



WORKFLOW

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The painful reality for healthcare organizations is that reimbursement is under increasing downward pressure. This, combined with the recent operational requirements of Meaningful Use and ICD-10 conversions, has meant that while reimbursement is headed lower, operational costs have risen to previously unseen levels. Healthcare organizations are looking for any area of their operations in which they can pare costs, from staffing to supplies to reducing or eliminating unprofitable services.

One area that is routinely overlooked is improved management of departmental business processes. Though hospital executives often cite the need for staff to be more productive and do more with less, few actually give their employees the tools to make this happen effectively.

The idea of Business Process Management or BPM, is not new to many industries as many have benefitted from the automation of work-flows in many of their departments, BPM has not been widely applied to healthcare institutions.

Many healthcare organizations are currently pursuing LEAN projects in some form or fashion. This is certainly a necessary step, but what many do not understand is that even in a LEAN optimized environment, without a systematized way to control the work-flows in various departments, entropy occurs and work-flows among individual staff tend to diverge over time.

The discipline of Business Process Management takes these optimized work-flows and uses IT tools to automate them to a point where each employee performs the optimized work-flows identically. When changes need to take place, the automation is modified to continue this compliance of process.