DECREASE PATIENT WAIT TIMES IN BREAST IMAGING

Breast Imaging Improvement Team Members
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Myia Woods - Medical Assistant
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Target State: SMART Goal

Our target was to decrease the average wait time for breast imaging patients from 29 minutes to 10 minutes by October 9, 2015.
Baseline

Diagnostic Patients
Scheduled Time-Exam Begin Time

Analysis: Detailed Process Map
Process Analysis: Multiple Consent Steps Identified

1. Nurse Consents
2. Attending/Fellow Consents (Giving same information as the nurse)
3. Technologist explains procedure (Some of the same information as Nurse and Attending/Fellow)
4. Medical Assistant repeats the post procedure instruction (Same information as Nurse, Attending/Fellow and Technologist)

Cause and Effect Analysis
Interventions

Shorten consent times for procedures

Structure and protocol for same day add on exams
Interventions

- Shorten consent times for procedures
- Structure and protocol for same day add on exams
- Improve communication to patients and staff about wait times

Lead Tech is protocoling diagnostic schedule the evening before. Protocoling includes: correct exam ordered, correct number of views, patient history.

- Improve pre-exam process for diagnostic mammogram and ultrasound
Interventions

- Shorten consent times for procedures
- Structure and protocol for same day add on exams
- Improve communication to patients and staff about wait times
- Improve pre-exam process for diagnostic mammogram and ultrasound
- Improve the accuracy of scheduling the correct exam

Mammography coordinator and Lead Tech protocol diagnostic exams prior to scheduling.

The designated breast imaging schedulers are then scheduling appropriate exams.

Run Chart-Diagnostic Exams

Diagnostic Patients
Scheduled Time-Exam Begin Time

- Protected same day add-ons
- Created exam wait time board for patients
- Technologist protocols exams before scheduled

Desired Direction
Run Chart-Procedure Exams

**Intervention**

- Structured procedure consenting process
- Protocol exams before they are scheduled.
- Same day add on slots

**Sustain Method**

- Watch the daily run chart. If consent time is out of limits, the reason will be looked into and addressed.
- The assigned techs will be checking the order queue daily, to protocol exams in queue.
- Daily schedule checks to make sure the add on slots are not being overridden on the schedule.
**Sustainment**

As shown in the following chart, our process mean (dark blue line) went from 29 minutes to 10 minutes within the 5 month frame with much less variation. A year later, our current average is 6 minutes.

**Key Learning Points**

1. Small changes with everyone on board = Large impact on processes
2. It takes a village to move mountains
3. Don’t be afraid to ask the customer what they want
4. Time can’t be given back
5. Calmer and relaxed staff due to patients being more relaxed
6. The power of patient involvement in problem solving

We invited a patient to assist the group with input on how to help alleviate long patient wait times. Having Mary on our team brought patient perspective to light. Her insight was instrumental in achieving our goal.
Go Team!