

Same-Day Surgery Cuts Payroll Costs by \$75K, Reduces Patient Wait Times by 57%



The Problem

Same-Day Surgery staff at this 230-bed, for-profit hospital struggled to process patient information in a timely, organized fashion. Physicians' orders, pre-admission test results, and patients' medical histories were often missing or incorrectly filed, leading to high patient wait times and numerous procedure cancellations per week. These delays and cancellations caused increasing frustration among both patients and staff.

The LEAN Healthcare Solution

Using several LEAN tools, Healthcare Performance Partners assisted a 10-person Kaizen team in crafting an effective solution to the problem. The team first used value-stream mapping to identify sources of patient information and the paths the information might take through Same-Day Surgery. The team then developed process maps, identifying landing locations for the information and the ways the information might be used at each location.

Through the mapping process, the team discovered a lack of standardization for collecting, reviewing, and distributing information. Patients were allowed to decide whether they would undergo pre-admission testing, there was no central repository for patients' pre-surgery data, and staff had lacked protocol for tracking patients who had been admitted. In addition, staff were admitting patients with missing information such as physicians' orders, health and physical workups, or anesthesia reviews. As a result, patient information was often missing or incomplete at critical junctures, and medical staff struggled to obtain the information needed to provide quality care.

A second set of value-stream and process maps outlined the desired future state of Same-Day Surgery information processing. Facilitated by HPP, the team used these future-state maps to build standardized processes for all stages of information flow. Patient charts were formatted to integrate with the hospital's patient-information software, and the distribution system was reconfigured to send patient information (for example, printouts and physicians' dictation) directly to the nursing station serving the patient's location in the hospital. The new procedures

also established gates, or checks (aka mistake proofing or Poka-Yoke), to ensure that all necessary information has been collected before a patient is admitted for a procedure.

The Outcome

Conspicuous improvements followed almost immediately. The hospital realized:

- \$75,000 annual tangible savings in payroll costs associated with staff time spent searching for information
- 57% reduction in Same-Day Surgery patient wait times resulting in improved patient satisfaction.
- Elimination of loose sheets of patient information, improved documentation accuracy and increased physician satisfaction.
- Increased ability to see 8-10 additional patients per day without increasing FTE's.



To discuss how HPP can assist with your LEAN HEALTHCARE journey or Six Sigma Implementation: Call 615-265-2002 or e-mail: chagood@hpp.bz www.hpp.bz