

LEAN Top Sheet

The Latest LEAN Operation News

Monkey Junction Urgent Care Hosts First Kaizen

By Neil Cheffings

The first of three planned kaizen events for Monkey Junction Urgent Care was held February 21 and 22. A kaizen is a two to three day Lean rapid improvement event. Kaizen is Japanese for “small changes for the better”. This kaizen chose to look at patient wait times and door to door times; as these two items are a challenge in the Urgent Care environment and can adversely affect patient satisfaction. The first segment of the patient visit was examined. This portion of the patient flow is from the time the patient completes paperwork until he or she is ready to see the provider. Other segments of the patient flow will be examined in future Kaizens. The Lean Team consisted of Neil Cheffings, Debbie Sweeney, Jan Minter, Wendy Weimer, Elizabeth Hufham, Kelly Schaudt, Rachel Peaspanen, Paula Bruner and Dr. Robert Kastner.



At first glance this portion of the visit appears simple. It consists merely of the nurse or other triage staff recording vitals, the reason for the visit and some medical history. When it was dissected, no less than fifteen steps were discovered, most of which provided opportunities for wastes such as inaccuracy, duplication and excess motion. Height and weight were obtained in the hallway, history and vitals were taken in an exam room on paper then brought to the nurse’s station to be entered in EMR. The staff was uncomfortable using the small notepad computers and the exam rooms were too small to accommodate full sized units.

During the discussion times of the kaizen, it was noted that Family Medicine had recently relocated to Monkey Junction and their department had a room dedicated solely to triage. The team felt that this deserved a closer look. There was space available for a similar arrangement on the Urgent Care side. There was ample room for scales and a desk top computer. An added benefit was that it was directly opposite the lab. Urgent Care often does simple labs prior to seeing the provider as a standing order. An impromptu triage room was created by the kaizen team and an experiment was conducted using this set up. While the room was a bit “thrown together” it was decided that it had potential. The biggest time saver was the ability to directly input data into EMR



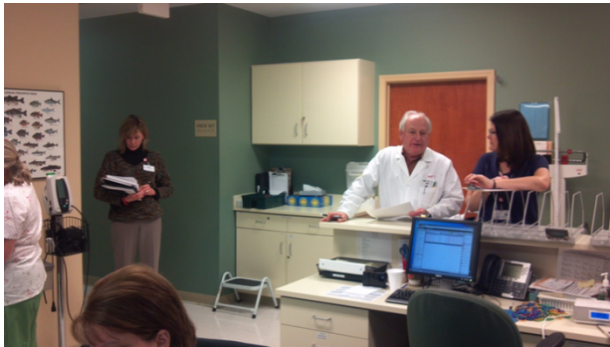
LEAN Top Sheet

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versus writing it on a sticky note and entering it afterward. Six of the original fifteen steps were eliminated. The change was further discussed and a to-do list for implementation was created.

The change continues to evolve. The triage room has been stocked and supplies are gradually finding their most efficient “home”. Time studies will be conducted once everyone has settled in. Staff has availed themselves to the Family Medicine triage room after hours and on weekends to double triage capacity. Obtaining a large lap top and mobile stand is being considered to allow triage in exam rooms as well, should it be needed. One unexpected result of the quicker triage is that it has at times resulted in log jams at the provider segment of the patient flow. The dedicated triage room allows triage to continue even if the patient is returned to the waiting area. The hope is that the patient’s perception will be that at least the process has begun and steps are being taken to save time. The change will be examined ongoing. The feeling at least anecdotally, is that the impact will be positive.

Monkey Junction Urgent Care will be having their next kaizen in early summer 2012 to look at the provider portion of the patient flow value stream. Keep a lookout for the next Lean Top Sheet to find out what happens!



Lean Thinking Leads to Cost Savings

By Bryan Hunt

For anyone who uses Experior on a regular basis, you’ve probably come across a patient’s account screen where you would see various charges listed and even some that had a negative number listed in the account. These instances could either be insurance over-payments or a patient paid more on their account than they were responsible for. Trying to make heads or tails of which scenario might be applicable took a great deal of time and effort. Some might be tempted to tell the patient that a refund was owed to them but you couldn’t as the money might truly



LEAN Top Sheet

The Latest LEAN Operation News

belong to the insurance companies. Such decisions were best left to the Insurance Advisors in the Business Office who would work the account to show the true balance.

