

Quality and Productivity Commission
30th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Heritage of Excellence”

2016 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: E = ∞ PX (EFFICIENCY= INFINITE PATIENT EXPERIENCE)

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: NOVEMBER 1, 2014
 (Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before July 1, 2016)

PROJECT STATUS: Ongoing One-time only

HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT? Yes No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 As the first L. A. County Department of Health Services (DHS) hospital to implement the
 2 new L.A. County Electronic Health Record known as “Online Real-Time Centralized
 3 Health Information Database” (ORCHID), Harbor-UCLA Medical Center (Harbor) faced
 4 a challenge of adapting to ORCHID technical features that did not integrate seamlessly
 5 with the existing patient workflow. ORCHID presented an opportunity to transform
 6 healthcare delivery while simultaneously restructuring outpatient care under Health
 7 Care Reform. Harbor’s Finance Department reallocated existing clinic registration staff
 8 to create a new Financial Insurance Verification (FIV) Unit that financially clears
 9 scheduled appointments, from a central location, one week prior to the scheduled
 10 appointment. As a result, 86% of patients can be immediately checked-in for their
 11 appointment without delay. Patient outreach is conducted, as necessary, to assist
 12 patients in evaluating insurance coverage options prior to their scheduled appointment.
 13 Medi-Cal applications in-take is co-located with the FIV Unit to further improve the
 14 patient experience. Harbor’s FIV Unit success was shared with other DHS hospitals,
 15 which helps to position DHS to remain competitive under Health Care Reform.

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Finance Department Box 40, 1000 W. Carson Street Torrance, CA 90509	TELEPHONE NUMBER (310) 222-3004
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PROGRAM MANAGER’S NAME Malvin Mallari, Patient Financial Services Director Felix Aure, Financial Insurance Verification Unit Manager	TELEPHONE NUMBER (310) 222-3306 EMAIL mmallari@dhs.lacounty.gov
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PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME)</small> Gerardo Pinedo	DATE 7/5/2016	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-240-8104 EMAIL gpinedo@dhs.lacounty.gov
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DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE MITCHELL H. KATZ, M.D. SIGNATURE ON FILE	DATE 7/5/16	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-240-8101
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1st FACT SHEET – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **Challenge, Solution, and Benefits** of the project. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made. Use Arial 12 point font

Challenge:

The perception of patient experience at public hospitals is poor compared to private hospitals. Often times the delay in service delivery yields poor patient experience of which lengthy waiting times or delays in financially clearing patients, at clinic registration, is a contributing factor. Approximately 350,000 patients are seen in Harbor’s clinics annually. Prior to the creation of the FIV Unit, patients presented to clinics to be registered and financially cleared on the day of their scheduled appointment. The financial screening and clearance process ranged from 3-15 minutes per patient. Under ORCHID, this time frame was expected to increase considerably, absent any changes to the current patient workflow.

ORCHID workflow requires a patient to be financially cleared in the system before the patient can be checked-in for a scheduled appointment. This represents a significant departure from past practice whereby the financial screening would occur upon a patient’s check-out from the clinic. This ORCHID technical feature presented Harbor Finance with the challenge to quickly transform the financial screening process to yield greater efficiencies while simultaneously improving the patient experience. Harbor’s Finance Department embraced the challenge of leading DHS in implementing the requisite transformation efforts prior to Harbor’s ORCHID Go-Live date of 11/1/14.

Solution:

Harbor Finance recognized that in order to achieve greater efficiencies and improve the patient experience, the financial clearance of patients could no longer be handled by clinic registration staff on the day of a patient’s appointment, as the workload and staffing at each location fluctuated on a given day. The Harbor Finance team led by the Chief Financial Officer and Revenue Manager agreed upon a plan that centered on 1) leveling the workload at the seven clinic registration locations based upon a reduced demand with the establishment of a centralized financial clearance unit and 2) reallocating staff from these clinic registration locations and other units within Harbor Finance to staff a new Financial Insurance Verification (FIV) Unit. The FIV Unit provides for scheduled appointments to be financially cleared in ORCHID one week prior to the scheduled appointment, which allows ample time for patient outreach. The FIV Unit maintains weekly financial clearance statistics that are widely distributed at Harbor in an activity/productivity report and dashboard report.

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Benefits:

Since Harbor’s ORCHID Go-Live on 11/1/14, the FIV Unit has been a success and the unit became a key factor in impacting change at other DHS hospitals allowing DHS to transform healthcare delivery in order to remain competitive under Health Care Reform and the Medi-Cal 2020 Waiver. The FIV Unit’s pre-financial clearance rate is 86% (one week prior to a patient’s scheduled appointment), which we understand is competitive with the private sector hospitals.

Benefits derived from the creation of the FIV Unit includes:

- 86%+ of patients report directly to their scheduled clinic appointment to check-in without any delay or waiting in lines due to financial screening.
Note: The actual percentage on any given day is approximately 95%+, as patient outreach efforts are conducted up to the day of the scheduled appointment.
- Clinic staff checking-in patients can focus on patient demographic information and performing timely check-ins.
- Providers can see patients in a timely manner.
- Patient outreach letters (English and Spanish) are mailed to Non-DHS Medi-Cal Managed Care patients that should be seen at their primary care medical home or may elect to become a DHS assigned patient upon completion of the necessary paperwork.
- Patients are able to contact the FIV Unit to address insurance coverage options via telephone or in-person, prior to their scheduled appointment.
- Bilingual FIV Unit staff conduct patient outreach by placing courtesy phone calls to patients without insurance coverage, who may qualify for Medi-Cal or a L.A. County low-cost/no cost program.
- Medi-Cal applications in-take workers are co-located with the FIV Unit. This enables patients to contact the FIV Unit and schedule a same day or future day in-person appointment. This one-stop shopping experience is new and streamlines patient flow.
- Patient conflict regarding insurance coverage on the day of the appointment is minimized.
- Clinic scheduling staff can optimize available clinic appointment slots.

Overall, this Harbor Finance transformation resulted in improved patient flow for the seven clinic registration locations, achieved outstanding efficiency in the financial clearance of patients, and successfully transformed the overall patient experience allowing DHS to remain competitive in the healthcare industry and capture workload for the Medi-Cal 2020 Waiver which will maximize revenues.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (DETAIL IS REQUIRED FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS): Use Arial 12 point font

Los Angeles County Strategic Plan

- Goal #1: Operational Effectiveness/Fiscal Sustainability
Maximize the effectiveness of processes, structure, operations, and strong Fiscal management to support timely delivery of customer-oriented and efficient public services.

Harbor’s Efficiency Equals Infinite Patient Experience Project aligns with the L.A. County Strategic Plan goal by maximizing the effectiveness of the patient financial clearance process so patients can be seen by their provider, for a scheduled appointment, in a timely and efficient manner. This encompasses 1) transforming healthcare delivery for patients by implementing changes to the patient flow process, 2) optimizing the use of ORCHID EHR technology to gain maximum efficiencies, 3) re-envisioning the Finance Department organizational structure in a way that supports clinic restructuring and operations, and 4) creating a dedicated Finance team to collaborate on this project in order to support the timely delivery of customer-oriented and efficient public service.

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12 point font

Cost Avoidance: Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes.

Revenue: Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

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