Stat Dose (SD) Team: Expediting Safe & Efficient Dispatch of Urgent Medications

Introduction
Each month, porters are tasked to transport an average of 10,000 SD from the Inpatient Drug Management (IDM) to the Department of Emergency Medication (DEM) & wards safely & promptly. The on-time administration of SD is critical to patient needs. The average departmental completion time was about 19 minutes. Several challenges were identified:
- The huge compound requires more time for the SD to reach the end locations; and
- The high number of SD requests pose a challenge for the aging porters to deliver the medications promptly.

Aim
The improvement project aimed to shorten the average SD departmental completion time by 20% within the next 6 months so that the SD could reach the patients safely and promptly.

Methodology
The project team adopted a cause-effect analysis using the Fishbone methodology to determine the root causes behind the challenges in processing SD cases. It centered on four major categories:

A. Environment
Time taken to travel the distance from the porter’s last known location to the IDM.

B. Method
Assignment for all cases based on First IN, First OUT principle may exhaust available competent manpower for SD cases.

C. People
Ageing workforce. Limitation in responding promptly to SD cases.

D. Materials
Speed of updating SD task details on porter’s task forms.

Intervention (Continued)
- SD cases were assigned according to destination blocks
- Porters were given a maximum of three SD cases at a time
- Use of standard abbreviations to shorten writing time.

Results

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<td>Ave DCT</td>
<td>0:19:13</td>
<td>0:12:38</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
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Conclusion
The project ensures that the SD reach the warded patients promptly and reduces the incidence of patients not receiving the urgent medication on time. With a deepened sense of aligned purpose, porters are highly motivated to support the hospital’s service quality commitment to patients.

This study is scalable in the healthcare portering sector. Future research directions include using a robust auto-assignment system to expedite efficient assignment of cases and a paperless system for recording comprehensive case processing details, which are already in progress.