

Lean Enterprise Academy

LEA e-Letter - 10 June 2009



Realizing the potential of Lean

Dear Lean Community Member

We can now demonstrate that lean is the most promising way for hospitals to meet growing demand while budgets are being squeezed. For the first time Making Hospitals Work shows hospital leaders how to realize the full potential of lean. It provides a road map to link all improvement actions along the core patient journeys through every hospital – for the emergency medical and elective surgical patient – and to synchronise all the support activities such as imaging, pathology and pharmacy. It also provides clear evidence that this can over time simultaneously: -

- Ensure every patient gets seen in A&E within 4 hours.
- Treat patients referred for elective treatment within 8 days or at the time of their choosing, instead of waiting 18 weeks or longer.
- Improve the patient experience by eliminating unnecessary waiting time in hospital – reducing average medical length of stay by half and hence exposure to hospital acquired infections.
- Free up the time hospital staff spend fire-fighting and chasing things so they can spend more time caring for patients.
- Free up capacity (beds and staff) to treat twice as many elective patients with the same resources.
- While cutting the overtime and agency budget and saving capital expenditure and space.

No hospital has yet put all of these pieces of the system together, although many hospitals have begun by engaging staff in improving their own areas of work. Making Hospitals Work provides the agenda for the next phase – in which hospital management can see the scale of the opportunities and focus these activities to improve the performance of the hospital as a whole.

The core method in Making Hospitals Work is the same scientific method applied to management problems that clinicians use to diagnose and treat medical problems. Think of it as evidence based management to complement evidence based medicine.

Making Hospitals Work is a call to action – to show every hospital how they can find their own path to achieve these results. Bring your team to the Lean Healthcare Transformation Summit on 10 July at the QEII Conference Centre in London to hear from the team that pioneered this approach and give your staff a copy of this book to develop your action plan to meet the difficult challenges ahead. Full details can be found at www.leanuk.org.

Yours sincerely

Daniel T Jones

Chairman, Lean Enterprise Academy