

HOW TO USE PROCESS IMPROVEMENT FOR OPTIMIZING PACU FLOW

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Spectrum Health is a multiple hospital system based in Grand Rapids Michigan. Butterworth Hospital is a level one trauma center with 600 licensed beds; performing 20,000 surgical cases annually. There are 28 Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) bays serving 28 operating rooms (OR's).

From July 2012 to January 2013, the Butterworth PACU closed on average 55% of the business days. Delays ranged from five minutes up to one hour. Closure reasons were staffing, patient acuity, influx of patients from the OR's and lack of available inpatient beds. Closures have had a negative impact on staff and physician morale, decreased patient satisfaction and have created production pressure for PACU RN's.

A four day rapid improvement event (RIE) was held. The RIE utilized the Toyota Production Model for process improvement. An A3 document was written outlining the business case, current state and future state.

Use of this systematic problem solving approach and LEAN tools to identify waste, create standard work and organize the environment and flow of the unit resulted in 0% closures for the first 40 business days! These improvements have been sustained for the past 6 months, with an average PACU closure of 6% and average wait time of less than 15 minutes.