

LEAN DELIVERS PERFORMANCE GAINS IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR

Healthcare Case Study



Organization Profile

National blood donation service organizations in Europe processing 150,000 donations p.a.

Project Goals

Reduce the wait times of donors, thereby increasing the value delivered to customers.

Project Timeframe

6 – 12 months

Key Deliverables

Re-engineered structural layouts and operational practices within both the mobile and fixed clinics thereby increasing capacity and absorbing rising demand for blood donations.

Leading Edge Group applied its Lean expertise to reduce waiting times for donors in a blood service organization.

The client was a national, multi-site, organisation, processing some 150,000 blood donations annually.

Aware of Leading Edge Group's (LEG) long experience of working with national blood service organizations across Europe, such as the National Blood Service, UK and Etablissement Français du Sang in France, the client engaged LEG to look at their clinics' operations, as part of an overall clinic review task. The core aim of the review was to reduce waiting times for donors.

While the client's donors were extremely satisfied with the personal interactions during the donation process, they were not satisfied with the waiting times during clinic visits. This area of the donation process required the greatest improvement in order to meet the needs of the donors and also to encourage donors to donate more regularly.

Donors had repeatedly commented that one hour was the maximum waiting time they were willing to wait to donate blood. This was established as the goal for all clinics - to have the donor through the process in less than one hour, having delivered a professional and caring service.

“We have found the Lean techniques, as practiced by the Leading Edge Group, an excellent way to disassemble, challenge and rebuild the complex processes involved in the collection of blood and platelets from voluntary donors.” (Director of Operations, Blood Service Organisation)

How was the project implemented?

The review was conducted across six clinic locations and comprised three main phases.

1. Data gathering and clinic observation
2. Current state planning
3. Future state planning

Phase 1:

Data collection forms were generated to collect relevant clinic information regarding the length of stay of donors in the clinic. These forms were given to the donors upon arrival and then accompanied the donor as they progressed through the donation process. A customer satisfaction survey was generated to gather feedback and comments from the donors.

Phase 2:

The development of current state maps and process flows were vital in determining the process as it occurred today and how it could be improved in the future. This was the starting point upon which improvements were made. By having a documented map it was possible for staff to question and challenge the process and the way that tasks and duties were performed, in order to identify non-value added activities, eliminate waste and drive future change.

Phase 3:

The final phase, future state planning, convened a large cross-disciplinary group of the clinics' staff, to ensure representation from each of the geographical locations and job functions involved in the clinics' operations. Staff members included drivers/clerks, donor assistants, doctors, nurses, team leaders, area organizers as well as the task force.

The group first worked with the current state maps and identified where improvements and enhancements could be made to speed up the donor transit times and add value. From this they developed a future state map of the ideal and improved process.

Finally, LEG worked with the group to outline the human and technical resources required to achieve the ideal state in a business requirements and development roadmap. Re-engineered structural layouts and operational practices within both the mobile and fixed clinics were proposed and implemented, thereby increasing capacity and absorbing rising demand for blood donations.

Frequently Used Terms

Term	Description
Value Stream Mapping	A primary Lean tool that describes the flow of material and information through a system. This is carried out by graphically portraying the current process, thus enabling one to see where value is added and lost.
Current state map	Incorporated in Value Stream Mapping. A graphic illustration of an organization's current process.
Future State Map	Incorporated in Value Stream Mapping. A graphic illustration of how the process could look if perfect integration of all components were to occur.

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