

Improving the Call Center Experience

Emily Bridges, MS, RD; Kelsey Whalen, RD

BIDMC

Introduction/Problem

The call center in BIDMC's East Campus Kitchen is the main hub for patients and nurses to order breakfast, lunch, and dinner seven days a week. The call center was staffed by customer service representatives, all trained in using HealthTouch 4.0 to craft personalized meals for each individual patient.

Over time, multiple problem areas were identified:

- Patients and nurses reported long hold times. In early 2017, there was an average of a 6.5 minute wait at peak time, highest of 11 minutes.
- The call center was generally understaffed. Staffing needs were determined using the average daily call volume and average length of a call. Given increasing census, staffing was found to insufficient.
- Patient complaints via Press Ganey of incorrectly ordered meals, missing items, curt employees, etc.
- New call center employees did not have a training manual to reference or a standardized training program.

All problem areas were identified as opportunities to improve effectiveness, efficiency, and efficacy of the call center as a whole, thereby improving patient and nursing satisfaction as it relates to food service.

Aim/Goal

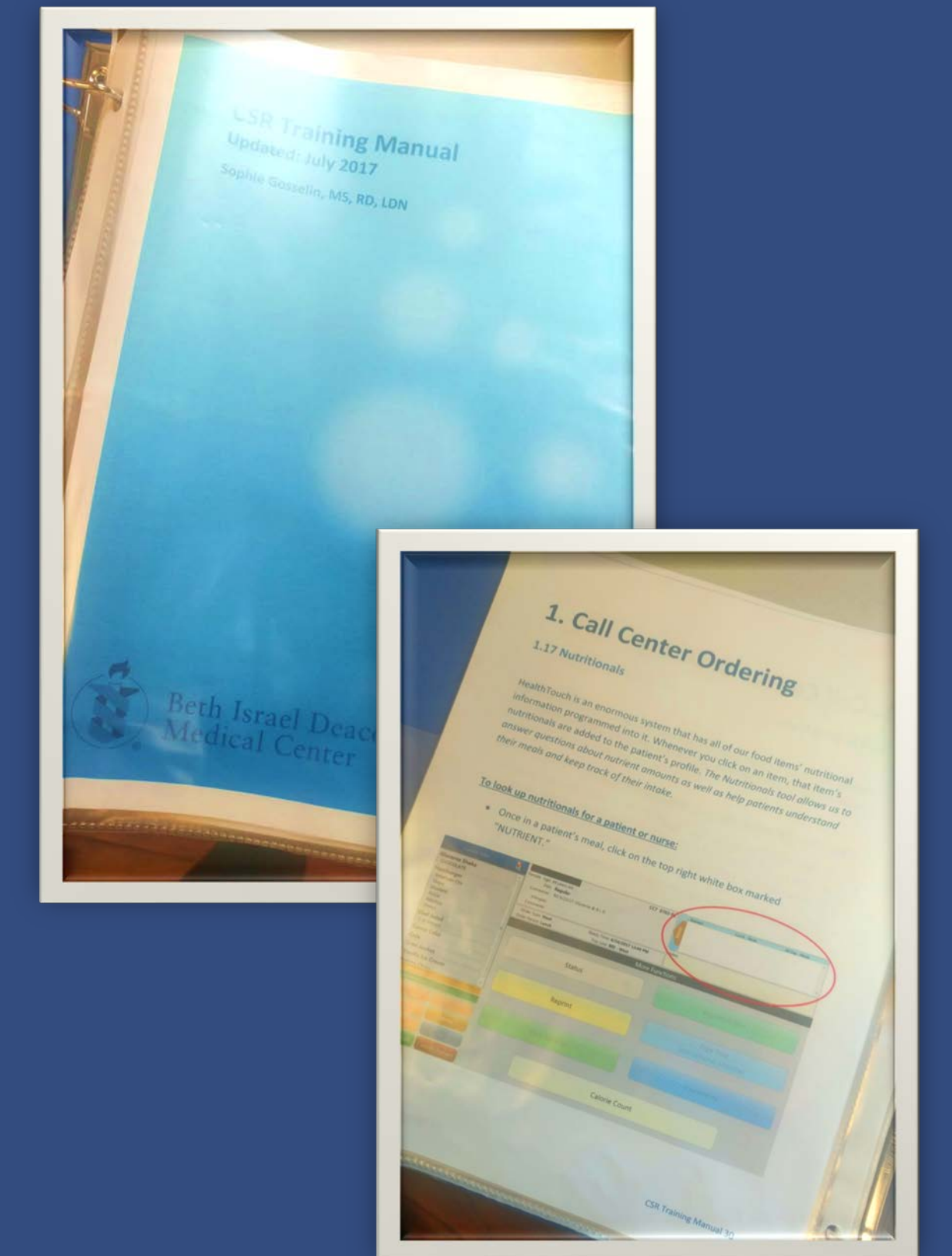
The overall goals of this project were to decrease hold times, increase Press Ganey scores of employee courtesy, increase satisfaction of nursing with food service, and standardize and improve training for newly hired employees.

