

Innovative Productivity's Healthy Hospital™ achieves immediate, measurable, sustainable results

About Innovative Productivity, Inc.

Innovative Productivity, Inc. is a Kentucky 501c3 corporation that began in 1993, and operates the McConnell Technology & Training Center and the National Surface Treatment Center, both in Louisville. It provides an extensive array of outreach programs and business solutions, including Lean enterprise, Six Sigma, Malcolm Baldrige, ISO 9000, and organizational development with state and local community resources in Kentucky and Indiana. Those resources include small business development centers, regional technical training centers, government agencies, universities and technical schools, and various trade and professional organizations. IPI also partners with the Kentucky Community and Technical School System (Jefferson Community College, Louisville). For more information call 502-638-4400

TQM, CQI...it's the alphabet soup of quality improvement that never seems completely to be able to spell "change" in an organization. Even after many hospitals embarked upon quality improvement programs over the last 15 years, some quality professionals continue to observe as much as 60% waste in healthcare functions, from administrative processing to operating rooms.

However a quality initiative called Healthy Hospital™ from Innovative Productivity, Inc. (IPI), Louisville, is producing impressive results for its clients and receiving high marks from executives and managers whose hospitals are implementing the program. The program applies the same methodology and approaches used by the manufacturing industry to the healthcare industry for achieving improved patient care, reducing errors, improving profitability and enhancing the morale of employees. The focus is on elimination of waste and non value-added activities from customer-driven value streams.

IPI clients in the region include Norton Suburban Hospital, Louisville; Jewish Hospital (Louisville); Floyd Memorial Hospital, New Albany, Ind.; facilities of the former Caritas health-

care system (now Jewish Hospital & St. Mary's Healthcare, Louisville), Ireland Army Hospital, Ft. Knox; Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital (Ashland, Ky.); and Baptist Northeast Hospital, LaGrange, Ky.; and IPI also is in discussion with several other hospitals and systems in the region.

Manufacturing process improvements

"It's all about process improvement," says Ray Zavada, IPI president. "While the manufacturing and healthcare industries are significantly different in terms of what they do, they nonetheless accomplish their respective objectives by performing processes. So while the content of their processes is different, the same process improvement tools can be used in both industries."

Zavada goes on to explain "In the 1970s, American made automobiles were a maintenance nightmare. The major automobile manufacturers accepted one defect in every 200 parts from their suppliers. Assuming 10,000 parts per automobile, that meant every new car had 50 defective parts before it moved off the car lot. Today, auto manufacturers demand less than eight defects per million. Cars now have about 15,000 parts. That means there is only one defective part for every 7.5 cars. Quality in the healthcare industry is similar to the automobile industry in the 1970s, except that in healthcare, the defect rate is measured in patients. There is a lot of room for improvement."



Ray Zavada
President,
Innovative Productivity, Inc.

"The government does not have a solution to spiraling healthcare costs," Zavada believes. "Cost controls will not work and tort reform will result in only minimal savings. The

only viable solution is for the healthcare industry to implement process improvement programs already proven to work in the manufacturing community."

Zavada explains that the Healthy Hospital approach is different from other quality improvement initiatives because "It is results-oriented and results happen quickly. We do a bit of training and then 'get to doing.' It allows team members to see the benefits and understand why we are making changes. The Healthy Hospital philosophy is that small, measurable and sustainable improvements are more important than larger improvement a year from now."

Healthy Hospital methods and tools include:

- Lean (Value Stream Analysis & Rapid Improvement Events)
- Leadership and Organizational Development
- Six Sigma
- ISO
- Conflict Resolution
- Continuous Improvement

Several keys to maintaining gains include clearly defined and easy to use metrics to identify results; monitoring and reviewing changes and action items; training, and mentoring and support. IPI staff provide support after changes are implemented to ensure sustainability and any solution flexibility identified and needed once implementation begins.

Noteworthy results

After participating in the Healthy Hospital program, one hospital's emergency room was able to reduce its time in triage from 22 minutes to two minutes; its triage to bed time from 49 minutes to 36 minutes; its average length of ER stay from 6.05 hours to 5.13 hours, and the number of persons who left without being seen from 7.9 to 4.3 persons. It also was able to increase the number of patients seen in the ER from 2,565 to 2,700.

Operating room processes are yet another area prime for improvement. "One surgeon told me his surgeries take twice as long—a four-hour procedure that goes eight hours—waiting for supplies, test results and so on. The patient is under anesthetic longer, there's a certain amount of fatigue that occurs among the surgeon and others, and the operating room remains unavailable for other cases." Zavada says one hospital involved in the Healthy Hospital program reported a 50% improvement in its on-time surgeries, reduced patient recovery room time from 90 to 58 minutes (so that an orthopedist now can do five joint replacements instead of four); and is experiencing a 33% decrease in OR supplies items returned-to-set (waste).

"We recommend a hospital start small," Zavada says. "We offer Healthy Hospital as an incremental approach that minimizes risk. We don't approach this as we have in the past by spinning up

everyone with a lot of training, setting up false expectations and then failing by insufficient follow-through. Rather, we advise a hospital to pick a process, assign a team of employees who typically work with that process, and conduct what we call a rapid improvement event, spending three to four very focused days working. That's one of the beauties of Lean. Improvement projects don't drag on forever. They are very focused, very intense, and improvements are made immediately."

With respect to the successes that can be achieved by facilities using the Healthy Hospital program, Zavada quotes a regional hospital medical director and a hospital lab director who said, respectively, "We've gotten more done in the past few days than

we have in the last 10 years," and "I've seen a lot of consultants come and go. These are the best I've seen in 23 years." But perhaps his favorite statement is from the president of a Louisville hospital: "These are the first guys who didn't ask me to borrow my watch to tell me what time it was."

For more information, see www.healthyhospital.net. ■

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