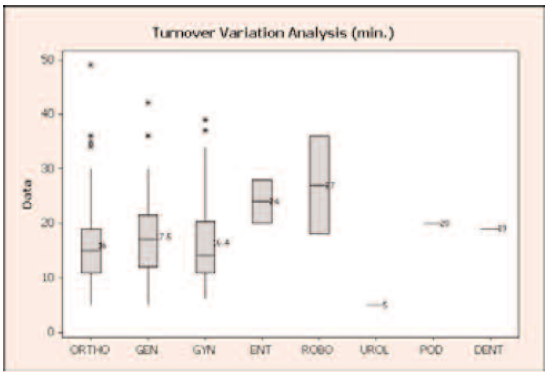
Model OR . . . Proves Continuous Improvement Never Stops

HEALTHCARE PERFORMANCE PARTNERS

The Problem

The OR staff at this 230 bed, for-profit hospital had difficulty meeting operating room turn around goals. The team averaged 20 minutes to complete room turnovers and some observed cases required up to 25 minutes. Missing personnel and supplies, delayed delivery of the patient to the OR and undefined responsibilities were just a few of the factors impacting the team's turnover efficiency. In addition, analysis of historical performance revealed a large degree of variation in turnover performance, indicating a lack of consistency within the process. Extended turnovers increased both patient and physician wait times, disrupting flow in the OR suite.

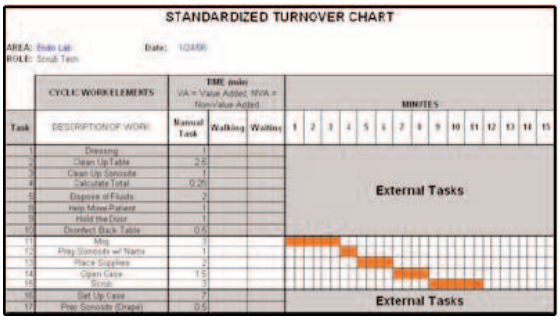


The LEAN HEALTHCARE Aproach

In order to improve turnover performance Healthcare Performance Partners employed the LEAN tools of Standard Work and SMED (Quick Turnover). Initially introduced as critical elements of the Toyota Production System, these concepts have been applied successfully across multiple industries. Perhaps its most heralded application has been in the performance racing industry where SMED and Standard Work techniques allow pit crews to complete minutes worth of work in a matter of seconds.

The Endo Vascular suite was selected as a primary focus for turnover improvement due to the advantage that quick turnarounds could provide in a competitive local market. The team of 5 was experiencing average turnovers of 21 minutes and lack of standardization drove significant variation in performance.

The team began the improvement process by identifying all tasks required to complete the room turnaround and building Standard Work Combination Sheets. The worksheets captured the turnover tasks, time required for the task and whether the task was internal (performed after the patient has left the OR) or external (performed either before the patient leaves the room or before the next patient arrives).



Putting It Into Practice

With baseline Standard Work sheets complete, the team moved to a "mocked-up" OR to simulate actual operating room conditions and identify opportunities for waste elimination. This technique was designed to allow team members to experiment with different work combinations and roles without the pressure and stress that is typically present during an OR turnover. The old adage, "Practice makes perfect" has never been more true. By moving from the training room to the operating room, the team was able to simulate the turnover in real time and identify wasted motion, communication gaps and opportunities to balance the workload. After each iteration, the Standard Work Combination Sheets were revised based on the previous simulation and the new method was tested to identify further opportunities. True PDCA in action!

Turnover Simulation Drills in the OR

The Outcome

- 45% Reduction in Turnaround Time
- 7.5 Minutes of Internal Work Moved to External
- 5 Minutes of Internal Waste Removed
- Reduced Physician Wait Time for Follow-on cases
- Reduced Patient Wait Time in Pre-Op Holding

To discuss how HPP can assist with your LEAN HEALTHCARE journey or Six Sigma Implementation: Call 615-265-2002
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