Stop the Chaos! One Patient at a Time, Please

Megan Snyder BSN, RN, BC
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Megan.Snyder@lvhn.org

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Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania

PROJECT GOAL:
Patient transport from documented time of admission in the Emergency Department (ED) through transport to assigned medical-surgical bed occurs within 50 minutes, inclusive of standard, required handoff communication.

GEMBA
Japanese term for “actual place;” the setting where work takes place

Pre-Project Current State
- PULL was more like PUSH
  - PULL - time from when assigned bed becomes clean to time patient occupies the bed
  - PUSH was movement of patient at time of convenience
- Long “tail” of PULL between 60 and > than 90 minutes – the tail drove patient and employee dissatisfaction
- Med-Surg units experienced influx of admissions from ED
  - “Bolus” or “batching” of patients
  - Regardless of unit situation
- Driving forces – Need to move patients out of ED
  - Accommodate more patients
  - Improve patient satisfaction

Gap Analysis
- Delays in bed assignments
- Delayed and closed loop communication handoffs
- Untimely transport requests
- Limited use by med-surg staff of electronic mechanism to prioritize bed assignments

Countermeasures
- Mandatory use of electronic mechanism to prioritize bed assignments
- Completion by ED nurse and availability of handoff report to receiving RN prior to transport
- Request for transport by receiving unit only after handoff report is secured

Sustaining the Effort
- Real-time quality metric board visible to all stakeholders
- Ongoing analysis of transport times from ED to med-surg unit

Outcomes
PULL TIME: Pilot unit
April, 2011 to June, 2012

References: