

Abstract

Today emergency department (ED) overcrowding remains a concern at a global level posing a public health problem resulting in patients leaving the ED without being seen and an increased patient safety risk. The goal of this quality improvement project was to improve ED throughput of a Federal facility combining direct bedding, provider in triage (PIT), and implementation of evidence-based triage nursing protocols early in the patient visit. The Donabedian model was utilized for this project as delivery of quality care and improvement of patient outcomes is the overall goal. The project included education of evidence-based triage protocols and updated facility policy and procedures to a convenience sample of ED registered nurses (RNs). ED quality metrics were compared pre and post implementation of the project. The project resulted in an improvement in leave without being seen (LWOB's) from 3.6% to 0.97%, door to provider time from 32 minutes to 12 minutes, and length of stay (LOS) from 367 minutes to 334 minutes.

Keywords: Emergency department, overcrowding, nursing protocols, patient safety