

50. IMPROVING TURNAROUND TIME IN ORTHOPAEDIC O.R. THROUGH INTER-DISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION

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BACKGROUND:

Our orthopaedic department has 8 rooms and 13 surgeons, many of whom complained about their waiting time between surgeries which appeared to be 'much too long'. It was 43 minutes on average.

Also, the increased level of activity put pressure on the space available and the teams, which sometimes gave rise to stressful work environments, absenteeism, staff turnover (twice that of the hospital average).

Finally, the management of emergency cases was not approached in a systematic fashion and often gave rise to management challenges and delays.

OBJECTIVES:

- Reduce turnaround time in the orthopaedic OR
- Improve the work environment by engaging multi-disciplinary stakeholders in the change process
- Review how emergency cases were managed
- Test and teach basic lean management approaches

METHODS:

The Cardinal Health consultants spent three weeks with us. For the first week, they interviewed key stakeholders along the Perioperative continuum of care who are involved in managing patients coming through the orthopaedic OR, from the cleaner to the CEO! They also observed their workflow and how data was collected, asking questions to everyone along the way. The second week was spent summarising the daily challenges, identifying focus areas for improvement and planning for a four-day Kaizen event the following week which was organized with a team of 12 (nurses, doctors, planners, cleaners, porters). The Kaizen included mapping processes from a patient flow perspective, identifying waste and non-value-added activities, distinguishing key challenges using root cause analysis collectively. Finally, solutions were brainstormed and ranked on a benefit / effort matrix, which resulted in 10 actions that they would undertake to meet their objectives in the coming six months.



The Kaizen team presenting their work to management and peers.
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RESULTS:

What has been achieved?

- Turnaround time dropped 39%, from 41 min to 25 min, without requiring additional resources
- Staff turnover dropped from being twice the hospital average, down to the hospital average
- Everyone felt reenergized since something was being done and they had contributed
- A complete process map of the patient pathway enabled us to align teams on key areas to focus: Surgery planning, Roles & Responsibilities, Room preparation and cleaning, Communication
- Some specific functions on the OR were kept for the most qualified nurses, whilst in parallel making the training pathway of less experienced staff more rigorous
- Guidelines on how to use the information system were clarified, so as to more accurately capture data with turnaround time operational definitions were established
- Surgery planning time and the way staff were allocated was changed, to increase ownership and team spirit around each operating room's function, whilst ensuring no procedures requiring similar tools were planned at the same time

39%
TURNAROUND
TIME REDUCTION BETWEEN
PROCEDURES

TAKE-AWAYS:

What worked well?

- ✓ All the Kaizen team members, including the nursing staff that was taken off duty to participate in the Kaizen event were well engaged and actively contributed to the event. Yet, doctors were harder to engage during the Kaizen, and had to be involved afterwards. More communication and engagement, well before the event, could have convinced some of them to spend more time with the group.
- ✓ The experience of taking members from each department, to work together with colleagues from other departments, and then advocate for their experience with their colleagues, was clearly one that changed the mindset of the team, towards a mentality of continuous improvement where everyone contributes their valuable knowledge and experience and plays an important role.

