**INTRODUCTION**

With rising costs and threats to continued reductions in reimbursements, supply expenses are an important piece in an organization's ability to stay efficient and control costs. Supplies can be a major source of variable costs behind labor so it is important to have as much control over the “variable” part as much as possible. Nursing supplies provide staff members the proper resources to provide care to residents. The availability and accessibility of these supplies impacts the quality of care that can be provided to residents. Supplies that are in stock and accessible in a timely manner reduces waste in the treatment and care of residents. The supply management and inventory systems process improvement project focused on two variables: availability and accessibility.

**CURRENT KNOWLEDGE OF TASK**

The goal of the project was to develop a standardized supply management process within different types of supply areas accessed by nursing staff. Upon review of the current state of supply management, there was not a standard management of supplies in any areas. The ability to control the flow of supplies and also the inventory on hand would provide higher outcomes in efficiency and also staff satisfaction. Based on knowledge about 5S and other quality improvement tools I reviewed other best practices for health care supply storage to begin my project. 5S is a workplace organization method to increase efficiency and effectiveness by identifying items needed, defining a system, and building a standardized process to sustain the gains.

Another best practice that could be implemented into the developed process was Kanban. Kanban works toward Toyota's just in time principle. Using a two bin storage system supplies are stored in two separate bins. When one bin is empty it can be replaced by a full bin. The empty bin will then be picked up by the supply manager who will then include the item in the next scheduled purchase.

**METHODOLOGY**

- **Step One:** Data collection about the current state
- **Step Two:** Research best practices
- **Step Three:** Go to the Gemba “Gemba is a Japanese term meaning “the real place.” This is part of Toyota’s lean manufacturing. The idea of gemba is to go to the people who do the work to identify the wastes and identify opportunities for improvement.
- **Step Four:** Plan new approach
- **Step Five:** Pilot ancillary rooms
- **Step Six:** Adjust
- **Step Seven:** Full scale ancillary rooms
- **Step Eight:** Full scale storage room
- **Step Nine:** Adjust

**CALCULATED WASTES**

- Cycle time to place order average: 3 hours
- Cycle time to stock ancillary room: 1.25 hours
- Staff satisfaction: 2 on scale of 1-5
- Space: 56 cubic feet per clean utility room used
- Costs: Over 30 types of items that were expired

**RETURN ON INVESTMENT**

- Cycle time to place order average: .75 hours
- Cycle time to stock ancillary room: 1.95 hours
- Staff satisfaction: 4 on scale of 1-5
- Space: 30 cubic feet per clean utility room used, reallocated 150 square feet in central supply room
- Costs: The system developed should eliminate expired items.

**SUMMARY**

The data collection section of the poster visualizes some of the outcomes of the project. Some main points to hit on include:

- Having a standardized system for the ancillary supply rooms increased efficiency for staff to identify locations of items. This reduced time spent looking for items and increased time to care for residents. It also increased reliability of items not being stocked.
- The inventory on hand was reduced, thus decreasing the need for more storage rooms for the new skilled nursing facility being built in the coming years.
- The inventory management process was streamlined to reduce time needed to complete the purchase orders and restore more time to other value added tasks.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Communication: It is important when working a project that will impact many individuals to develop a communication plan along with the project plan. Communications may be scheduled updates sent out or a visual management board updated on any changes that occurred or soon to be occurring.
- Audits: The continued success of this project relies on all staff to use the developed systems. Regular audits are recommended to ensure items are being stored in correct place, staff do not hoard items, and that new supplies are being built into the developed system.
- Regular Meetings: A recommendation for future projects is to continue regularly scheduled meetings. During the initial planning and development portion of the project I had regular meetings to discuss the project. As we moved into piloting stages and turnover occurred with the team the regularly scheduled meetings were not used and the project was delayed. It is important to sustain contact with the team through all parts of the project so that when the next phase occurs, the team is ready for it.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

COO/Skilled Nursing Facility Administrator/Preceptor: Michael Libby

DON: Jameie Williams

Director of Organizational Advancement: Sherry Cira

Lean Consultant: Brian Fairbrother

Project Team:

- ADON: Jennifer Coppes
- Scheduler/Supply Manager: David Downs

All of the staff at Marquardt Village for their input, feedback and commitment to sustaining the standardized systems.