

ideas. answers. action.

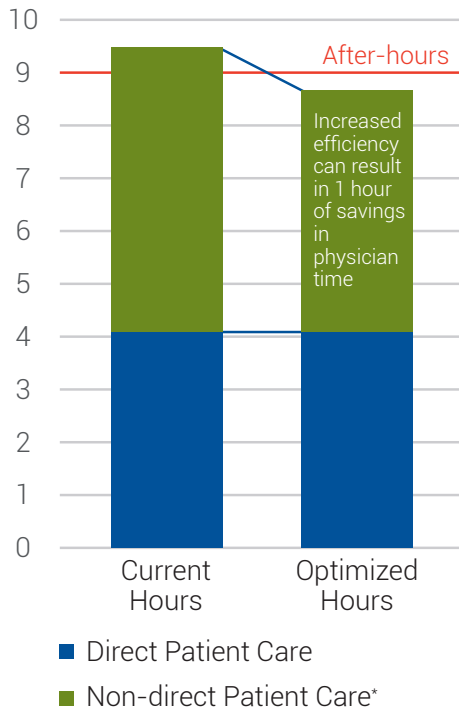


Maximizing Physician Satisfaction and Patient Throughput

Situation

A large independent primary care medical group (the “Medical Group”) with approximately 500 physicians in 200 primary care and 8 urgent care sites throughout the United States was committed to improving physician satisfaction. Therefore, it launched a major work flow assessment initiative including the use of surveys to identify issues and examining work flows in representative clinics throughout the country.

Optimization of Physician Time Per Day



Source: The Camden Group

*Non-direct patient care includes the following activities: Administration, documentation, completion of tasks, phone calls, and clinical staff direction.

How We Helped

The Camden Group was engaged to assist the Medical Group in understanding the challenges faced by its physicians in their daily work life through the documentation of current state work flows, identification of best practices, and prioritization of opportunities for improvement.

To ensure a broad understanding of the work flow challenges encountered by physicians in various clinic settings in multiple states, the Medical Group requested that The Camden Group document and analyze work flows in approximately 25 percent of its total sites (over 200 primary care and 8 urgent care sites). Medical Group leadership selected clinics and physicians for participation that represented a wide variety of characteristics in order to understand the effect of the various characteristics on impacted work flows. Characteristics considered included payer mix (percent of risk vs. fee-for-service), financial performance, patient mix, and patient and physician satisfaction; also at least one clinic from each region was selected.

The Camden Group documented and analyzed five major operational processes for each clinic, for a total of 250 work flows; we also interviewed and shadowed approximately 105 physicians and discussed operations with more than 400 Medical Group staff.

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How We Helped

- Documented 250 work flows in 50 primary care and urgent care sites providing the client with a robust database from which to draw best practices
- Provided baseline cycle time data including the percent of value and non-value added time for all 50 locations compared to benchmark
- Developed an action list identifying 39 opportunities for performance improvement
- Quantified the potential time savings by task from implementation of the 39 opportunities: potential impact is a time savings of an average of 1 hour per day per physician
- Provided a detailed list of EHR optimization items that had the potential to create early wins

The five work flow processes included:

- Check-in
- Rooming of the patient
- Physician exam
- Order completion
 - Medical assistant discharge
 - Referrals
 - Prescription refills
- Check-out

In addition to documenting current state work flows and identifying inefficiencies and bottlenecks, The Camden Group conducted cycle time studies at each of the 50 locations, using our proprietary mobile software to accurately track cycle time data. This data was used to determine the percent of value (time patients spend interacting regarding their care) and non-value added time at each site. The Camden Group also assessed the effectiveness of the EHR system and its impact on physician satisfaction and productivity by shadowing physicians through a series of visits. Through cycle time studies and shadowing, The Camden Group documented time to complete various tasks, including the number of clicks and screens required for each task.

Results

Based on our data analysis and observations, we identified opportunities for improved efficiency and effectiveness as well as best practices that could be implemented nationally, regionally, and within each clinic location. By applying the cycle time data and EHR task specific data to the prioritized opportunities, The Camden Group was able to quantify the potential savings in physician time per day and per task. The Camden Group was able to identify opportunities to save physicians an average of one hour of time per day. To assist the Medical Group in achieving its goal of increased physician satisfaction, The Camden Group developed a prioritized performance improvement action list with timelines detailing 39 improvement opportunities, and then prioritized the top 10 opportunities for improvement. We are now working with the Medical Group to assist with implementation of the action items.

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