A clear view of the emergency department

CST's (former) Emergency Team leads Melissa Pearson RN, Cynthia Startup RN and Patrina Lo RN

The Emergency Design Team at the Clinical & Systems Transformation project has been working to design an integrated, electronic tracking board to make patient care more efficient and effective.

According to Cynthia Startup, "The board makes it clear who needs to do what for a patient. You can send alerts to it, so everyone in the department can see them without looking at the patient's chart, which is good for patient and staff safety. There could be alerts for isolation status, allergies, violent patients and care plans. Access leaders can see what patients are in the Emergency Department, how long they've been there, what hold-ups there are and what might be causing them."

"You can see from the board if someone has a lot going on, and offer help where it's needed," adds Melissa Pearson, an experienced Emergency nurse. "It makes it easier to find patients too. For example, if a patient has gone for an X-ray, the board shows where he is. It therefore decreases the time spent tracking down patients.

"Also, it's interactive – you can click through to the patient chart or go directly to test results. If a test result has a critical value it will show up as an alert. The tracking board won't show the actual result; just that it has a critical value and needs attention."

Melissa explains how the new tracking board will work: "There's a tracking list for small screens, and a tracking board visible on a grease board (a large LCD screen)," she says. "No full patient name is displayed on the grease board, but it shows all the details staff members need to do their work. The smaller tracking list has different views: an 'all beds'

view, which any Emergency staff member can see, and role-specific views for providers, nurses, registration, nursing unit coordinators and so on."

The tracking board display was designed by the whole team, with representatives from VCH, PHSA and PHC providing input into what they wanted to see and how they wanted to interact with the board. "We asked team members to think about their desires for the future, how they wanted to work, and what would expedite patient care," says Cynthia.

Background information

The Clinical and Systems Transformation project is a joint initiative of three health organizations: Vancouver Coastal Health, Provincial Health Services Authority and Providence Health Care. The project is designed to transform health care delivery systems and processes to improve the safety, quality and consistency of the patient and caregiver experience. CST will support the health organizations in establishing common clinical and process standards, including work flows, order sets, clinical guidelines integrated plans of care and a common electronic health record. This clinical transformation will be supported by the implementation of a clinical information system that will replace aging existing systems. The project will be implemented in stages across the health organizations.

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