

BHC Partners with MHA and MSU

Broadwater Health Center (BHC) is one of six Montana Critical Access hospitals from across Montana to partner with MSU Industrial Engineering students and MHREF Rural Hospital Flexibility Program on a joint Lean Healthcare Project.

Two MSU engineering interns spent two-weeks at BHC, beginning May 18, to implement a pre-determined focused process improvement project. Prior to deployment, the interns received education and training in Lean Healthcare concepts, principles and tools and their application relevant to the hospital setting.

Broadwater Health Center originally applied to have their laundry facilities evaluated using the Lean concepts. For a variety of reasons the BHC laundry facilities are split with the washing machines on the first floor while the drying and folding areas are on the second floor. That project was deemed too large and unable to be accomplished within the two weeks of the program so an alternative project of, registration to the ER during off hours, was identified.

The interns work was supervised and coached daily by the MT Flex Program's Rural Hospital Improvement Coordinator (RHIC) via distance communication, with training and consulting provided by the MSU Industrial Engineering faculty member.

The objectives of the joint projects were:

1. To apply and incorporate Lean process management principles to MT Critical Access Hospitals systems via a rapid improvement event.
2. To collaborate with MSU Mechanical & Industrial Engineering (MSU-MIE) Department in the delivery of this project to Montana CAHs.
3. Create and coordinate a means for MSU-MIE interns to apply their knowledge and skills in a rural healthcare setting.
4. Collaborate with existing Lean projects when applicable.

The project will be completed by May 29 when the MSU interns present their findings and suggestions for process changes for the BHC registration process.



MSU Engineering Students Stephen Manko and Kyle Kohn meet BHC Registration Clerk Kindra Turnery. Stephen and Kyle will be working with Kindra and other BHC Staff on their rapid improvement LEAN project to look at the BHC registration process.