

Nursing Work Station Team eliminates overstocking of supplies, reduces costs



Problem

The O.R. Nursing work station at this 250 Bed Major Medical Center was disorganized and impeded the staff's ability to perform their roles efficiently. Work load included over 30 cases a day. It was difficult for staff to know the location of materials, supplies and medicines from one shift change to the next, which led to a lack of confidence in inventory control.

Process

HPP lead the work station evaluation 'Team' in recognizing the importance of 'open' communication, as well as each staff member's role in making the knowledge base more centralized as opposed to individualized. The 'Team' agreed that knowledge had to become public and shared among the work group to empower the work group to act with speed and flexibility.

Visual Controls were developed with the purpose of:

1. Identifying the territory and equipment
2. Documenting the process of work flow
3. Controlling the flow of supplies and care-giving
4. Setting up systems that assured continued quality and workplace organization
5. Visually displaying performance indicators for sustainability

One major problem area identified through this process was supplies storage. Staff was keeping supplies in personal cabinets increasing costs through overstocked inventory and unknown inventory in the work group. This led to a new Inventory Ordering process. The 'Team' also worked through a workplace organization process and rated each step using a structured 5-S System:

- Sort (Disposal)
- Setting In Order (Straighten)
- Shining (Cleanliness)
- Standardizing (Schedule)
- Sustaining (Audits and areas of ownership)

Discipline is the key to success in this process and on- going leadership is crucial. The department leadership ensured that the area met the stated 5-S principles at the end of each day by utilizing checklists for monitoring adherence. The 'Team' also set up a system to quantify results utilizing the 5-S scoring criteria sheets. Each areas results were then prominently displayed on the Area Scoring Board providing everyone access to the knowledge of 5-S processes and results.



Outcomes

Prior to the 5-S workshop supplies were stored on the floor and stacked on countertops. After the 5-S workshop the countertops were cleared allowing drawers and cabinets to be labeled with their contents. Much needed floor space was made available along with better storage space. With the implementation of the new Inventory Ordering process over-stocking and stock-outs of supplies, materials and meds were also virtually eliminated. Inventory costs were reduced by 30% and improved efficiency allowed more time for direct patient care.



To discuss LEAN HEALTHCARE or how HPP can assist you: Call 615-265-2002 or e-mail: chagood@hpp.bz www.hpp.bz