



Ten Minute Bites to Help Others Understand (Specialty Care)

Key messages when talking with the rest of the team back at the clinic:

- Goal is to optimize specialty care service delivery.
- There is a gap between current performance and possibility.
- It is possible to close that gap
- There have been many attempts at this, although they often fail for a variety of reasons, usually because of a failure to understand the basic flow dynamic
- In flow, we match demand for service to supply of service
- In flow systems, where we match the demand to the supply, the most effective (clinical outcomes) the most efficient (cost-revenue) and the most satisfying systems will match demand to supply with as little delay as possible.
- Delays lead to dissatisfaction, higher costs, lower revenues and sub-optimized revenues
- If demand equals supply, we don't need a wait time.
- We need to match the demand to the supply at the organizational level, at the practice level and at the individual provider level
- Matching the demand for service with the supply of service at the individual clinician level requires identification of "caseload" (patients linked to each clinician) since this is where the work (demand) comes from. There is a limit to specialty caseload. That limit can be determined.
- We also know that when patients see their own clinicians, patient, clinician and staff satisfaction rises, costs go down, revenues rise and clinical care and outcomes improve.
- Therefore the two critical elements for optimizing specialty care delivery are: see your own patients and don't make them wait
- There is a process and a set of principles that if applied diligently can build systems without waits.
- That process includes:
 - Form a team - the people who do the work must transform the work
 - Set an aim/goal that focuses on reduction of delay
 - Make changes within the following categories
 - Balance supply and demand
 - Eliminate backlog
 - Reduce the number of queues
 - Develop contingency plans for variations
 - Use strategies to reduce demand
 - Use strategies to increase supply
 - Measure to prove that the changes we have made actually result in improvement

- These strategies address specific specialty issues: ensuring specialists get the right work packaged in the right way