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Application of lean healthcare methodology in a urology department at a tertiary hospital: Is it sustainable in a public health service?

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Statement of the Problem: The application of this methodology to the management of health services is very appropriate in times of crisis when demand continues to grow and there is no longer a growing funding that can adapt to this demand. The foundation of this methodology is the reduction of costs, the improvement of the feedback between the health personnel, the increase in the care and production quality, the decrease in the proportion of patients who do not show up at scheduled appointments, the improvement in the main indicators, as well as the reduction of human and system errors.

Purpose: The purpose of this work is to evaluate whether the application of the lean healthcare methodology is sustainable in a tertiary department of a Spanish health service public hospital looking for improving efficiency.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: The implementation of the lean healthcare methodology in a urology department was conducted by carrying out the five consecutive steps described in this methodology. This was applied in three non-sequential phases: Team training, process management and continuous improvement. The main source of information is the balanced scorecard for health systems management (CUIDISS). The comparison with other national urology departments was performed through the same platform (IASIST).

Findings: The implementation of this methodology translated into high practitioner satisfaction, increased the care production and improved quality indicators, mainly risk-adjusted length of stay, risk-adjusted complication index and risk adjusted mortality rate. The readmissions rate was the only indicator above the standard due to the adjusted length of stay. The application of this methodology resulted essential to improve the efficiency of the service and hospital.

Conclusion & Significance: The implementation of the lean healthcare methodology is possible in the Spanish public health care; however its sustainability depends on a parallel increase of resources to the care production and an intrinsic and extrinsic recognition of the unit, service or center that has incorporated it.



Recent Publications

- 1. Budía A et al. (2017) Lean healthcare methodology: is its sustainability possible in a public health system? Rev. Esp. Econ. Salud. 12(4):722-728.
- 2. Boronat F et al. (2018) Application of lean healthcare methodology in a urology department of a tertiary hospital as a tool for improving efficiency. Actas. Urológicas Españolas. 42(1):42-48.
- 3. Bonome L, Costa M and Filho M G (2016) Lean Healthcare: review, classification and analysis of literature. Productions Planning and Control: The Management of Operations. 27(10):823-836.

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- 4. Young T et al. (2004) Using industrial processes to improve patient care. British Medical Journal. 328(7432):162-164.
- 5. Boronat F et al. (2017) Costs and hospital procedures in an urology department of a tertiary hospital: analysis of groups related by their diagnosis. Actas Urológicas Españolas. 41(6):400-408.

Biography

Alberto Budía has his expertise in the diagnosis and treatment of urinary lithiasis and endourologic procedures. He has developed a total quality management project based on process management, patient safety, care quality and efficiency analysis since 2012. In January 2018 this project got the ISO 9001:2015 and UNE: 179003 management certification. This project has improved the activity indicators, the patient safety (FEAM model), the efficiency (cost-effective algorithms) and patient quality perception. His model is based on continuous improvement creates new pathways for enhanced healthcare in public health systems. He has built this model after years of experience in research, evaluation and management in a Lithotripsy and Endourological Unit at a Spanish tertiary public hospital.

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