Improving Patient Transport: 
It’s All About People, Processes and Technology

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The journey begins here…

Sentara Leigh Hospital
Norfolk, Virginia
Sentara Leigh Hospital
2009

• 14,149 Discharges
• 13,151 Surgeries
• 49,424 Emergency Department Visits

Sentara Leigh Hospital
Radiology 2009

• 39,322 Inpatient Procedures
• 28,018 Emergency Department Procedures
• 57,868 Outpatient Procedures

Sentara Leigh Hospital
Central Transportation - 2009

- 11 FTE’s
- 35,923 Total Trips at an avg 19.4 mins
- Productivity 117% !!!
Enhancing Productivity & Employee Satisfaction

The Radiology Information System

It takes all three of these to make improvements!

People
Processes
Technology
People

What would increase productivity and satisfaction?

Over the years…

• We’ve increased our hours
• We’ve added a second shift Mon - Fri
• We work full days on weekends instead of ½ days.
• Increased services outside of Radiology, PVL and Renal

• We’ve made a major impact on keeping the techs “teching” and nurses “nursing”

• Had to hire more FTE’s!
As staff increased, productivity and morale improved!

2010 Productivity: 110%
2010 Average Trip Time: 19 mins
Top 10% in Employee Satisfaction

Our Dispatchers

Dispatchers were added on both shifts Mon – Fri

Serve three main functions

1st function: Provide major coordination of workflow
2nd function: Increased our communication ability with our customers.

3rd function: They watch patients in our holding area as an added safety benefit.

It takes a PROCESS overhaul!
Equipment – Did we have enough?

Renovations – make the patient experience better!
Modality Tracking

Communication
Handoffs

The Dreaded “Yellow Sticker”

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The Dreaded “Yellow Sticker”

Tracking of Trips
The Impact of Technology

- Our Electronic Medical Record was introduced in 2008
  - Using the product by EPIC
  - Transport is requested in eCare and interfaces to our eTransport system.

eCare
Other Technology

PDA’S

Two way Radios
Processes that just didn’t work…

• Inflexibility in Transporting other area needs
• Lack of equipment availability/storage
• Different productivity levels
• Staff dissatisfier

Dedicated Transporters to Nursing Floors or Ancillaries

• Inflexibility in Transporting other area needs
  • Lack of equipment availability/storage
  • Different productivity levels
  • Staff dissatisfier

Adding transport staff from other areas to our cost center without management authority

• Inflexibility in Transporting other area needs
  • No accountability for trip tracking or hours
  • Different productivity levels and rewards
  • Staff dissatisfier
Hospital Construction!

• Continual source of delays.
• Hospital in constant state of renovation.
• Different processes on different floors – 3 pods vs central nurse’s station.

Expanded Services and Hours

• Too Much
• Too Fast
• Without people in place

Inpatient Scheduling

• Reinventing wanted patients on a hospital schedule that coordinated with their home schedule. Nursing supported.
• Patient’s schedule didn’t coordinate with the ancillaries.
• LOS was ultimately affected.
Quiet Time

- Quiet time occurs every day between 1pm and 2pm.
- Allows patients freedom to rest and not be disturbed.
- Allows nursing to catch up on paperwork.

Here’s what has worked!

Our Successes

Pagers
Portable Phones

eTransport
- Uses web to pager technology
- Tracks trips and productivity
  - Assigns trips
  - Allows ancillaries to request returns and make inquiries.

Dispatchers!
Customer Service Commitments

Always keep you safe.
Always treat you with dignity, respect and compassion.
Always listen and respond to you.
Always keep you informed and involved.
Always work together as a team to provide you quality healthcare.

Our Greatest Success

Focused on Building Relationships
National Transporter Certification!

Benefits of Certification
1. Provides consistency and standardization.
2. Provides compliance with Joint Commission.
3. Adheres to standards of productivity.
4. Develops a professional demeanor.
5. Enhanced RESPECT.
6. Improved customer service.
7. Standardized competencies.

Lessons Learned!
1. Staffing needs to be realistic.
2. Communicate processes.
4. Strive to make a difference.