Utilizing Lean Methodologies to Automate the OACC Medicare Cost Report

Cathyann Feher RN, MSN
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Cathyann.Feher@lvhn.org

Patrick Kincaid MBA
Lehigh Valley Health Network, patrick.kincaid@lvhn.org

Elyse Kernan
Lehigh Valley Health Network, elyse.kernan@lvhn.org

Denise Hill
Lehigh Valley Health Network, denise.hill@lvhn.org

Deb Bianco
Lehigh Valley Health Network, deb.bianco@lvhn.org

See next page for additional authors

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Authors
Cathyann Feher RN, MSN; Patrick Kincaid MBA; Elyse Kernan; Denise Hill; Deb Bianco; and Marybeth McMennamin BA

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Utilizing Lean Methodologies to Automate the OACC Medicare Cost Report

Cathyann Feher, RN, MSN, Patrick Kincaid, MBA, Elyse Kernan, Denise Hill, Deb Bianco, Marybeth McMennamin, BA
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, PA

Introduction

The creation of the OACC (Organ Acquisition Cost Center) Medicare Cost Report is a tedious time consuming task of data collection. The transplant financial counselors’ time was spent processing claims and preparing the supporting documentation for the cost report, instead of with direct patient care. Through the implementation of multiple lean methodologies and collaboration with Populytics, a third party administrator to automate the claims processing and streamline workflows, the financial counselor has increased availability for direct patient interactions.

Approach

Lean methodology was applied to the manual process of creating the OACC Medicare Cost Report Cost Report. The two day Kaizen event included Value Stream mapping prepared by the frontline, administrative, financial and clinical representatives. Each decision point in the process was analysed based on value added criteria. Twenty five areas for streamlining/automation were identified and prioritized for the preparation of the OACC Medicare Cost Report.

As the administrator supporting the adjudication of claims for the transplant program. Populytics was engaged to assist in the automation of patient eligibility, in network and out of network claims, automated report generation, OACC patient identification cards and the ability to field calls from patients and/or providers as necessary in reference to OACC rules.

Collaboration, dedication and perseverance has been the key to the success of the project; Lean Methodologies provided the framework. Through automation, overtime hours have been reduced and increase in patient contact by the financial counselor. Populytics created specific OACC financial reports including comprehensive details required as source data for the OACC Medicare Cost report. These monthly reports are utilized by administration in the budgeting and overall program decision making process.

Findings/ Conclusions

The lean principles provided the structured approach to accomplish this daunting task. It was the collaboration and commitment of the team member’s determination to accomplish the charter mission. The challenges of staff transitions, technology support, and available time were conquered to decrease the manual data entry of fourteen spreadsheet logs down to five. The financial counselor is now able to devote her time to patient care and overtime was eliminated.

Our Electronic Medical Record (EMR) network transition has been a challenge to complete our automation tasks, however full transplant EMR conversion is planned for 2016 with subsequent interfaces. The timeline below demonstrates the transition from a manual data entry to an automated process with the assistance of the Populytics providing the claims processing, adjudication and report writing.

Implications/ Relevance

Through automation, overtime hours have been reduced and increase in patient contact by the financial counselor. Populytics created specific OACC financial reports including comprehensive details required as source data for the OACC Medicare Cost report. These monthly reports are utilized by administration in the budgeting and overall program decision making process.