

AHA Innovation 90

90-DAY INNOVATION IMMERSION BOOTCAMP AND COACHING

CASE STUDY

The immersive, team-based AHA Innovation 90 program enables hospital teams to tackle innovation problems and produce a solution ready for implementation in 90 days. **Here's an example of one team's success.**

Hospital Develops New System That Cuts Frequency of Inpatient Overcapacity from 50 Percent to 10 Percent

CHALLENGE

A community hospital in the Washington, D.C., metro area was experiencing continual inpatient overcapacity issues that caused boarding problems and backup in the emergency department and post-anesthesia care unit. The hospital's capacity-alert approach depended on the nursing bed manager and night house supervisors monitoring the capacity situation and alerting hospital management using a red-light system.

Unfortunately, the overcapacity situations seemed to recur quickly and everyone felt that the capacity-alert method was inadequate.

INNOVATION PROCESS

A team of nurse managers, doctors, ancillary managers and consultants convened a design thinking project to identify the issues and determine a solution. Interviews and data analysis showed that the current system failed to focus on the real drivers of delayed discharges: transportation, physician orders, ancillary testing, ancillary procedures and inpatient nurse discharge routines.

SOLUTION

The team focused on implementing a behavior-based capacity management and access process system of triggers and roles for each position (executive, manager, doctor, nurse, ancillary manager), as well as checklists and metrics that focused on the real drivers of delayed discharges. They piloted the new system for six weeks on a typical nursing unit to streamline and simplify the monitoring and action plans.

The team nurse managers and doctors then created a "road show" presentation for all departments that explained the drivers of overcapacity and the new roles, tools and metrics that would solve it.

RESULTS

The rollout of the new system took less than a month and the hospital reduced its overcapacity situation from nearly 50 percent of the time to less than 10 percent of the time within weeks.