



Gaining from Understanding

Philips Utilization Consulting helps a busy clinic in France to improve their MRI workflow through decisive insight

Who/where

Clinique Médicale de la Porte Verte, Versailles, France.
Private clinic, west of Paris, focuses on elderly patients and delivers acute care, re-education, and aftercare services.

Challenge

This private clinic recently bought their first MRI system, a 1.0T panorama with AmbiScene, and was looking to optimize their new processes and to increase their patient throughput.

Solution

Philips Utilization Consulting helped them to examine their current performance, benchmark it against other organizations, and create an action plan on how to increase patient capacity by two to three patients per day.

The Clinique Médicale de la Porte Verte in Versailles, France provides acute care, reeducation, and aftercare services for elderly patients. Their new MRI system was working well, but they wanted to ensure that they were using the system to its fullest potential and expand their performance. Philips Utilization Consulting offered them an Extended Quick Scan to review their workflow over two intensive days of observation, to get an objective view of how they were running their suite, and to highlight improvement possibilities. This resulted in helping the clinic to realize how they could do things differently, and what they could change to improve their patient throughput.

The Clinique Médicale de la Porte Verte is a private clinic with a Philips MRI suite with AmbiScene lighting. It had a patient load that is among the top 25% in France and Germany. However, with changes in the general population, the clinic faces the same challenges as elsewhere: demands on their services are increasing.

They needed to find ways of doing more than the average of 20 examinations each day, and to reduce the patient's 10 to 15-day waiting time – while preserving examination quality. They also needed to do it with the

same resources. They decided to approach the situation by optimizing and improving their processes. “Most of all, we’re trying to reduce the amount of time spent on things that perhaps take a little too long here, without compromising quality” says Ms C. Spender, Hospital Director. “So, that is why I asked for Philips’ help in analyzing what we were doing.” Philips Utilization Consulting provided the objective system usage data needed to help the Clinique Médicale de la Porte Verte identify areas where they could improve their performance.

"We're trying to reduce the amount of time spent on things that perhaps take a little too long, without compromising quality"

The intention is to improve both patient and staff satisfaction

A people focused approach

In the clinic, the Extended Quick Scan started with a general meeting in which the Philips consultants reviewed the approach and agreed the specific processes and goals of this project. The approach involved looking at the workflow in a structured way, and examining interactions between people (the staff and patients), processes, and technology. The intention, apart from increasing efficiency, was to improve both patient and staff satisfaction. Before the visit, the Philips consultants had already studied data from the system from the existing Remote Services connection. An important part of ensuring staff commitment from the start is by showing that the Extended Quick Scan was not a conceptual exercise: it was rooted in their own data, and the objective observations of their own processes.

Detailed investigation and appraisal

The next step is the inspection of the current processes, in which the Philips consultants follow the existing patient visit process. This begins with scheduling the appointment, through the patient arriving at reception and preparing for the scan, the experience during the scan, until the scan is ready for reporting. The Philips consultants analyzed every step: what each person does, how they follow the procedures, and how long each action takes. The guiding principle is to take nothing for granted. The consultants looked at the attitudes to processes, the efficiency of preparation, the patient's point of view, the equipment, and how the scanning is done. They reviewed and questioned even the seemingly obvious aspects of the procedure.

Then the consultants reviewed the data and findings with the staff. This involved looking at the procedure and examination mix, which scans are done, how these are selected and performed, which exam cards are used;

and the duration of the patient changeover and scan. The consultants compared the duration of the examination with best practices, and discussed whether the extra time taken was because of the large number of scans or long scanning times. They also looked at the waiting times between scans, which could be caused by contrast preparation in the exam room, uncooperative patients, the need to sedate patients, or repeat or add-on scans. Changeover times were also scrutinized: delays can be caused by patients arriving late or missing appointments, or inefficient scheduling.



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DVD will be placed here



Philips Utilization Consultants review the data and findings with the staff

Reconciling different interests and expectations

After analyzing and reviewing the data, the Philips team had a meeting with the hospital team. This can be difficult, because different layers of the organization have different understandings and expectations of the MR workflow process. There are also differences in style preferences because the members of the radiology department have varied experiences from different organizations. In this case, the discussion centered on the average of 30 minutes taken for each patient, and reconciling this with the goal to examine three patients an hour. The discussion also included the viability of introducing new procedures into the mix, how to prioritize which examinations could and should be improved, and arranging a way to avoid the break traditionally taken for lunch, which tended to be a busy time.

The Extended Quick Scan ended with a final meeting with the entire staff. The consultants presented all the conclusions, their analyses, and their recommendations on how to change and improve specific procedures.

Clear options for the future

In the Clinique Médicale de la Porte Verte, though the procedures were already good, they did find room for improvement and had a clearer idea of their different options to standardize protocols and enhance scheduling. "I think this audit really helped us examine our organization from every angle, and achieve the objectives we have set in our forecast," says Ms Spender. "We're really going to try to improve our organization in every area included on the list." The Extended Quick Scan provided the basis for improving the clinic's performance, and ensuring they get the most from their Panorama 1T MRI system.



"This audit really helped us examine our organization from every angle"

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