Introduction
Productive Ward is an improvement framework based on an NHS model which is currently being implemented at St Vincent’s Hospital Melbourne (SVHM). Based on Lean Thinking methodology, Productive Ward provides clinical teams with structure and skills to review how activities are supporting clinical care. This empowers staff to lead initiatives and projects that improve and enhance the experience of their families and their patients.

Aim
The key aim of the Productive Ward program is to eliminate waste i.e. any activity that consumes time, resources or space taking time away from patients and their families. Productive Ward releases time to care allowing staff the opportunity to care for patients and also provide support to families. This should result in a significant improvement in the patient and family experience.

Methods – what changed to improve the patient experience
The outcome on 4 West is an excellent example of how Productive Ward has been instrumental in improving patient experience. The ward has currently completed two modules: ‘Knowing How We Are Doing’ and ‘Well Organised Ward’ (WOW) and is currently undertaking ‘Patient Status at a Glance’.

These foundation modules have supported 4 West to capture the ward’s performance and identify improvements. Ward staff have gained an understanding of how the ward is performing against their objectives of improving patient safety, patient experience, efficiency of care and staff wellbeing.

Methods (cont.)
As a result of completing the two foundation modules, there has been a significant amount of time released back to care. This has provided staff with an opportunity to spend more time with patients and families. It is likely patients who receive more direct care time have improved clinical outcomes and experiences and a reduced length of stay.

The ‘WOW’ module has improved the environment on the ward with equipment and consumables sorted and stored in a more effective and efficient manner which supports staff to find the right equipment at the right time in the right place.

Huddles
Each week the team meet to discuss “How they are Doing”. Patients and families are encouraged to participate in these huddles. New ideas and improvements are added to the “Knowing How we are Doing” board which is located in a prominent public area in the ward.

Time to Release results
As part of Productive Ward, one of the activities undertaken by staff is an ‘Activity Follow’. The ‘Activity Follow’ is completed by ward staff, following a ward colleague and reviewing the work flows. The graphs below demonstrate the baseline data before implementation and results after implementation. The Productive Ward process released an extra 20 hours per week direct care time which staff now spend with patients, resulting in improving the patient and family experience.

Cardiac Rehabilitation Choices
Cardiac Rehabilitation is vital to maximise optimal recovery after surgery. Many SVHM patients live in rural Victoria and it is important to offer choice in the location of rehabilitation services. A new initiative on 4 West is to introduce a colour coded map outlining areas where cardiac rehabilitation is available. Patients and their families can easily access information from the colour coded map identifying options across Victoria. Nursing staff now assist with this important aspect of discharge.

Patient experience feedback
Evaluation of patient experience is conducted through existing structured feedback mechanisms. Victorian Healthcare Experience Survey (VHES), Volunteer Bedside Experience Surveys, St. Vincent’s Health Australia (SVHA) Patient Experience Survey and local ward surveys. As a result of a patient experience survey conducted in 4 West in August 2016, it was identified that patients and families were satisfied with the care received however, identified the need to improve patient and care education whilst on the ward.

Cardiac Education and Information Station
4 West has developed an interactive and informative education station which provides patients and families an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of procedures and treatments undertaken in cardiac care. Patients can see and touch life size devices such as cardiac valves and pacemakers. The station assists in alleviating some of the ‘unknowns’ and fears associated with cardiac surgery. The Productive Ward has provided staff with more time to spend in the education role.

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