

Adapted Lean Thinking for Healthcare Services: An Empirical Study in the Traditional Chinese Hospital

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Abstract

This chapter looks at how Lean Thinking can be adapted using a model derived from a case study of a large Traditional Chinese Hospital. After a restructuring in divisions and the implementation of the care programmers and clinical pathways, hospital management found that they had no tools to evaluate if these changes were resulting in a Lean Thinking approach on the work-floor. In agreement with hospital management, an existing tool of Business Process Re-engineering measurement was adopted and adapted to the specific context of health care. This chapter reports on how the quantitative model was changed and validated in order to come up with a useful instrument to measure the Lean Thinking of the employees in the hospital. The Hospital Lean Thinking (HLT) tool can be useful to measure the effects of changes that are assumed to lead to more Lean Thinking or even patient focus. In this way the pay-off of these investments can be made more tangible. The HLT tool offers hospitals a way to evaluate how they are evolving towards more Lean Thinking.

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