AVA 2024

This poster was presented at the AVA Annual Scientific Meeting.

Wrestling Wait Time: A Story of Nurse Leadership Collaboration to Drive Vascular Access Department Efficiency & Increase Patient Satisfaction

Kaddie Marie Lopez MSN, RN, OCN, PHN, NE-BC & Maria Theresa Fabros, MSN, RN, VA-BC, NE-BC

City of Hope

Purpose

Discuss how one outpatient vascular access specialty oncology department in Southern California managed to decrease patient wait time by 70% (27 min to 8 min) and increase patient satisfaction by 14% (81.2 to 92.4) in a 12-month period.

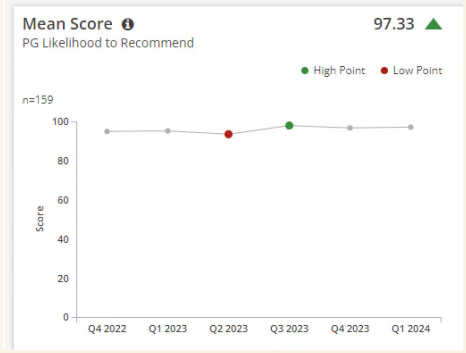
Background

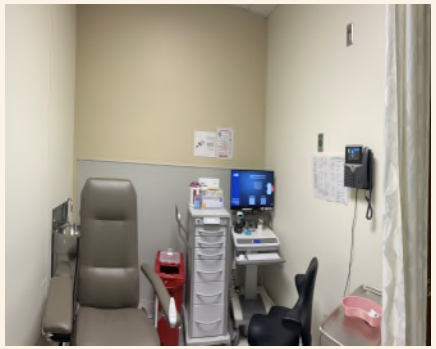
In 2022 the nursing profession reached the height of the Nursing exodus, and the Vascular Access Department (VAD) was no exception. Simultaneous to the department's staffing shortage, patient volume grew 12% with no new capacity allotted. Wait times began to soar and patient satisfaction began to plummet. Collaborative Problem solving was needed to address the growing need without delaying appointments as limiting patient access to services would potentially impact oncology patient outcomes.

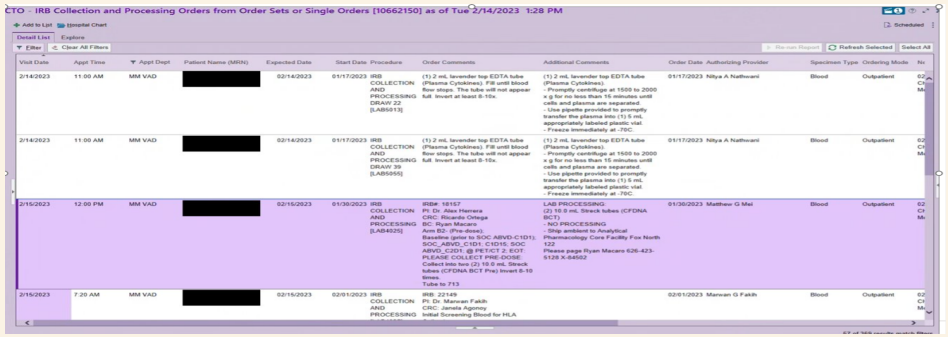
Implications for Practice

Collaborative problem solving can lead to sustainable reduction in wait times and increase in patient satisfaction by thinking outside the box during unprecedented nursing shortages. Front line leaders working together to solve problems can lead to effective and sustainable improvement.









Strategy and Implementation

A collaborative taskforce was created with representation from nursing leadership, patient experience, physician leadership, and business management.

Root causes identified & interventions implemented:

1) Build business case to increase physical capacity by 4 additional patient care rooms
2) Justify labor request for 6 additional staff
3) Collaborate with interdisciplinary leaders to address patient early arrival patterns
4) Optimize patient scheduling
5) Address bottlenecks created by complex research specimen collections.

Outcomes

The 5 initiatives implemented were activated simultaneously each with their own unique challenges resulting in ebbs and flow in individual completion which resulted in an incremental but study decrease in patient wait time and increase in patient satisfaction over a 12-month period.