

Lean Healthcare Green Belt Project Examples

As a part of Leading Edge Associate's Lean Healthcare Green Belt program, participants are required to complete a work-based improvement project.

Through this requirement, the program ensures immediate practical application for participants and a tangible benefit for the organization. The following are some of the examples that participant improvement projects have focused on:



Improving the Emergency Department Follow-Up Clinic Process

Objective

Improve the ED follow-up clinic process by reducing inefficiencies in referrals, improving patient flow and supporting timely outpatient follow-up as an alternative to return visits to the Emergency Department.

Solutions Implemented

A Kaizen rapid improvement event identified key wastes in referrals and test readiness. The team implemented a standardized ED referral form and added dedicated administrative support to coordinate referrals, confirm labs/imaging are completed before visits and send appointment reminders.

Implementation Results

- Reduced wasted clinic time spent chasing missing lab/imaging information (estimated 75% of visit time previously), by redesigning the process so results are completed before the follow-up appointment.
- Improved attendance by adding appointment reminders to address a 40% baseline no-show rate.
- Improved referral consistency between the ED and NP clinic by introducing a standardized referral form that clearly specifies required labs/imaging and responsibilities.





Improving the Urgent Care Multi-Purpose Space of a Health Centre

Objective

The project aimed to improve the setup of urgent care space by reducing inefficiencies in equipment storage and retrieval, optimizing space utilization and supporting a safer and more efficient workflow. It sought to shorten setup time, enhance staff satisfaction and enable a smoother start to operations and patient care.

Solutions Implemented

Stakeholders were engaged and the current state was assessed through voice of the customer input, Gemba walks/environmental scans, waste walks and timed observations. A Lean 5S workplace organization event was then completed using red tags, inventory logs, visual management and pre/post spaghetti diagrams, supported by before-and-after photos and a sustainability plan to maintain order and prevent re-accumulation.

Implementation Results

- Reduced the space setup time by 42%
- Improved staff satisfaction by 66.9% for the pre-setup experience and by 76.2% for the post-setup experience
- Increased positive staff ratings (“agree/strongly agree”) from 22% to 89% for pre-setup satisfaction and 18% to 95% for post-setup satisfaction



Improving Surgical Flow from OR to Inpatient Unit

Objective

Improve surgical flow from the Operating Room (OR) to the inpatient unit by reducing Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) boarding, minimizing OR holds and eliminating overtime pressures impacting staff experience, patient flow and hospital performance.

Solutions Implemented

A Kaizen event brought the OR, PACU, Service Associates and inpatient unit teams together to walk the process in real time, map the current workflow, identify why patients were waiting and redesign a future workflow. The team then tested and adjusted the changes through PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) trials to reduce delays and improve handoffs.

Implementation Results

- Reduced PACU boarding time from 78 minutes to 16 minutes
- Reduced OR holds from 7–10 minutes to 7 minutes
- Eliminated overtime related to overnight PACU stays (no overtime required)

