

**Control #: 5 – Lorna Ford**

**Category:** Business of cardiology/ Care delivery (Operational, administrative and financial processes to improve health care delivery)

**Title:** Call Center Implementation Leads to Improved Patient Care and Patient Satisfaction

**ABSTRACT BODY****Background**

Multiple points of entry of patient calls.

Heavy reliance on voicemail.

Licensed staff doing administrative tasks.

Long waits for return calls and resolution.

**Methods**

Process began with measuring incoming call and in-basket volume and categorizing the types of calls, as well as tracking entry point (scheduling, nurse line, billing, etc.)

Established that 80% of incoming calls going directly to a nurse resulted in leaving a voicemail.

Individual nurse workload depends on provider panel size and practice style causing a great variance in work from one Physician-Nurse team to the next.

A multidisciplinary team used the call and in-basket data to determine what job category was best suited for each call type.

Established incoming call algorithm.

Established “minimum information necessary” templates to collect important incoming call information.

Restructured scheduling department, trained-up Schedulers to receive all incoming calls and distribute incoming calls to the correct work area using templates in EHR.

Implemented clinical teams based on in-basket/call volumes.

**Results**

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Average Call Volume Per Day 903 780 123 14%

Nurses Total Weekly Talk Time (in hours) 140 91 49 35%

Patient Experience Scores 87th % 93rd % +6

From 80% of patients leaving a voicemail for clinical staff to 82% of patients getting needs met at first contact by non-clinical staff.

Clinical teams created equity in workloads.

Reduced staffing by 3 Clinical FTEs (repurposed to Call Center by attrition or available job posting)

Reduced wait times and delays from first contact to resolution from 1 business day to < 4 hours.

## Conclusions

Call Centers enable effective communication and put the right work to the right person at the right time with each patient telephone contact.

Improves patient satisfaction.

**Clinical Implications:** My study will help enable cardiovascular clinicians to create efficient use of clinical and non-clinical staff by directing incoming calls and patient requests to the right work area.

**Image/Table:**

