"Where's the Thing"?
Can Kanban Improve Efficiency? - Spread in our Supply Chain

The Problem

The problem is the variance in setting par levels for supplies stocked on patient units. There was no standardized process for reordering supplies causing variance for par stockers and end users resulting in the over and under stocking of supplies.

Aim/Goal

The goal is to create a standardized process that will remove variance from reordering supplies for the benefit of both the par stockers and the end users.

The Team

CC7 Staff

Farr 9 Staff

Jenine Davignon MBA, Management Engineer (Business Transformation)

Ryan Erskine, Project Manager (Materials)

Brian Bertrand, Supervisor (Materials)

Bill Pyne, Director (Materials)

Judy Hebert, O.R. Material Manager (Peri-operative Services)

The Interventions

Through our Rapid Improvement Events (RIE) we look for ways to improve upon the foundation of established processes we have already put in place here at BIDMC.

➤ Through meetings with Business Transformation and the staff on CC7 we decided to try a Kanban supply replenishment system.

➤ Many hours were spent on CC7, the first unit we attempted to Kanban, going through data and meeting with the end users to try to adopt functional par levels.

➤ Starting with the med room on CC7 we went through each item and created a two bin trigger system that would set a signal for the par stocker to reorder.

➤ Beginning with just the med room we were able to create a controlled environment where we would be able to trial our concepts in a real time setting while causing little disturbance to the daily functions of the unit.

➤ Once a successful process was established in the med room we prepared to launch the new system to the two other supply areas on CC7 using a power point presentation with strong visual representation of the process and how the system would work.

➤ After staff assimilated to the medroom and the new system seemed to be working well over the next couple of months we began implementing the Kanban in the other two stocking areas of the unit to complete the full implementation in the unit.

➤ Using the lessons learned from implementing the system on CC7 we decided to implement it on Farr 9 to get better baseline metrics from having the system operate with two different par stockers.

The Results/Progress to Date

Kanban completed on CC7 and Farr 9 but we are early in the process of gathering metrics to be able to get a full grasp of the benefits or disadvantages this process has on the two units.
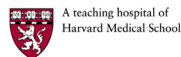

Lessons Learned

➤ There was and still is a large learning curve in how the system works and operates.

➤ We learned we had to create ways to make a side by side bin system work so only one bin would be used before the other, in order for the system to flow.

➤ We are all still learning. Being new to this process and the intricacies that work within it we work to make this system better day by day.

➤ Constant communication and feedback from all parties is crucial for success.

Next Steps/What Should Happen Next

➤ Our next steps in the process are to continue to gather and study the data from the floor over the next couple of months to see how the system is working.

➤ We will reconvene and weigh the pros and cons of the new process and decide whether to spread this process to other supply areas.

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For More Information Contact

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