Screening Mammography: Achieving Same Day Access

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Access to Screening Mammography

• In our practice, access for screening mammography at Tansey Breast Center was a frequent source of complaints from referring clinicians and patients.
• Screening mammograms were performed at:
  – Tansey Breast Center (multidisciplinary, free-standing Breast Center, performs screening and diagnostic mammograms, located across the street from the Ochsner Medical Center main campus hospital and clinic)
  – Two satellite primary care clinics in suburban areas (perform screening mammograms only)
Access to Screening Mammography

- Screening mammography is not an “emergency” procedure where same day access was felt to be medically necessary.
- Nonetheless, access for screening mammograms at Tansey Breast Center did not meet Radiology Department or institution-wide expectations.

Screening Mammogram Access at Tansey Breast Center – 1/08 – 6/09

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screening Mammogram Access</th>
<th>1st Available Appointment</th>
<th>3rd Available Appointment</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23.5 days</td>
<td>38.8 days</td>
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Access to Screening Mammography


• In New York City, access for screening mammograms:
  – Within 1 week: 62% of facilities
  – 1-2 weeks: 11% of facilities
  – 2-4 weeks: 18% of facilities
  – >4 weeks: 14% of facilities

Access to Screening Mammography

• Studies have shown a link between long waiting times and patient non-attendance for healthcare appointments in general and for screening mammography specifically(1-3).

• Research about the link between travel burden and health care utilization is less consistent than wait times(4-12).
Access to Screening Mammography

• Our staff routinely accommodated requests for same day screening mammograms.
• Nevertheless, having to contact our department to get a same day appointment was perceived as an inconvenient barrier by patients and clinicians.
• Earlier access was available at the satellite clinics but patients were generally unwilling to travel for sooner appointments.
• In late 2008, mammography volumes justified adding another screening unit at main campus.

Same Day Access for Screening Mammograms – Our Model
Same Day Screening Mammography - Goals

- Make same day access available every day
- Eliminate barriers that might lead to non-compliance
- Focus on convenience
- Minimize hiring of additional personnel

Same Day Screening Mammography - Goals

- Improve efficiency by eliminating disruptions due to patients who arrive earlier or later than appointment time
- Reduce lost productivity caused by “no show” appointments
- Streamline processes as much as possible
Same Day Screening Mammography - Location

- We wanted to put the new unit in the main campus rather than Tansey Breast Center to minimize distance.
- There was insufficient space in the Radiology Department for equipment, waiting rooms, and changing areas.
- Exam volumes (and dissatisfaction) were greatest from Internal Medicine and Ob-Gyn clinicians.
- Internal Medicine allowed our department to use of two adjacent rooms near the front entrance and check-in area for waiting room and mammography room.

Same Day Screening Mammography – New Work Flow

- Patients leave clinician’s office with electronic or written order for screening mammogram or self-refer without an order.
- Clinician’s office staff does not need to book an appointment time.
- Signs guide patients from the clinic offices directly to mammography area.
- No additional “check-in” is required.
Same Day Screening Mammography – New Work Flow

• Upon arrival, signs instruct patients to enter their names on a HIPAA compliant sign-in sheet, change their clothes, and complete a questionnaire.
• Mammographic examinations are performed on a first-come, first-served basis.
• “Self-service” is used as much as possible to reduce need for ancillary personnel.
• One exception: patients must be able to stand and change unassisted to have their mammograms in this unit.

Same Day Screening Mammography – New Work Flow

• To limit the amount of time the technologist must spend addressing patient issues, pamphlets direct patients who are “outliers”:
  – Patients who cannot wait and want to schedule an appointment at Tansey or a satellite clinic.
  – Patients who have a clinical problem and need a diagnostic mammogram (not a screening).
  – Phone line was dedicated at Tansey to assist these patients.
Same Day Screening Mammography – New Work Flow

- Staffing – 1 mammographic technologist, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.
- Assignment is rotated among mammography technologists who work at Tansey and the satellite clinics.
- 1 additional technologist was hired.

Same Day Screening Mammography – New Work Flow

- No support personnel (receptionist, tech assistant, aide, etc.) are utilized.
- Technologist is in contact with supervisor or assistant supervisor at Tansey via the instant messaging feature on Ochsner’s email system.
- Other resources (reporting system, radiologists, clerical staff, supervisor,…) are shared with Tansey Breast Center.
Same Day Screening Mammography – New Work Flow

• Originally, the technologist was scheduled with a “lunch break” at noon.
• Due to demand from clinicians and patients, staffing was changed to two technologists working one at a time with overlapping schedules so that continuous service is available throughout the day.

Same Day Screening Mammography

Internal Medicine Walk-in Mammography

Hours of Operation:
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

PLEASE ENTER HERE
WOMEN ONLY.

Thank you and have a nice day!

Please Sign In and Follow Instructions Below:

1. Take a clipboard and complete Questionnaire.
2. Enter dressing booth and remove clothing from WAIST UP.
3. WIPES are provided to remove deodorant.
4. Put gown on, OPEN to FRONT.
5. Place clothing in a Belongings Bag and have a seat.

If you are having ANY breast problem, please use the appropriate coat hanger on the wall.
Same Day Screening Mammography

Same Day Screening Mammography
Same Day Screening Mammography

- Immediately upon opening this unit, we achieved our goal of same day access every day for screening mammography.
Same Day Screening Mammography - Utilization

• Generally, in our department, decisions about acquiring new equipment were based on "pro forma" models of utilization with an expected number of scheduled appointments.
• Lack of schedule was a departure from standard business modeling used in our institution for equipment acquisition and staffing.
• We were expected to at least achieve the same volumes as at our screening mammographic units at the satellite clinics.

Same Day Screening Mammography – Utilization

• There was a learning curve as clinicians and patients learned about the new unit.
• Nonetheless, daily volumes at the same day unit exceeded those at the satellite clinics by 33% in the first full year (2010) and by 64% in the second year (2011).
Same Day Screening Mammography Volume Comparison

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Average Number of Screening Mammograms/Day</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satellite Screening Mammography Units</td>
<td>13.21</td>
<td>12.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same Day Unit</td>
<td>17.58</td>
<td>21.08</td>
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Conclusions

- Same day access can be achieved for screening mammography.
- Modifications to work flow allowed us to achieve greater volumes with less staffing than screening units with traditional scheduled appointments.
- This model has been well received by patients and clinicians.
- Multidisciplinary and administrative support enabled us to adopt a different model that focused on patient convenience.
References


References