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YUMA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

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ED Pod Process Redesign at Yuma Regional Medical Center

YUMA, ARIZONA

Team Members: M. Nilsen

Quality, Noteworthy Project

OVERVIEW

To reduce emergency department (ED) length of stay (LOS), Yuma Regional Medical Center redesigned the ED into a pod system.

PROBLEM IDENTIFIED

YRMC's ED had an average LOS of more than 300 minutes for years. Press Ganey patient satisfaction scores were poor, patients and family members complained on social media, and 32 percent of MIDAS care management system complaints stemmed from long wait times.

METHODS

The hospital used Lean value stream-mapping to identify opportunities to reduce wait time, but efforts to standardize processes and minimize variation in the triage and intake care areas led to bottlenecks. YRMC in September 2018 redesigned the ED into a pod system, in which each pod runs as its own miniature ED and must meet an overall patient LOS of 240 minutes 80 percent of the time. Each pod includes a real-time dashboard with green, yellow, and red indicators to track time thresholds. The hospital moved the resource coordinator to the ED entrance and revamped this staff member's responsibilities to include controlling bed traffic through a round-robin system that disperses patients to pods in a timely, even fashion.

ENGAGEMENT

Led by the ED director, this initiative also involved the hospital's vice president of operations, who had Lean process improvement experience; CEO; chief nursing officer, and chief medical officer. Leadership round in the ED regularly to reinforce progress.

YRMC started a daily multidisciplinary huddle with ancillary support departments to discuss the previous day's throughput and current status, identify barriers, and celebrate wins. Care advocacy team members resolved to "lean in" to complaints by holding face-to-face meetings with patients and family members to understand their concerns and ameliorate unsettling experiences.

RESULTS AND DATA

From August 2018 to August 2019, average LOS improved from 302 to 239 minutes, and the rate of patients leaving against medical advice or without treatment declined 12 percent. Press Ganey patient experience scores increased from the first to near 50th percentile, and patients and family post more positive social media comments.

