



Plastic and Oral Surgery Reap the Benefits of Lean at Boston Children's Hospital

A GBMP Client Case Study

Boston Children's Hospital in Boston, MA is a 395-bed children's general facility. Nationally ranked in ten pediatric specialties, Boston Children's includes one of the largest and most experienced pediatric Plastic and Oral Surgery centers anywhere in the world. Every year, staff within the Boston Children's Plastic and Oral Surgery department serves ten subspecialty programs. These programs see more than 16,000 children of all ages and with all different types of conditions: those present at birth, those acquired later in life, those that are most common as well as those that are extremely rare and complex.

Dan Fleming, GBMP Continuous Improvement Manager, has been supporting improvement efforts within this department for the past year. Recent efforts have been focused in their patient clinic and in supporting processes. Teams have focused on workplace organization (5S) and Pull Systems/Kanban in both the clinic and administrative processes. They have also been successfully using the CEDAC (Cause and Effect Diagram with the Addition of Cards—see example below) method to work through problems.

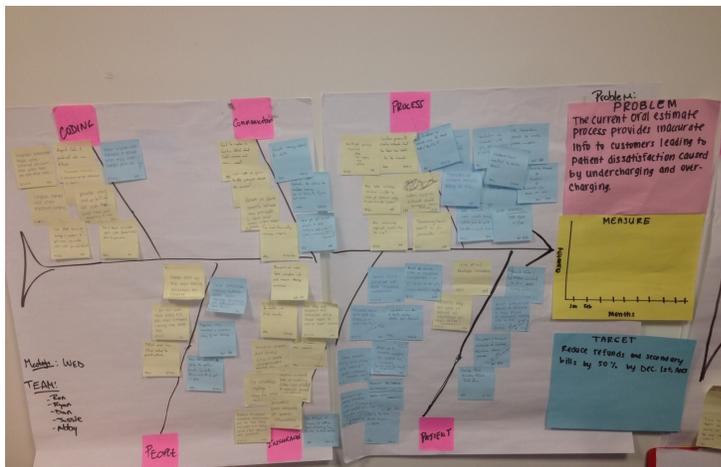


Figure 1: CEDAC diagram for the Estimating Process was created to work through cause and effect relationships and target measurable improvements.

According to GBMP CI Manager Dan Fleming, “The teams in the Plastic Oral Surgery department have really demonstrated the spirit of Kaizen.” “They recognize that making the work easier for them makes a better experience for patients, and helps cut costs and improve quality. I have introduced them to several lean tools when a process or problem suggests application of the tool makes sense. They have done a great job adapting various tools and methods to really rethink how daily work gets done.”

Ronald Heald, MBA and Financial Administrator for the practice, led a team that tackled Oral Surgery's estimate process. The team identified many issues that contribute to patient dissatisfaction and incorrect charges. Using the CEDAC method, they explored current state cause and effect information, set a target to reduce refunds and secondary bills, and are actively working through a formalized process to test several improvement ideas surfaced by the team. "This is still going well and we've further enhanced what metrics to track/how to measure success. We have the pre-intervention type data (and we are refining it a bit) and we're looking forward to evaluating the post intervention data. The Lean ideology is great on so many levels. It is not only an all-inclusive, hands-on type process bringing together and engaging a diverse set of employees - from administrative staff to physicians - but also it is a very timely and vital tool to help us innovate and transform into a more efficient and effective business. This work has enabled us to look at processes in a new, safer, more engaging light, with a proven template for success that ultimately breaks down unnecessary barriers and points us towards improvement and value enhancement," said Mr. Heald.

Kelly Muir, Practice Administrator, was involved in a team that looked at the patient photography process. "GBMP and Dan have really helped our employees learn how to collaborate to address problems using targeted lean tools, thinking and methods. The changes that have been implemented enhance both the patient and employee experience, and most importantly demonstrate to our staff that they can be the creators of good changes on a daily basis," said Ms. Muir.

For more information about Boston Children's Hospital please visit <http://www.childrenshospital.org>

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