

OR and Registration Staff Redesign Patient Flow, Reduce Patient Wait Time

Outcomes

- Decreased Wait Times for Patients in excess of 50%
- Decreased Cost (Paper, Labels, etc.) - ~82,000 sheets/year
- Increase quality of patient prepping, due to decreased confusion and a standardized process
- Increased Communication
- Reduced Confusion/ Stress for Patients, Staff
- Reduced "Pick-Up" Delays for OR

The OR staff at a Texas hospital was challenged with the difficult task of satisfying both patient and physician needs in a constantly changing environment. The patient experience involved wait times ranging from 1 to 8 hours and did not meet expectations. In order to address the underlying process issues impacting overall patient satisfaction, a Kaizen team comprised of OR staff and Registration personnel was tasked with using Lean Healthcare methodologies to affect rapid improvement in the unit.

Map the Current State

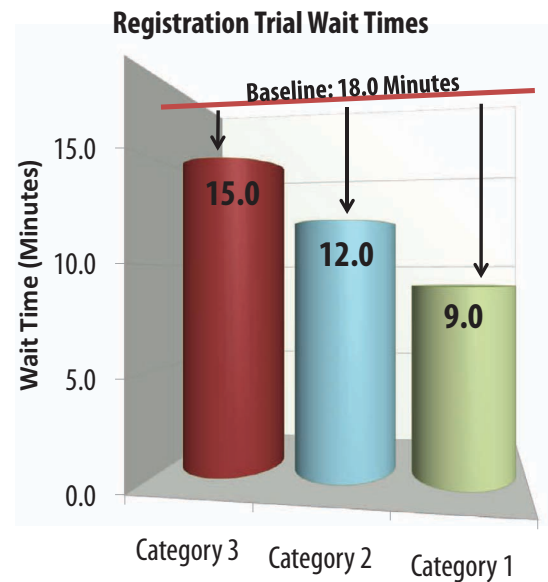
The Kaizen team mapped the Current State Value Stream for the typical patient path through the OR. Through the mapping exercise the team identified key areas of the process where waste elimination opportunities existed. Patient wait times and quality and safety issues were primary focuses of the exercise.

Observe the actual work

In order to complete the map, the Kaizen team moved into the OR to observe activities at all stages of the process through the time OR picked up the patient for their procedure. The team's observation data revealed significant opportunities to improve patient flow in the arrival/pre-op process as well as improve consistency and quality in the OR.

Design the Future State, Test, and Implement

The team began defining the future state by testing new methods for signing in and prioritizing patients through registration. After three iterations



of testing and modifying the sign in process, the team defined a process that not only assisted the OR but all functions within the hospital with scheduled patients. After trialing the process for two weeks, the team achieved significant wait time reductions for all patient types.

The team also made immediate impact by defining a new method for moving patients into pre-op holding. This system called for patients to be moved to holding and prepped only when the OR was ready to accept the next patient. A generous lead time for patient prep was built into the process to reduce the risk of delaying OR activities. Over time, this lead time can be reduced as the OR's internal operations become more predictable.

RESULTS

A trial of the new system was conducted during the event, yielding a **54% reduction of patient wait time in pre-op holding** on days in which patient volume was 50% higher. The Day Surgery staff also reported that the **quality of their work was improved** as they could now prep patients in a "One-by-One" fashion, eliminating many of the errors and delays previously caused by interruptions and the need to "get patients in a bed."