



Case Study: Using 5S Lean Six Sigma Methodology to Improve Staff Efficiency

Poor internal audit results, negative physician feedback and staff dissatisfaction in the Surgical Services Department centered on lack of space, organization and the ability of caregivers to find the supplies they needed quickly and efficiently. Furthermore, these supplies were required intra-case which subjected the patient to prolong periods under anesthesia and exposed to an environment of risk.

The urgency of the issue demanded an expedited solution. Guidon Performance Solutions worked with the client to first identify and train key staff members in the Lean Six Sigma 5S methodology. 5S is an approach to a workplace organization as well as a conditioning discipline for improvement and sustainment.

A sense of urgency was created by setting a four-day project schedule to resolve the issues identified. Prior to the project week, analysis of data was completed to identify par levels, usage of ad hoc surgical supplies, as well as to determine why surgical techs were leaving the procedure rooms, how often that was occurring, and what supplies are they retrieving.

After reviewing the analysis data, the team focused their 5S activity on two primary storerooms. Because of space limitations and how the rooms were organized, it was necessary for staff members to bypass the storeroom closest to their surgical location to retrieve an item at another storeroom. That round trip was over 500 feet and consumed considerable minutes not including the time it took to find and pick the requested supply item.

The team utilized Sort and Set in Order tactics to clean out each room and remove unnecessary supplies and equipment. Following that step, they re-organized the supplies adding those items that were consistently required intra-case to each storeroom utilizing the space they had created. They re-labeled and relocated supplies by family type and continued the 5S process by cleaning up each storeroom (Shine).

The team was also able to identify unnecessary supplies and divided those into two groups: Group A could be returned for credit. Group B could be boxed and shipped to third world countries, as these items would not be used by the client and could not be returned for credit.

The team utilized Standardize and Sustain by communicating changes and improvements to other staff members and physicians. Part of that communication was establishing the exact location of needed supplies and celebrating the fact that the long retrieval process had been eliminated.

The 5S process not only impacts organization and space but also can have a dramatic positive effect on productivity. Walking steps and time may be saved and, more importantly, patients will ultimately be impacted with fewer delays, faster procedure times and enhanced overall quality.

Client: A premier regional hospital is located in the Midwest with a growing national and global reputation

Industry: Healthcare

Service: 5S

Challenge:

- The size, layout and space considerations in the Operating Room suites were insufficient
- Staff was making multiple trips to storage/supply room
- Supplies delivery and organization issues

Solutions:

- Targeted Lean and Six Sigma 5S methodology to expedite a solution
- Core team of surgical staff members were trained in the 5S methodology

Results:

- Reorganization within two workrooms allowed them to place required supplies at the point of use
- Surgical Staff walking was eliminated by 5,000 miles per year
- Returned for credit to the unit over \$10,000 in excess supplies



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