Better inpatient workflow leads to faster diagnoses and treatment

Learn how this medical center greatly improved its inpatient echo workflow, leading to faster diagnosis and treatment.

Process redesign and optimization. PRO.

Better processes. Extraordinary potential. We work with hospital administration leaders and care teams to identify, prioritize, and implement changes that can transform patient care pathways and establish operational excellence that endures.

Learn more

Take a self assessment

Whether it's building a new program or improving an existing one, we're here to help. Identify challenges at your hospital or clinic that our guided solutions may be able to help you solve.
The challenge
An acute-care hospital located in the Northeast identified an opportunity to improve patient care and reduce length of stay by shortening turnaround times for ordering, performing, reading, and receiving completed echo results.

With a growing echo demand, they were also looking to improve the delivery of effective and cost-conscious care to avoid overuse, underuse, or misuse of echos.

Finding the solution
Medtronic healthcare consultants worked with a cross-functional team at the hospital to identify the root cause of higher-than-desired echo turnaround times. Using a data-driven approach, Medtronic then guided them in developing sustainable solutions.

Key opportunity | Solution
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Visibility to patient information | • Alert the ordering clinician of past echo history  
• Create clinician visibility to the lab schedule  
• Complete a real-time preliminary report while in the lab with the patient  
• Report regularly on metrics and trends
Timeliness | • Create clinician visibility to the transport schedule, including ability to monitor any delays  
• Set up cross-functional working agreements to address the timeliness of patient arrival and any delays to/from the lab  
• Shift to more frequent bedside modeling versus transporting patients  
• Implement first-in-first-out (fifo) echo processing
Lab workflow | • Identify and implement optimal task deployment in echo lab  
• Enable scan techs to have greater patient focus by shifting clerical/technician work and changing job descriptions
The results

Over the course of the project, the hospital made numerous improvements that directly impacted productivity, patient care, and capacity.

• Increased median echo same-day turnaround compliance by 28%, from 35% to 63%.

• Decreased median echo turnaround time by 28%, from 32:29 hours/minutes to 23:14 hours/minutes.

• Shortened the overall echo process by a median of 9 hours and 15 minutes per patient.

The impact

The hospital was able to significantly improve its inpatient echo workflow, leading to faster diagnosis and treatment, less rework, and improved patient satisfaction.

"Our project with medtronic exceeded our expectations and helped us achieve significant results in a very short period of time.”

-Senior Vice President, Management Services
Optimize your care experience
Don’t allow operational variation to hold back efficient, quality care. We can help transform workflow and improve care delivery in your health system to:
• Optimize costs
• Reduce variability
• Increase access
• Eliminate overuse, underuse, and misuse of care

Our approach
We customize our solutions to your operational and clinical challenges. Uniquely, the PRO process:
• Keeps the focus on the patient experience
• Ensures collaborative problem-solving across the care pathway
• Uses data to identify focus areas unique to your environment
• Provides a plan for long-term sustainability

We are here to help.
Contact us at HealthcareConsulting@medtronic.com medtronic.com/healthcareconsulting

Reference
1 Medtronic data on file. Results provided by the medical center.

Important:
Process Redesign and Optimization Healthcare Consulting is a fee-based service. This case study is provided for general information purposes only. Your institution’s results will vary. At all times, it is the professional responsibility of the practice to exercise independent clinical judgment in a particular situation. Medtronic does not make any representations or warranties in connection with the information presented herein.