The Team

- Kelsey Whalen, RD, Operations Manager, Food Services
- Emily Bridges, MS, RD, Patient Services Manager, Food Services
- Shana Sporman, RD, Director of Food Services
- Chris Weiss, MBA, Asst Director of Food Services
- Sophie Gosselin, MS, RD, LDN
- Call center employees

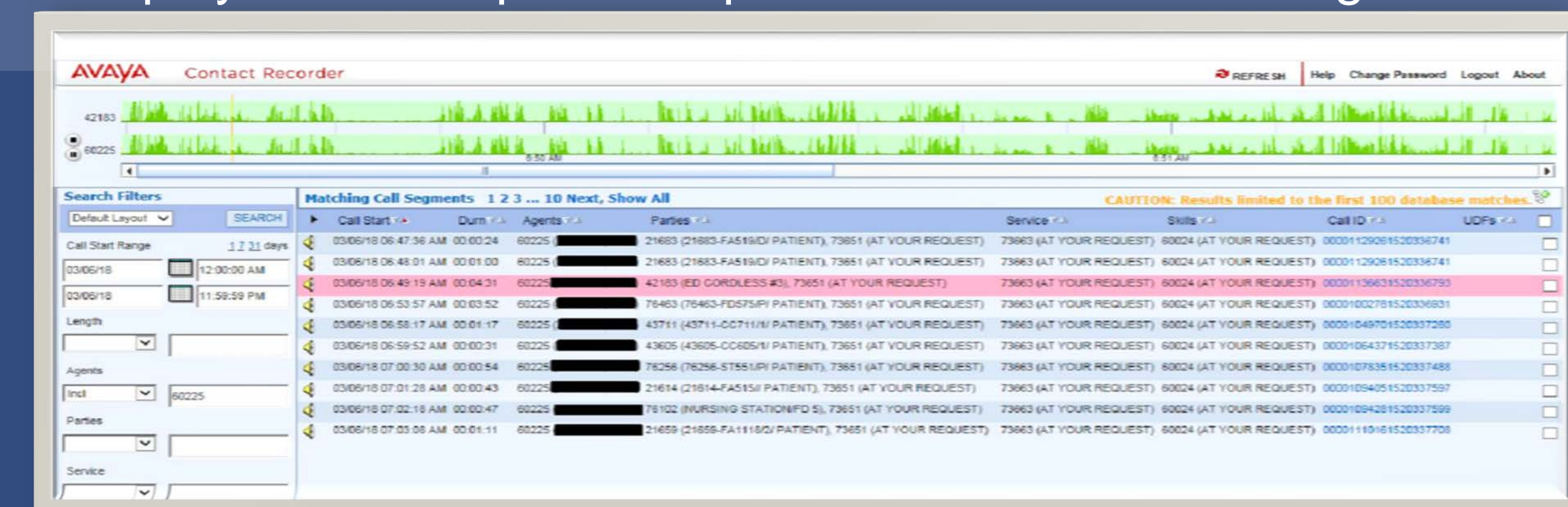
The Interventions

- Increased staffing by 1 FTE (full-time equivalent) in March 2017 and 1 FTE in April 2017
- Created and implemented CSR training manual in August 2017
- Purchased and utilized training headset when onboarding new employees beginning September 8, 2017.
- Utilized Avaya CMS Supervisor software to track average hold times, answering speed, and other metrics. Information was leveraged to motivate employees and increase accountability. Information could also be used to identify peak hold times in order to adjust job flows as necessary.



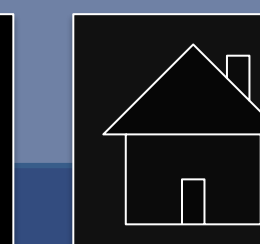
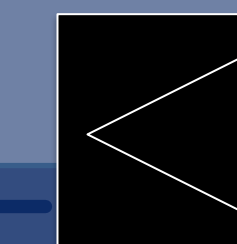
Agent Name	Login ID	AUX	Reason	State	Split/Skill Level	VDN Name
FOOD SVC EAST 2	60249	0	AUX		44:59	
FOOD SVC EAST 1	60248	0	AUX		-----	
	60225	0	AUX		34:19	
	60240	0	ACDN	19	1 34	AT YOUR F
FOOD SVC WEST	60245	0	AUX		-----	
	60368	0	ACDN	19	1 104	AT YOUR F
	60228	0	AUX		73:15	

- Utilized Avaya call recording software beginning late November 2016 to listen to calls placed in the call center. Calls could be used as a reference point when speaking to employees about patient reported issues made during the ordering process.



