KEY POINT SUMMARY

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the project were to eliminate waste, standardize processes, and mitigate workflow inefficiencies.

Applying Lean Six Sigma for Innovative Change to the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit

Key Concepts/Context

This case study outlined the application of the Lean Six Sigma quality improvement framework to a post-anesthesia care unit redesign project.

Methods

Three frameworks were used to guide the project. Transformational leadership was used to engage clinical stakeholders. Donabedians' structure, process, outcome framework (a process used to examine health services and evaluate the quality of healthcare) was used to guide the redesign activities, and the Lean Six Sigma method was used as the quality improvement framework. A staff satisfaction survey was used before and after change implementation.
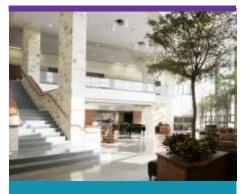
Findings

After implementation of the redesign project, staff were more satisfied, quality and care delivery was perceived to be improved, non-productive time was reduced, and staff perceptions of safety were improved.

Design Implications

This study reinforces the importance of engaging staff to achieve a satisfactory outcome when undertaking a design renovation. Transformational leadership and Lean Six Sigma are credited with facilitating staff engagement in this redesign project.

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Limitations

Single-unit design was a limitation and the case study format prevents generalizing the findings to other post-anesthesia care units. Number of nurses and physicians and staff participating in the surveys were not included.