



5 Productive work flows

Efficient processes

Script collection register, Bristol

Lost prescriptions were causing wasted time, GP distractions and frustration for all. A simple Lean redesign project saved 250 hours a year.

The idea

A practice in Bristol used quality improvement techniques from the Productive General Practice Programme to deal with a particular issue where prescriptions were being mislaid after pharmacy collection.

The team found:

- Patient inconvenience: patients were repeatedly going between the pharmacy and practice in search of their prescription, often becoming very frustrated with staff
- Wasted time: administration and clinical staff spent additional time in the process of reissuing
- Safety risk: clinical safety was compromised with more than one prescription in circulation

By running an EMIS report the practice team confirmed that most 'lost' scripts happened when the prescription was being collected via a pharmacy. The pharmacy often had the prescription but incorrectly told the patient that it had not been received by them and so to alleviate concerns, they introduced a 'Script Collection Register'.

After each prescription had been authorised, the receptionist would record details to track that the prescription had been sent to the patient's nominated pharmacy. This meant that the receptionists could quickly and confidently confirm this to the patient. Over time the team decided to just record information relating to the pharmacies which experienced the largest number of claimed lost scripts.

Impact

The new system has saved the practice over 250 hours of administration time over the year. Other benefits included:

- Doctors experienced fewer interruptions during surgery
- Better traceability and tracking of scripts through to fulfilment
- The practice team were able to support patients quickly and efficiently
- Patients received a better service
- There were cost savings against printing

The practice continues to monitor the number of re-prints requested. They have seen a fall in the time taken to respond to patients and fewer requests and less time to complete this task of re-printing where necessary.

Implementation tips

Engage and gain commitment from the practice team to learn more about the benefits of using simple quality improvement techniques such as those in the Releasing Time Programme.

Don't be put off by the language used in improvement techniques such as Lean. Once people see what they can achieve the technical language becomes less of a barrier.

Link(s)

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www.nhs.uk/capacity-capability/productive-general-practice.aspx