

Summer 2017

## Kaizen: Improving Patient flow

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/jgpha>



Part of the [Public Health Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Roberts, Gurleen; Kennedy, Jack; Smythe, Catherine; Krahwinkel, Dawn; and Green, Melissa (2017) "Kaizen: Improving Patient flow," *Journal of the Georgia Public Health Association*: Vol. 7: No. 1, Article 34.

DOI: 10.21633/jgpha.7.135

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/jgpha/vol7/iss1/34>

This conference abstract is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Georgia Southern Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of the Georgia Public Health Association by an authorized administrator of Georgia Southern Commons. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu).

**Kaizen: Improving patient flow**

Gurleen Roberts, MPH, Jack Kennedy, MD, MBA, Catharine Smythe, MSN, RN, Dawn Krahwinkel, MSN, RN, Melissa Green, RN

Cobb & Douglas Public Health (work); Georgia Southern University, Jiann Ping Hsu College of Public Health (school)

Corresponding author: Gurleen Roberts • Cobb & Douglas Public Health (work); Georgia Southern University, Jiann Ping Hsu College of Public Health (school) • 1650 County Services Parkway, Marietta, GA 30008 • 770-514-3104 • [Gurleen.roberts@dph.ga.gov](mailto:Gurleen.roberts@dph.ga.gov)

**Background:** Since Cobb & Douglas Public Health (CDPH) achieved accreditation in May 2015, efforts to mature a culture of quality have been emphasized. In addition, the Adult Health Clinic moved to a new facility in Spring 2016. This move has improved many patient flow issues, but also has had unexpected consequences that spurred interest in doing several quality improvement (QI) projects.

**Methods:** Rather than doing one QI project at a time, a kaizen event was held. Kaizen is a Japanese term for continuous improvement. This workshop allowed the Adult Health Team to plan seven QI projects and implement them simultaneously over the next several weeks. After the first six weeks of implementation, nearly 14 different projects were in various stages of the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle. Baseline average patient flow for 1880 patient encounters was 75.11 minutes.

**Results:** Results are still pending. Preliminary results reflect increased collaboration among clinic staff and an increase in staff members taking the initiative to make improvements. Employee morale has improved, and employee and customer satisfaction seems to be improved.

**Conclusions:** The Adult Health Clinic used the LEAN methodology to reduce waste in the patient flow process and used the PDSA framework to structure their 14 QI projects. A kaizen event allows rapid improvements to be planned and implemented in a short period of time.

**Key words:** Quality Improvement, QI, Kaizen, LEAN, PDSA, QI Project, QI Team, Culture of Quality, accreditation, patient flow, nursing

<https://doi.org/10.21633/jgpha.7.135>

© Gurleen Roberts, Jack Kennedy, Catharine Smythe, Dawn Krahwinkel, and Melissa Green. Originally published in jGPHA (<http://www.gapha.org/jgpha/>) December 20, 2017. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial No-Derivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work ("first published in the Journal of the Georgia Public Health Association...") is properly cited with original URL and bibliographic citation information. The complete bibliographic information, a link to the original publication on <http://www.gapha.jgpha.org/>, as well as this copyright and license information must be included.