

2009 Showcase in Excellence Award Recipient

Laboratory Sciences of Arizona

“Advancing Patient Safety Through Order to Collection of STAT Testing”



Testimonial of Value of the Arizona Performance Excellence Award Program

“Laboratory Sciences of Arizona and Sonora Quest Laboratories are committed to continuously improving its laboratory processes. Our goal is to “Be the trusted leader in diagnostic testing and information services”. The Arizona Quality Alliance and the Performance Excellence Program continues to provide our organization with an opportunity to validate our processes and be recognized once more as a Showcase in Excellence Award recipient”.

-David A. Dexter, President & Chief Executive Officer, Laboratory Sciences of Arizona

Company Information:

Company Information:

Highest Ranking Official:

Dave A. Dexter

President and Chief Executive Officer

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Type of work:

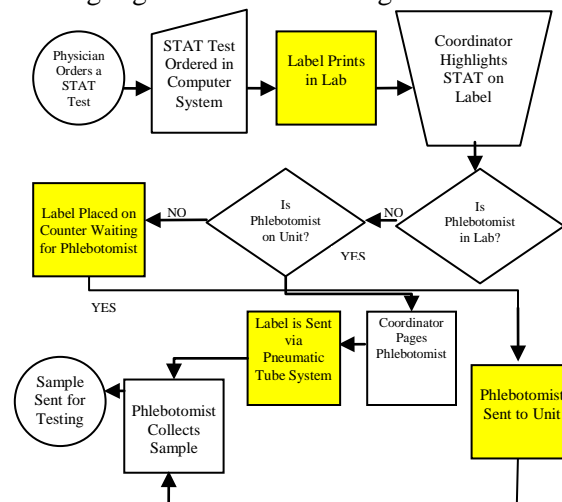
Laboratory Sciences of Arizona (LSA) is the largest fully integrated laboratory network in the nation. The diverse network includes the nine hospital laboratories of Banner Health and the medical laboratories of Sonora Quest Laboratories (SQL).

Workforce: 2,500 Employees

Highlights of Organizational Process:

In April 2008, only 13% of STAT Laboratory draws were collected within 15 minutes from the time the order was placed. Nurses, Pharmacists, and Physicians were dissatisfied with the timeliness of STAT Laboratory draws. In addition, the regulatory requirements outlined by JCAHO regarding the ordering of critical tests and reporting of results was not being met.

In October of 2008, a team was assembled to analyze the current process and brainstorm ideas for improvement. A flow chart was completed to identify steps in the process that could cause delay. These steps are highlighted in the following chart:



A process was implemented to place phlebotomists on the units where they would be closer to the patient. This change would allow for specimen collection at the appropriate time and improve communication between the laboratory and nursing staff.

The implementation of this new process was completed in three phases:

Phase One:

- The first step in this phase was determining the ‘hours of service’ and adjusting the staffing levels without adding additional employees. This task was accomplished by extending the eight-hour shifts to ten and twelve hour shifts.
- The next step in the implementation process was to determine which nursing unit would be best to pilot the project. If the project was successful on the most challenging unit, it could easily be adapted on other units in the hospital. The STAT test volume was studied on each unit over a two month period and the best unit for the pilot was selected.

Phase Two:

- The first step in this phase was a communication plan, which included the Chief Nursing Officer, Clinical Managers, and Directors on the pilot unit.
- Next, a work schedule and a work area were created for the phlebotomist that included computer access, label printers, resource sheets and telephone access.
- A survey was given to nursing staff to get an idea of their satisfaction ‘pre-pilot.’ Thirty days after the pilot was implemented a second survey was given and results tallied to ascertain any improvements in satisfaction scores.
- The last part of this phase involved training all of the phlebotomists in their *new* roles.

Phase Three:

- Phase three started with the complete implementation on all units as described above.
- Implementation occurred on two units at a time, staggering the project every two weeks.

Measurements:

The process was measured using several different methodologies. The primary measurement tool used was the percentage of Stat specimens drawn in less than 15 minutes. The organization also measured through customer satisfaction rates, employee satisfaction rates, and benchmark comparisons.

Results:

