



Here is an article from Lean Advisors Inc. (www.leanadvisors.com) that brilliantly captures the value of Lean to the healthcare industry:

Lean Healthcare



Does Lean work in Healthcare?

Absolutely. Lean works wherever there is a defined set of activities working to produce a product or service. Healthcare 'factories' such as diagnostic labs makes the introduction of Lean into healthcare facilities more intuitive and the results initially more visible. However we find that once the thought process becomes integrated in one area then it quickly spreads to other areas as Lean offers somewhat of a path of least resistance creating a domino effect as it permeates throughout the enterprise.

At Lean Advisors we have successfully implemented Lean in several well-known healthcare institutions throughout North America. Our Hospital experience includes Critical Care Units, Outpatient Clinics to the Laboratory. Here are some of the Healthcare organizations that we have worked with:



Our methods of transferring Lean knowledge through the right combination of classroom and practical hands-on training and implementation have given our clients the confidence to continue their Lean effort long after we have completed our work. The strategy is simple: map your Value Stream(s), create an Implementation Plan, and then, over the next 4 - 12 months, implement the right Lean tools at the right time and place as defined by the Plan.

What is Lean?

Lean is a thought process. It is a way of thinking about how a product or service flows through a series of processes in the most efficient manner possible. It is a simple strategy that creates flow through the elimination of waste, variation and work imbalance. Each activity or process must create value from the perspective of the customer.

Lean is sometimes misrepresented as simply a set of tools. Kanban, 5S, Kaizen, SMED, Poka Yoke are a few of the most popular ones. Lean is a way of thinking in terms of value to the customer, of improving 'processes' not managing people, of flow and pull, of the identification and elimination of waste, and of the pursuit of perfection. Those are the things that create the fabric of what we call the Lean enterprise. Lean tools grew out of the need to have mechanisms

in place to support the way of thinking throughout the enterprise and to allow flow to permeate the process.

In order to use the Lean tools effectively we must change our way of thinking. That is what will ultimately lead us to the desired Future State. Think Lean and use the tools where and when they make sense!

Lean Healthcare Experience - Value Streams

- » Outpatient to collect
- » Chemistry
- » Order to Phlebotomy to Accessioning
- » Hepatitis Lab
- » HIV Lab
- » Renal
- » Cytogenetics
- » Critical Care Units
- » Rapid Response Lab
- » Haematology
- » Special Studies Lab
- » Kidney stones
- » Opiates
- » Meconium
- » Logistics
- » MRI
- » X-Ray

Lean Healthcare Results



"We have been on the Lean Program since the 17th of January, and what a difference it's made. The most important improvement has been the coordination of lab draws which in turn means less sticks, charges, and risk of infection to our patients."



"The bus route we have set up has enabled the Doctors, and Nurses to know when we will be coming to the room, or when we have been at the room which in turn helps to coordinate the work we do reducing accesses to the patients."



"Getting the buy in from Consultants, Nurse Managers, Respiratory, etc... has been invaluable. It made for a very smooth transition into lean. It's wonderful to see such a positive change made to the way we do our job, and to know that the people actually doing the job were given the freedom to come up with these changes, and with supervision help to implement them."

I recommend visiting their website for more information, and contacting me to discuss how Lean can benefit your healthcare enterprise.