

CHCF CHIP Summary

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CHIP Title: Rapid Innovation: Building New Pathways to Address GI Procedure Critical Backlogs after COVID-19.

Project Description: Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (LAC-DHS) is a huge organization comprised of multiple large complex facilities with their own unique culture, leadership, policies, and procedures. It can be extremely difficult to implement a system wide operational approach within the organization due to this landscape, especially in a time limited capacity. Early in the pandemic, LAC-DHS shut down all outpatient GI procedures for six months. This created a huge GI procedure backlog and delay in diagnostic care. Due to COVID-19 budget restrictions, there were no new available resources to solve the problem. Therefore, we needed a multi-pronged innovative strategy to address the backlog and deliver much needed diagnostic and therapeutic services to our patients. Before starting this project, the GI services at LAC-DHS had no standardized electronic data tracking system, no GI specific nursing protocols, and no standard procedure delivery workflows across the system. Our goal was to decrease the GI procedure backlog from 6000 procedures to 1500 procedures from August 2020 to March 2021. We accomplished this goal by developing and implementing an electronic procedure queue with triage capabilities, multiple nursing/pharmacy standardized protocols, cross facility scheduling throughput, and standard policies and procedures across LAC-DHS GI departments.

Key Findings and Lessons Learned:

At project completion, we were able to:

- Decrease the GI procedure backlog from 6000 to 1400 procedures by March 2021 (met goal timeline)
- Increase procedure capacity across the system from 100 to 290/week
- Implement an electronic procedure queue system at all clinical sites
- Implement three new nursing/pharmacy standardized protocols to free up GI physician time for procedure delivery

Leadership Lessons Learned:

- Be flexible and use EMPATHY, HUMILITY to drive persistence
- Have the RIGHT people on the team
- Don't let good be the enemy of great – give teams freedom when possible to increase buy-in
- Don't be afraid to get into the details on the ground

Next Steps:

- Apply project and leadership lessons learned to system wide initiatives within new position at UC Davis Health