BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT

BY JIM LEONARD

Business Process Management (BPM) is the activities of defining the most efficient set of activities that need to take place in order to complete a business process, like paying an invoice or creating a bill.

Let's take a look at one of the most impactful BPM initiatives in Hospitals over the past 10 years...

Remember back in the days before Electronic Signature for Medical Records? Piles of unsigned patient charts in HIM, organized by Physician, all waiting for the docs to come by HIM and sign their charts (a hidden component of this was that very often a chart was held for more than one physician's signature, so very often the chart went from one pile to another once the first physician signed their documents). A huge management activity for HIM staff, many Docs hated having to visit HIM, and Hospital executives hated having to corner some of their most prolific physicians to get to Medical Records to sign their charts. The piles of unsigned charts were mirrored by an equally problematic DNFB (Discharged, not final billed) report. The larger your DNFB report was, the worse your cash flow story was. Headaches all around.

Then along came Electronic Signature, Business Process Management to the rescue! Now HIM staff could identify chart deficiencies and the physicians' charts were entered into a work list that they now accessed electronically and signed with a Pin. Even more efficient, the same chart could be in multiple physician's work lists simultaneously, talk about an impact! DNFB reports shrunk in size pretty dramatically. This improved even more as physicians were granted remote access to systems so they could sign charts electronically from their offices and even from their homes. This was a huge satisfier to all parties involved. The advent of Web-based Physician Portals smoothed the process even further.

I implemented a Physician Portal at a fairly large, teaching hospital where I was CIO and shortly thereafter had the lead Trauma Surgeon in the doorway of my office with a huge smile on his face "I just signed my charts with my iPhone on this new Portal we implemented!" Big win for everyone! So, that is Business Process Management and you can see how beneficial it can be.

Many hospitals have completed or are conducting LEAN process improvement projects now, but are somewhat missing the boat by not taking these new, more efficient processes and driving them through a system capable of locking in that new process to ensure it's continued implementation in

departments or across departments. Many processes in Healthcare can be supported by a BPM system.

Just one example: Invoice processing can often be improved to the point that the cost of processing an invoice would drop from the industry standard range of $8 - $11 an invoice to $3 or $4. Do a time study of your invoice processing now; you'll be surprised how involved it can be.

Take the next logical step in your LEAN initiatives and drive the new process through a BPM Tool.

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