

ABSTRACT: 2018 ELAM Institutional Action Project

Project Title: Emergency Department Front End Re-Design to Improve Efficiency

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Topic Category: Clinical

Background, Significance of project:

Penn State University's flagship academic medical center in Hershey, PA is frequently at critical capacity resulting in many admitted patients boarding in the emergency department awaiting available inpatient beds. The emergency department (ED) itself is a high volume ED with over 75,000 patient visits per year. It is imperative that the ED be as efficient as possible to assure that space is available for patients as they arrive in the ED. The boarding patients are more likely to suffer from quality of care issues. Patient wait times rise and the number of patients leaving without being seen increase when the hospital is full and the ED is boarding admitted patients. Patient satisfaction scores are also impacted.

Purpose/Objectives:

This project has multiple objectives: (1) decrease the time from patient arrival to seeing a provider; (2) decrease the length of stay for discharged patients; (3) increase the use of protocols; and (4) increase National Research Corporation (NRC) patient satisfaction scores.

Methods/Approach/Evaluation Strategy:

An internal review and external review of ED operations was performed. A literature review identified institutions that demonstrated best practices with respect to ED follow. An ED team went on a site visit to an institution that demonstrates best practices on ED throughput/flow with a provider rather than a nurse meeting the patient on arrival. The ED team partnered with the hospital's executive leadership to engage *Quality Matters* to implement a redesign our front end processes – provider in triage, nursing protocols and vertical placement of patients. We will be monitoring key time stamps before and after implementation of multiple rapid cycle improvement events as well as measuring patient satisfaction scores.

Outcomes/Results:

A group of physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses, patient care aides, registration associates, and Operation Excellence team members have partnered with one another to redesign our flow. Protocols are being developed and care teams reconfigured to support this project. Rapid cycle improvement events will begin shortly.

Discussion/Conclusion with Statement of Impact/Potential Impact:

We anticipate improved efficiency and a rise in patient satisfaction scores with the ultimate goal of becoming a model for academic emergency departments across the country.