



Salina Regional
Health Center

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Hospital celebrates efforts aimed at helping itself, other organizations become ‘Lean’

(July 26, 2018) – After more than five years since implementing business principles made famous in the Japanese manufacturing industry, Salina Regional Health Center’s Quality Improvement Department surpassed a couple noteworthy milestones in July training more than 1,100 people across Kansas in Lean methodology and executing more than 1,000 Lean projects within its own organization.

Lean Manufacturing, Lean Production, or simply Lean is a methodology that focuses on eliminating waste and improving processes in order to create more value for customers. Toyota perfected these principles over many decades to become one of the largest automakers in the world. The company’s success created a demand for knowledge about Lean thinking, which has spread beyond manufacturing and distribution to many other sectors including retail, construction, maintenance, health care and government.

“A majority of our participants have been hospital employees or come from the health care field,” said Brian Weisel, Salina Regional’s Quality Improvement director. “But the principles of Lean are universally applicable. It doesn’t matter if you’re baking bread, manufacturing automobiles, providing a service or taking care of patients. Eliminating waste in our processes and pursuing perfection by making continuous improvements cuts across all business sectors.”

Salina Regional embraced becoming a Lean organization in 2013 when it hired Weisel who is an expert in Lean Six Sigma methodologies. Weisel not only trains hospital employees in Lean philosophy, but he also offers his services free of charge to other hospitals in the Sunflower Health

Network, and members of the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce. The training is open to anyone else for a fee.

Since implementation, Lean projects have been conducted in every department at Salina Regional and at many of the hospital's affiliates. Generally projects work to improve patient care by increasing flexibility in order to deliver services as they are needed and expected by the patient while at the same time eliminating waste.

Examples of processes improved at SRHC through Lean include surgical scheduling, outpatient dietitian referrals, laundry and linen services, stocking of medical supplies and pharmaceutical distribution. Lean efforts at Lindsborg Community Hospital have helped improve pediatric emergency readiness. Cloud County Health Center also has made strides to improve emergency care and cardiac testing through Lean.

While the financial impact and cost savings from Lean can be significant, the value-added benefits are equally important.

"Improving patient or customer experience is what Lean really is aimed towards," Weisel said. "But employees see benefits from reduced waste as well. They're encouraged to be involved in improving processes. Customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction can both be positively impacted. There is no downside to Lean."

For more information about Salina Regional Health Center's Lean curriculum and course schedules visit www.srhc.com/lean-academy

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