

Process Improvement for Patient Scheduling – Improve Revenue and Patient/Staff Satisfaction

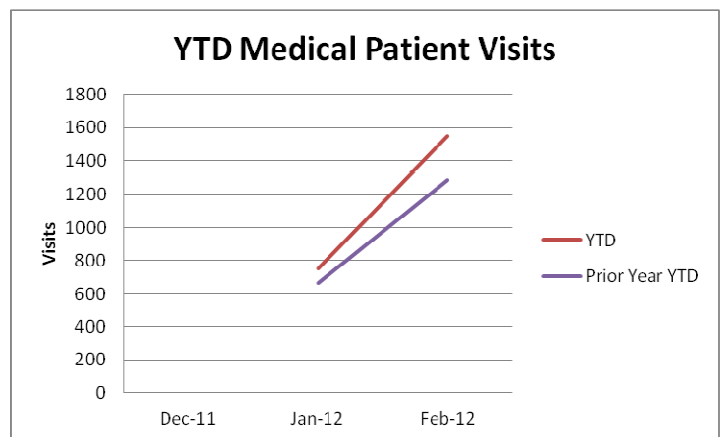
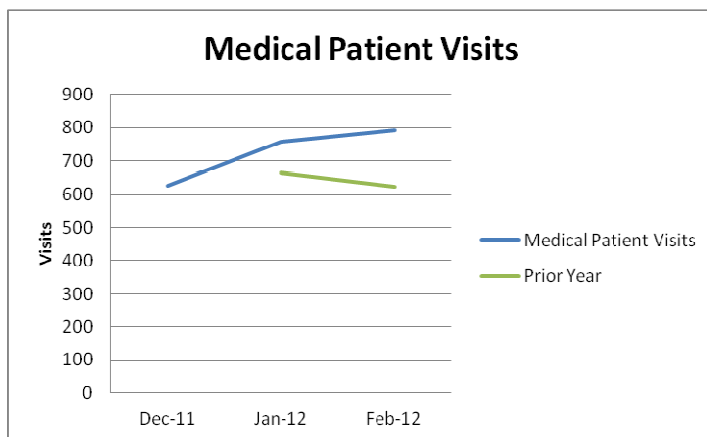


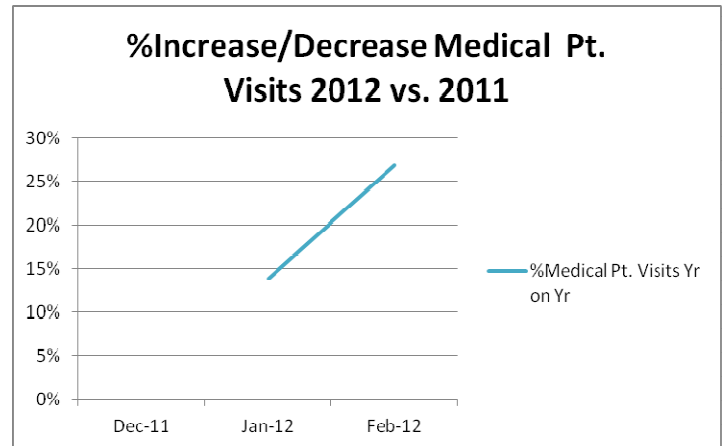
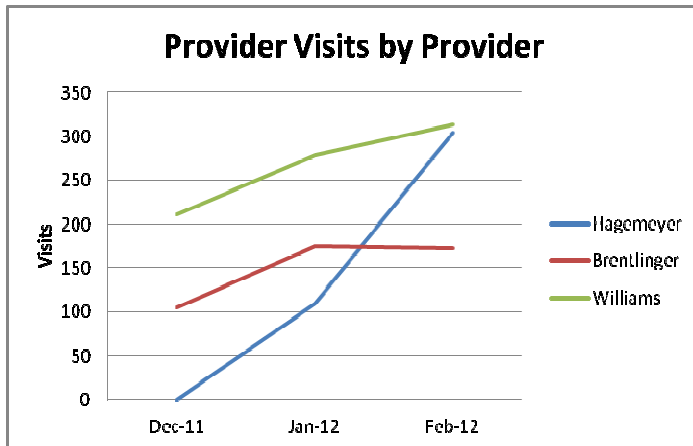
Cheyenne Health and Wellness Center in Cheyenne, WY is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) made possible by a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), donations by the City of Cheyenne, Laramie County, United Medical Center, civic groups, Cheyenne businesses, and private donors, and by the volunteer efforts of many concerned community members who believe healthcare should be available to all people. CHWC accepts all patients regardless of their ability to pay for services.

Over the course of 2011, revenues at Cheyenne Health and Wellness began to decrease while costs grow. Providers' calendars were not filling up and patient satisfaction began to suffer. The smaller number of appointments and the increase in patient dissatisfaction had an adverse impact on revenue that threatened clinic viability. As the problem grew the executive team explored all their options, including the investment of significant financial resources in a marketing campaign to educate the community. Like most healthcare organizations working to fix a major issue, committees were formed and meetings scheduled to try to quickly address the problems, but without clarity on the nature of the problem it was difficult to know where to start.

SigmaMed was engaged in late 2011 on a HRSA funded project to bring CHWC into NCQA PCMH recognition and facilitate care coordination efforts with the Cheyenne Regional Medical Center. In an initial executive training and project selection session, it quickly became apparent that without closing the revenue shortfall the clinic would run out of money before making it to PCMH. and SMS developed a project charter that would both increase revenues and meet certain requirements of PCMH.

During the course of meetings, it was quickly found that the phone system and how calls were handled was not set up properly. After doing a quick study, they found out that they had more than enough calls coming in to fill up the providers schedules. Several processes were changed and the graphs below represent the outcomes from improving their processes.





Within 3 months, not only has Cheyenne Health and Wellness seen an increase in patient traffic, they have seen an increase in:

- Daily Cash Collection increased 10 fold.
- Patient Satisfaction is on the rise because their calls are being answered and managed more effectively.
- Provider's patient schedules are increasing.
- Revenues are quickly increasing.

As a byproduct of this initial project, other areas of improvement have already taken place like:

- Loose paperwork either brought in by the patient or created in-house use to take around 2 weeks to get scanned into the EHR. It is now only 24 hours behind with the goal of scanning everything into the EHR as it is presented.
- The nurse triage process has been significantly improved freeing up RN's to address the more pressing needs of patients and handing off lower priority tasks to other staff members.
- The patient prescription refill process has been significantly improved, positively impacting both staff and patient satisfaction.

The Lean Sigma Healthcare Solution

1. Make it easier for the Providers at manage their schedule
2. Make it easier for patient to schedule their appointments and talk with the right person when they need to.
3. Feedback of Defect types to upstream process to continuously improve process

About SigmaMed Solutions

SigmaMed Solutions is a professional services firm with decades of experience in applying Lean Six Sigma to healthcare quality, process improvement, care coordination and EHR implementation and optimization. We are committed to helping healthcare providers and facilities cost effectively implement Lean Six Sigma process improvements to improve safety, drive efficiency and increase effectiveness. We are dedicated to serving our clients in a "Lean" manner and all our work is unconditionally guaranteed.