

Future Proofing Pharmacy Discharge Dispensing Processes at St Luke's Hospital

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Problem Statement

St Luke's Hospital seeks to be patient-centric in the services it provides, including reducing waiting time for medications. With the future plans of upgrading the Pharmacy dispensing area, the team set out to review the dispensing workflow to the discharging patients, to improve patient's experience during peak hours.

The pilot was done for Saturday morning discharges. The shorter operating hours and reduced manpower are challenges to keep waiting time for medications short.

Project Aim

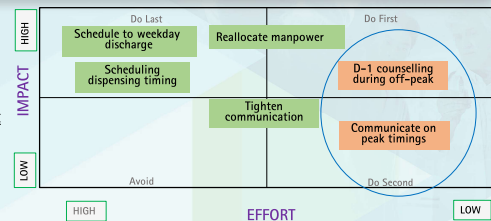
To reduce the number of planned discharge dispensing on Saturdays to ≤ 7 by mid September 2023 to shorten waiting time

Lessons Learnt

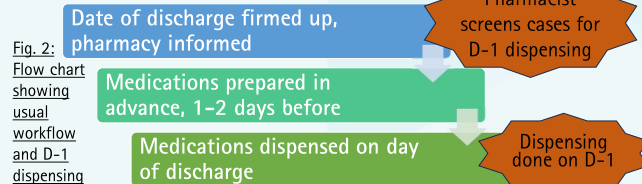
Challenge	Strategies employed
Multi-faceted nature of the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform GEMBA walk to understand how the discharge workflow is like for different healthcare professionals involved and how it impacts patient experience
Stakeholder buy-in in a multi-disciplinary team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular stakeholder engagement during pilot Review and adjust interventions to ensure that process is streamlined for all stakeholders involved

Potential Solutions

Fig. 1: Prioritisation matrix of countermeasures based on impact against effort



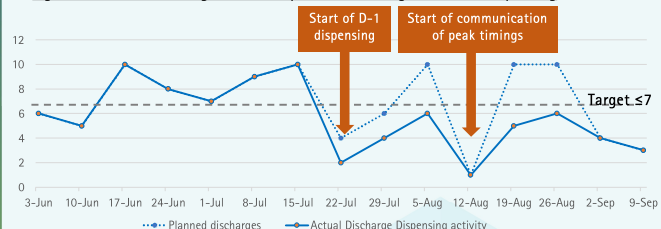
- A root cause analysis was conducted to brainstorm root causes and associated countermeasures. These countermeasures were then prioritized (Fig. 1) and implemented in phases.
- Dispensing medications on day before discharge (D-1) reduces the load during peak periods. Whereas communication of peak timings levels the load to avoid bottle necks.



Outcomes & Impacts

Target of number of planned discharge dispensing ≤ 7 was met since the initiation of D-1 dispensing on 22 Jul 2023.

Fig. 3: Line chart showing number of planned discharge vs actual dispensing



1 in 4 patients arrived at pharmacy before usual peak dispensing hours. This helped to relieve the congestion nearing pharmacy closing time and shortened waiting time.

Pharmacy staff also feedback that reduced dispensing load allowed them ample time to counsel patient and caregivers without compromising waiting time.

D-1 dispensing has since also been applied to weekdays whenever there is a surge in discharges.