

Transforming Emergency Care: Revolutionizing Obstetrics and Gynecology Operations for Enhanced Excellence

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Abstract : Introduction: The Obstetrics and Gynecology Emergency Department at Alwakra Hospital has faced significant challenges, which have been further worsened by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges involve issues such as overcrowding, extended wait times, and a notable surge in demand for emergency care services. Moreover, prolonged waiting times have emerged as a primary factor contributing to situations where patients leave without receiving attention, known as left without being seen (LWBS), and unexpectedly abscond. Addressing the issue of insufficient patient mobility in the obstetrics and gynecology emergency department has brought about substantial improvements in patient care, healthcare administration, and overall departmental efficiency. These changes have not only alleviated overcrowding but have also elevated the quality of emergency care, resulting in higher patient satisfaction, better outcomes, and operational rewards. Methodology: The COVID-19 pandemic has served as a catalyst for substantial transformations in the obstetrics and gynecology emergency, aligning seamlessly with the strategic direction of Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC). The fundamental aim of this initiative is to revolutionize the operational efficiency of the OB-GYN ED. To accomplish this mission, a range of transformations has been initiated, focusing on essential areas such as digitizing systems, optimizing resource allocation, enhancing budget efficiency, and reducing overall costs. The project utilized the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) model, involving a diverse team collecting baseline data and introducing throughput improvements. Post-implementation data and feedback were analysed, leading to the integration of effective interventions into standard procedures. These interventions included optimized space utilization, real-time communication, bedside registration, technology integration, pre-triage screening, enhanced communication and patient education, consultant presence, and a culture of continuous improvement. These strategies significantly reduced waiting times, enhancing both patient care and operational efficiency. Results: Results demonstrated a substantial reduction in overall average waiting time, dropping from 35 to approximately 14 minutes by August 2023. The wait times for priority 1 cases have been reduced from 22 to 0 minutes, and for priority 2 cases, the wait times have been reduced from 32 to approximately 13.6 minutes. The proportion of patients spending less than 8 hours in the OB ED observation beds rose from 74% in January 2022 to over 98% in 2023. Notably, there was a remarkable decrease in LWBS and absconded patient rates from 2020 to 2023. Conclusion: The project initiated a profound change in the department's operational environment. Efficiency became deeply embedded in the unit's culture, promoting teamwork among staff that went beyond the project's original focus and had a positive influence on operations in other departments. This effectiveness not only made processes more efficient but also resulted in significant cost reductions for the hospital. These cost savings were achieved by reducing wait times, which in turn led to fewer prolonged patient stays and reduced the need for additional treatments. These continuous improvement initiatives have now become an integral part of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Division's standard operating procedures, ensuring that the positive changes brought about by the project persist and evolve over time.

Keywords : overcrowding, waiting time, person centered care, quality initiatives

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