

Charging Change

Kaye Barnhart RN, BC

Lehigh Valley Health Network, Kaye.Barnhart@lvhn.org

Erin Joyce BSN, CPAN

Lehigh Valley Health Network, erin.joyce@lvhn.org

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Kaye Barnhart, RN, BC and Erin Joyce, BSN, CPAN
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania

The Plan:

Due to inefficiencies in the nursing process, an ambulatory surgical unit at an academic Magnet accredited hospital changed the preoperative patient workflow. A Value Stream Map revealed extended admission times, duplication of nursing tasks, and disorganized communications. A charge nurse was necessary to establish organization at the hub of the unit, assist with the implementation of the change, cultivate interprofessional communications and develop standard work for the charge nurse role.

The Change:

The leadership team and staff collaborated with the Organizational Effectiveness Department and utilized LEAN methodology to create a more efficient process. The leadership team identified a staff nurse to develop the role. The nursing unit divided into two teams. One team organized the work area and the second team evaluated patient flow. Key stakeholders met bi-weekly to plan the process change, allowing for step by step planning where feedback and questions could be addressed immediately.

The Charge:

The newly appointed charge nurse attended weekly meetings, travelled to multiple sites to observe charge nurses in similar settings, met with leadership to organize a plan, participated in two mock go-live trials, sought input from colleagues and addressed challenges in real time. The nursing staff offered feedback, solutions and support to improve the evolving role.

The Result:

The new ambulatory patient process is organized by the charge nurse from a central location on the Ambulatory Surgical Unit (ASU). The process change has improved inter-professional communication. The culture on the ASU has been transformed to an efficient and open environment; one which is accepting of new ideas and respectful of each person's role.