In an effort to reduce some of the confusion, the Charge Entry department starting allocating, or “packing”, patient copays to the office visit. If they didn’t, the copay on the account would erroneously be applied to a lab charge instead of the actual office visit. It was determined that there had to be an easier way. Too much time was spent keying a charge and the having to get out of the charge entry screen in order to move to the money to the actual office visit.

Carla Boyd gathered together Lisa Perry, Gloria Harmon, Linda Clark, and Bryan Hunt to partake in a conference call with a representative from Experior. With one small option enabled, the copay automatically linked to the office visit instead of the labs and packing was ceased by the Charge Entry department. The amount of charges that were entered increased by an average of 200 per person, and with four people regularly keying, that’s 800 additional charges that could be entered on a single day. All it took was one person questioning the system to save time and energy, and that has made a big difference.

Pipeline Associates Provide a Lean Perspective

By Sheila Eckroate

What is the Pipeline? I have been asked that question several times while traveling through departments, learning the many aspects of Wilmington Health. It is not a Float employee... It is a new LEAN concept brought forth by Wilmington Health to have new hires in a “pipeline” for opened positions at the end of the training period. As a company, we know there will be upcoming open positions. The Pipeline program gets the new hire ready so they can be trained and placed immediately when a position is open. The company has new hires in a “pipeline” to fill vacate positions instead of hiring when needed and being without an employee until trained. The Pipeline is divided into two divisions: Clinical staff and Non-clinical (clerical, business office). Each Pipeline employee is trained in all aspects of their division and provided the opportunity to experience the company in many areas.

I have enjoyed experiencing Wilmington Health and learning each area of the company. It has been educational in seeing all aspects of the Business Office. I have been fortunate to see the “Front end” and “Back end” of the Business Office. I have seen the full complete billing cycle so I know how the functions of each area affect each other. I have seen opportunities for Lean because I experienced duplication, unnecessary techniques and cumbersome streamlining. This experience has opened my eyes to a new way of thinking and has rewarded me with a career not just a job.



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We Are the Pipeline. We Are Wilmington Health

By Elizabeth Hufham

The definition of a 'pipeline' can be found in any dictionary. It is defined as *"a system through which something is conducted; a means of supply."* And that's exactly what the Pipeline program at Wilmington Health is designed to be. The Pipeline program is a 12 week process to produce reputable new hires, adequately trained in computer learning, Experior and EMR, and "on the job" training, to fulfill the anticipated needs of our company. The Pipeline program includes both clerical and clinical staff. Pipeline Associates are prepared to fulfill positions needed at the end of the 12 week learning process. The end goal is simple- a well-rounded employee ready to fill the need and jobs available with little to no additional post-Pipeline training.

I have been privileged to have the opportunity to be a 'product' of the Pipeline program. As a Pipeline associate, I have been trained in all aspects of Wilmington Health: Lean thinking, telephone training, EMR, and Experior. I have been fortunate to see many aspects of Wilmington Health during my endeavors. I have enjoyed the opportunities thus far, and hope to continue. Sometimes it's the simplest ideas that have the largest ripple effect of impact. The Pipeline Program. That's what we are... and "We Are Wilmington Health."

Upcoming Lean Events

5/10/12 Lean Awareness Training 1:00 to 5:00 pm (Managers Session)

5/16/12 Lean Steering Committee Meeting 7:00 to 8:00 am

5/16/12 Lean Awareness New Hires 1:00 to 5:00 pm

5/22/12 Lean Awareness Summer Camp 8:00 am to 12:00 pm

6/5/12 All Manager Meeting 3:00 to 4:30 pm

6/7/12 Lean Awareness Summer Camp 1:00 to 5:00 pm

6/13/12-6/15/12 Neurology Value Stream Mapping Event 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

6/19/12 Lean Awareness Summer Camp 8:00 am to 12:00 pm

6/20/12 Lean Steering Committee Meeting 7:00 to 8:00 am

6/28/12 Lean Awareness Summer Camp 1:00 to 5:00 pm