For more information, contact:

Emily Bridges, MS, RD; Patient Services Manager, ebridges@bidmc.harvard.edu



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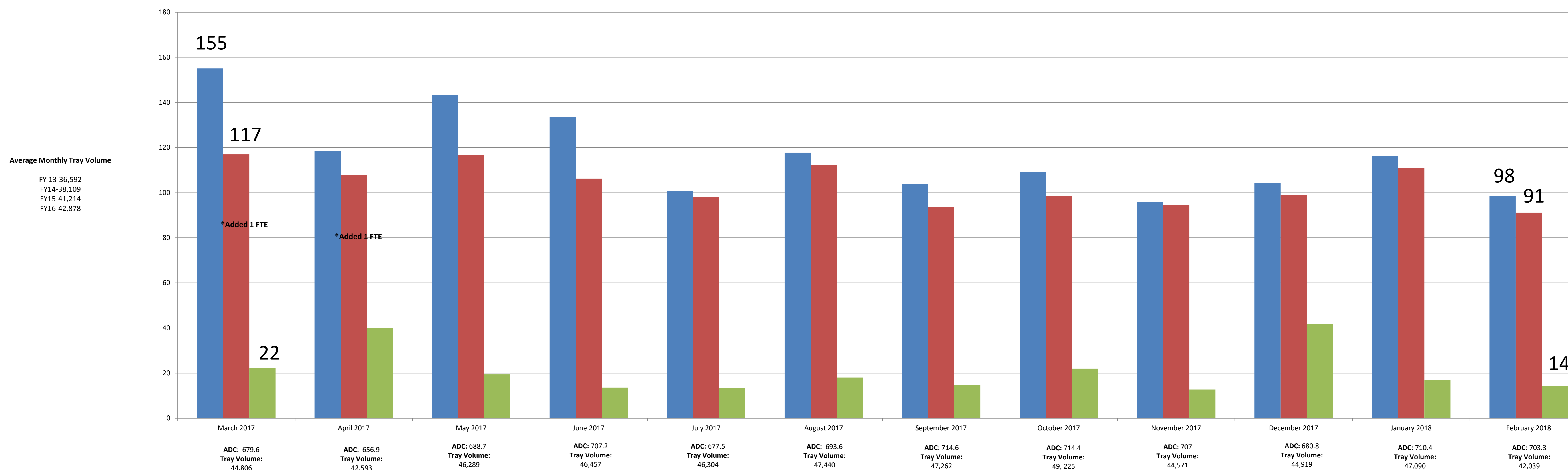
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Results/Progress to Date

Call Center Statistics

Avg Speed Ans (sec) Avg Aban Time (sec) Max Delay (min)



	Avg Ans Speed	Avg Max Delay
March 2017	2: 35 sec	33:38 sec
February 2018	1:38 sec	22:30 sec
2017 in total	2:09 sec	21:26 sec
2018 thus far	1:48 sec	15:30 sec

Average answering speed (blue), max delay (green), and average abandon time (red) from March 2017 to February 2018

Lessons Learned

- Ensuring orders are read back to the patient or nurse after each meal is placed helps eliminate mistakes. This is often in conflict with the call center employees trying to finish each call quickly to decrease the que. We realized how important it is to remind employees that reading back orders can help prevent unnecessary calls for missing items.
- Getting employee feedback on policies, the training manual, and other instructional material is crucial to the success of their implementation.
- Weekly call center meetings across shifts help motivate and inform call center employees and is an important component of improving the call center experience.
- Press Ganey questions center around courtesy of the employees delivering trays, not of employees in the call center. The courtesy of the call center is recorded using Service Depot (a patient rounding tool), but was not utilized frequently enough over the course of the year to trend.

Next Steps

- For 2018, the goal is to decrease the average max delay by 20% (goal of 17 minutes and 9 seconds) and achieve an average answering speed of 1 minute and 40 seconds.
- Continue to utilize computer software and training procedures to improve nursing and patients' call center experience.
- Compile and post call center policies and frequently asked questions to be displayed at each call center computer for ease of reference.
- Establish better benchmarks to assess future call center needs
- Incorporate West Campus employees into weekly call center meetings
- Utilize Service Depot to track efficacy of call center employees specifically.

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