Is Lean actually working in hospitals?

A fair question, and one that deserves evidence rather than enthusiasm. When the third edition of *Lean Hospitals* was published in 2016, there were many published examples of Lean methods improving safety, flow, patient experience, and cost. Here is a sample, as it appears in Chapter 1.

Each result reflects the organization, setting, and period described in its source. Some source links from 2015 no longer work; the citations are given as published so they can be found in archives or libraries.

Safety and quality

Reduced central-line-associated bloodstream infections by 76%, reducing patient deaths from such infections by 95% and saving $1 million

Allegheny Hospital, Pennsylvania [1]

Reduced hospital-acquired infections, saving 57 lives, reducing ICU length of stay, and reducing costs by over $5 million over two years

University of Pennsylvania Medical Center [2]

Reduced readmission rates for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) patients by 48%

UPMC St. Margaret Hospital, Pennsylvania [3]

Reduced falls by 22%, reducing costs by more than $500,000

Hanover Regional Medical Center, North Carolina [4]

Reduced pressure ulcers by 56% in three pilot areas over two years, with a 30% decrease system-wide

BJC Healthcare, Missouri [5]

Avoided 87 readmissions for congestive heart failure in 12 months across four hospitals, saving $830,000

Four hospitals in California [6]

Reduced sepsis mortality from 24% to 9%, reducing the average cost per case from $15,772 to $12,771

Presence Health, Illinois [7]

Waiting times and length of stay

Reduced patient waiting time for non-emergent orthopedic surgery from 14 weeks to 31 hours (from first call to surgery); improved inpatient satisfaction scores from 68% "very satisfied" to 90%

ThedaCare, Wisconsin [8]

Reduced emergency patient length of stay by 29% and avoided $1.25 million in new emergency department (ED) construction

Avera McKennan, South Dakota [9]

Reduced waiting times for screening colonoscopies from 6 weeks to less than 24 hours while reducing cost per patient by 9.5%

Palo Alto Medical Foundation, California [10]

Increased the percentage of atrial fibrillation patients treated within 40 days from 11% to 94%

HealthEast, Minnesota [11]

Flow

Reduced turnaround time for clinical laboratory results by 60% in 2004 without adding head count or new instrumentation; further reduced times by another 33% from 2008 to 2010

Alegent Health, Nebraska [12, 13]

Reduced instrument decontamination and sterilization cycle time by 54% while improving productivity by 16%

Kingston General Hospital, Ontario [14]

Reduced late surgery starts from 50% to 30% and rescheduled procedures from 20% to 4.4%, while increasing cases per month from 329 to 351

New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation [15]

Reduced OR turnover time from 60 minutes to 30 minutes, increased utilization rates from 25% to 65%, and achieved 100% on-time starts in a pilot area

Guangdong Provincial Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China [16]

Satisfaction

Improved patient and family satisfaction rates in the NICU from the 45th percentile to the 99th percentile

Franciscan St. Francis, Indianapolis [17]

Improved physician satisfaction from the 63rd percentile to the 87th, and was the highest rated in overall care among 170 California medical groups for two consecutive years

Sutter Gould Medical Foundation, California [18, 19]

Improved emergency department patient satisfaction from the 5th percentile to the 98th percentile in four months, as door-to-doc times fell from 67 to 18 minutes

Sumner Regional Medical Center, Tennessee [20]

Financial

Bottom-line benefit of almost $200 million over seven years, while achieving "the lowest observed-to-expected mortality among the academic health center members of the University Health system Consortium in 2011" and avoiding layoffs

Denver Health, Colorado [21]

Avoided $180 million in capital spending through Lean improvements

Seattle Children's Hospital, Washington [22]

Improved operating margin by 44%, from 1.70% in fiscal year 2011 to 3.06% in fiscal year 2014

HealthEast, Minnesota [23]

See what Lean looks like in practice

Chapter 1 explains why these results happened, and why copying the tools without the management system usually doesn't produce them.

Read Chapter 1 free

Buy the book

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