



Comprehensive Transformation in Primary Care Clinic: Improving Care While Improving Patient & Provider Satisfaction



Issue:

Sutter Health patients saw wait times as the biggest impediment to effective care delivery. Health maintenance topics were often missed due to schedules. Clinician burnout was rising, due to extensive work hours and administrative burdens.



Approach:

Built a safety system to teach real-time problem solving skills, embed a learning culture, and develop a team of leaders capable of maintaining flow and quality.

Used principles to redesign their work to achieve zero waiting time and harmonize patient flow with demand.

Implemented a proactive health maintenance approach, e.g. scripts, education, clinician communications.

Simplified documentation processes, reinforced need to take scheduled breaks.



Results:

- Achieved the goal of zero patient wait times and a 43% reduction in total clinic visit durations.
- An improvement of nearly 50% in patients meeting health maintenance needs during the visit.
- A 33% decrease in post-clinic hours for primary care providers and a 1500% increase in staff taking their scheduled breaks.
- Instituted daily operational review meetings, with morning “stand-up” to plan for the needs of the day and end of day “stand-down” to reflect on performance.



Staff Feedback: “There’s no patient wait times, and that’s great. I think patient care is definitely high [and we’re improving] health maintenance. The quality is just so much richer — it’s just built all in there.”

“One of the focuses is addressing physical, emotional, and professional safety....making it safe for people to speak up and having an environment when people speak up it’s actually celebrated, encouraged, and recognized.”