

# Nursing Floor Team Applies Lean Tools to Streamline the Admission and Discharge Process

## Outcomes

- **31%** reduction in Admission paperwork
- **62%** reduction in Discharge paperwork
- **68%** reduction in the Admission process time
- **84%** reduction in the Discharge process time
- Cost savings due to maintaining length of stay targets
- Improved patient care and satisfaction
- Improved employee satisfaction

## The Problem

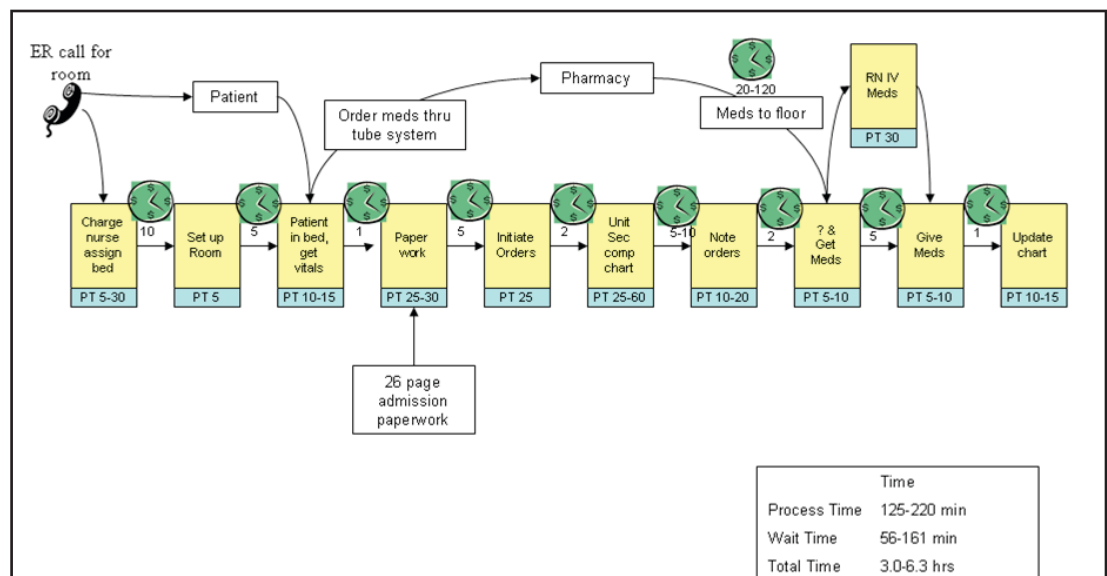
Historically, both patients and staff at this 146-bed hospital experienced frustration due to the complexity of the admissions and discharge processes. This conclusion was backed by observations on the nursing floor which indicated that almost 33 percent of caregiver activities were dedicated to *Waste*, or tasks which add no value to the customer/patient experience. Another common complaint among the nurses was the amount of paperwork to be completed on a daily basis. The fact that the facility had plans to implement an electronic system in the near future necessitated an effort to eliminate the duplication and waste from the current process prior to this change.

## The LEAN Healthcare Approach

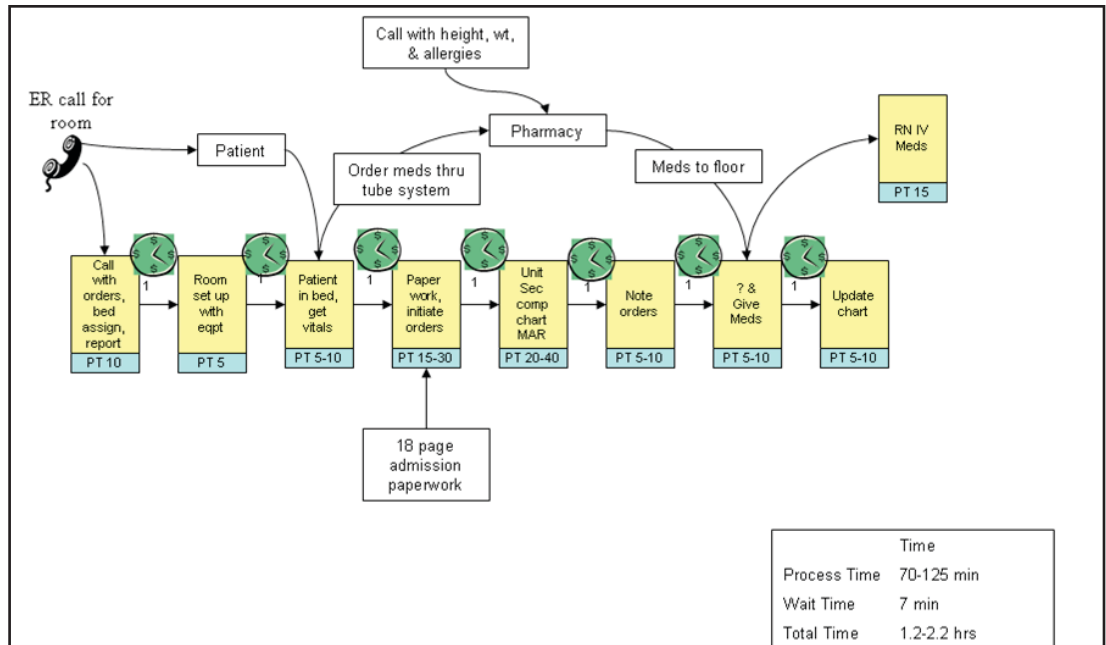
A Kaizen (Rapid Improvement) team comprised of nursing staff from the hospital's med-surg floor was formed to examine the admission and discharge processes, identify sources of waste and eliminate them. The team began by following the admission process and gathered data to document the current state. The team then created a *current state value stream map* (below) using inputs from team members involved in the process, walking the actual process (*Gemba Walk*) and simulating an admission.

The value stream map revealed that paperwork/charting, direct admission processes and the patient's length of stay were primary contributors to waste on the floor. The current admission paperwork consisted of 26 pages while the discharge paperwork required 13 pages to be completed by the staff. In addition, there was potential for unstable patients to be delayed and unsupervised in the main lobby while awaiting an available room. Issues surrounding extended lengths of stay as a result of process breakdowns in the facility were also highlighted.

With a thorough understanding of the current state issues, the team took on the task of defining



10-step Current State Process, before HPP-led Kaizen Event.



Eight-step Future State Process, following HPP-led Kaizen Event.

the future state process. With the assistance of supporting departments, the team updated charting requirements and either eliminated or combined the admission and discharge paperwork. The flow of patients into the hospital was also changed as all direct admits were checked in through the emergency department. A communication check sheet was developed to reduce room setup time and nursing documentation was improved to make length of stay information more visible. The improved *future state value stream map* (below) eliminated two process steps and dramatically reduced both admission and discharge process times.



### The Outcome

As a result of the Kaizen team's efforts, the nursing floor was able to realize the following improvements, reducing waste in daily tasks and giving caregivers more time at the bedside.

- 31% reduction in Admission paperwork
- 62% reduction in Discharge paperwork
- 68% reduction in the Admission process time
- 84% reduction in the Discharge process time
- Cost savings due to maintaining length of stay targets
- Improved patient care and satisfaction
- Improved employee satisfaction