

Case Study 1.3

Lean in the lab: Impact of increased cytology collections

The problem:

NGH cytology laboratory provides a cytology smear service across a wide ranging geographical patch. Due to the transport collection routes some GP practices had fewer collections than others.

The cytology laboratory has to meet a “patient to patient” target of 2 weeks from the sample being taken from the patient to the result being given to the patient.

A particular GP practice in Byfield only received 1 collection per week which put pressure on the cytology laboratory to process the sample in time to meet the target.



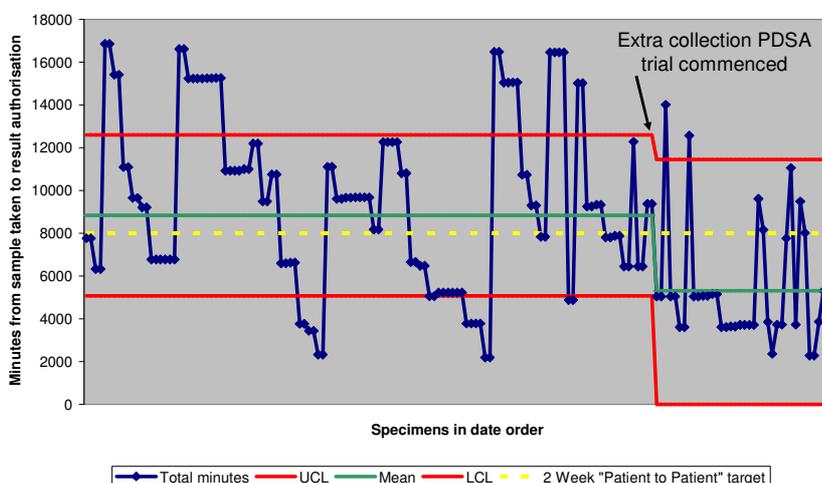
Actions taken:

- The lean team analysed the data relating to the Byfield practice to understand the current state.
- Then members of the lean team met with the external transport service manager to request a PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) trial run of some additional collections.
- The transport team were unable to increase the collections to 3 per week, but agreed to add one more on a trial basis for a 4 week period.
- During the trial period the lean team captured data on the turnaround time for those specimens to show what improvement had been achieved.
- After the trial PDSA it was clear that the turnaround time had significantly improved so the lean team met with the external transport manager to show them the impact of the trial.

Results:

A mean reduction of 40% in “patient to patient” turnaround time was achieved through the additional collection. The transport service manager has agreed to continue this additional collection to support the cytology laboratory’s continual achievement of the “patient to patient” target.

Cervical Smear Cytology samples from Byfield GP Practice



Contact us:

If you would like more information on this, or any other of the lean service improvements at NGH please contact the lean team on:

lean@ngh.nhs.uk.