation ABRs, whilst improving family experiences; demonstrating a sustainable, **child-centred approach** to diagnostics.

By **removing systemic barriers** and **adapting services** to meet diverse needs, the clinic provides equitable access and outcomes for an often under-served population.



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