DUDE SOLUTIONS

Healthcare Ops Management:

5 TRENDS YOU CAN'T IGNORE IN 2016



TheWorxHub™

ebook

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5 TRENDS YOU CAN'T IGNORE IN 2016

If you're in healthcare operations, you've got a lot on your mind. Every year brings new challenges and 2016 is no exception. A lot of the same concerns that kept you up at night over the past several years likely remain in the forefront. Here's a look at **5 trends you can't ignore in 2016**, along with some tips for turning these challenges into opportunities.





1 PATIENTS ARE CONSUMERS— AND THEIR OPINIONS COUNT

There's no doubt that the **balance of power** has shifted squarely in recent years from the provider to the **patient**, with "the authentic transfer of control over people's lives to the people themselves."[1] The healthcare industry needs to continue to work on treating patients as **consumers**—consumers with opinions, ideas, and feelings about the quality of their experiences. People want to be in control of their own care experience and want to feel like their healthcare providers are partners in their success and well-being.

Key drivers in the shift to greater patient autonomy include:

- An industry-wide focus on the IHI's Triple Aim of improving the patient experience of care, improving the health of populations, and reducing the per capita health care cost
- The focus of **affordable care organizations** on quality healthcare and patient engagement
- Reimbursements based, in part, on **HCAHPS scores**
- **Technology** that's put online reviews, price transparency and care ratings right at consumers' fingertips

[1]Don Berwick, Senior Fellow, IHI

Operations managers have a clear opportunity to participate in this transformative healthcare shift. A high-quality **Environment of Care** (EOC) plays a significant role in a patient's treatment process, their sense of well-being, and their satisfaction with their provider. Maintaining this type of physical environment takes vigilance in a number of areas, including:

- Formal EOC tours
- QA rounding

- Managing work requests efficiently
- Communication with hospital staff, patients, and visitors

- Ensuring compliance work and routine maintenance is completed as scheduled
- Prioritizing work on high-risk assets

- Managing projects effectively
- Long-term capital planning



2 PATIENT SAFETY— GOOD FOR THEM, GOOD FOR BUSINESS

Healthcare-associated Infections (HAIs) are the leading cause of death in the United States[2], so it's no surprise that patient safety continues to be a big focus area for healthcare operations management (and always will be). Though much progress has been made through various programs and partnerships, there's still more work to be done.

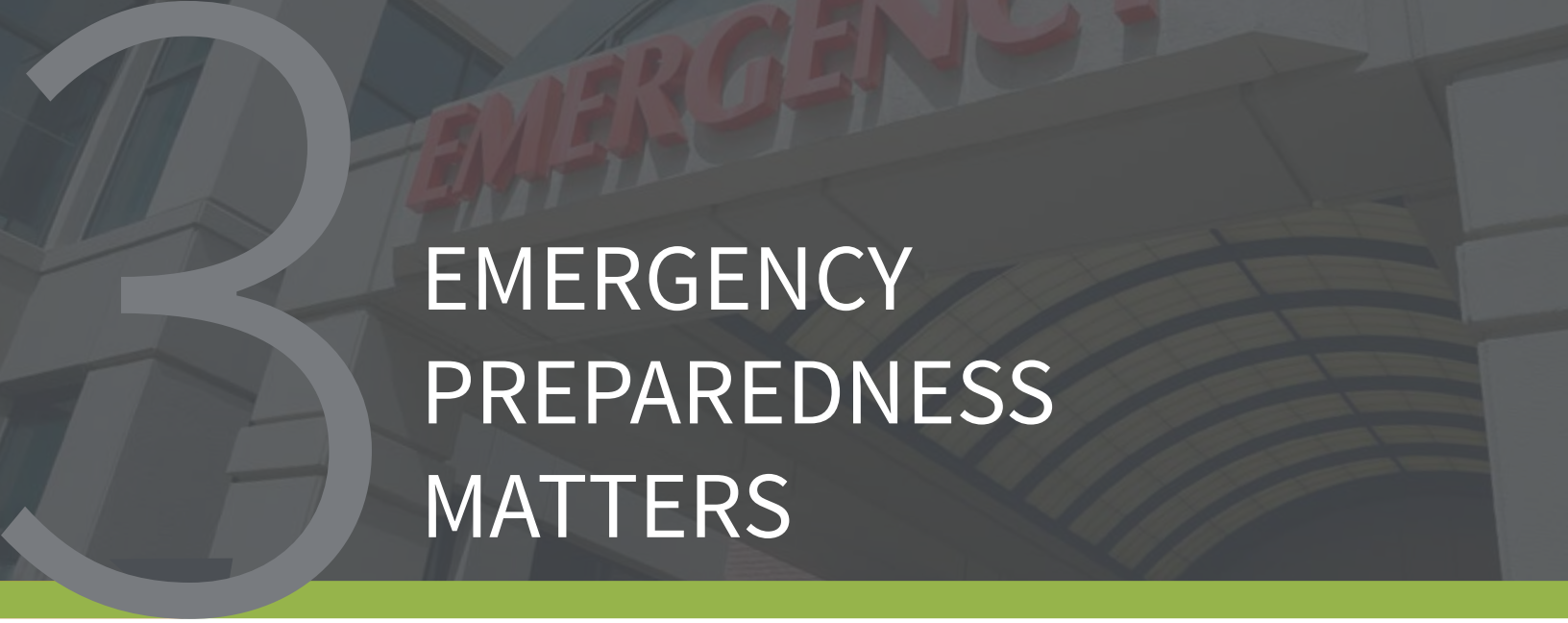
Not only is progress important for patient safety, but it also matters greatly to a facility's bottom line. With Affordable Care Act laws tying Medicare reimbursement to HAIs, hospitals across the nation are allocating more time and resources to **preventing HAIs** that are still wreaking havoc on the system. One has to look no further than the recent **Legionnaires'** outbreak in New York to see that the time and effort spent focusing on patient safety is an investment worth our continued focus.

The **ASHRAE standard** that New York City partially adopted as a result of the outbreak calls for collaboration between operations professionals to survey, analyze and monitor their buildings and water systems, and those standards could easily be replicated in other states moving forward. Even in the absence of new ASHRAE standards, it's mission-critical for operations management to have the following in place:

- Updated procedures that are at staff members' fingertips at all times
- Ability to track and document the implementation of all preventative measures
- Ability to easily manage, document, and analyze the quality of an implementation

Healthcare operations teams are already struggling to both save money and meet those patient-consumer expectations. However, when you compare the financial impact of HAIs overall with the cost of implementing and managing advanced safety programs, it's easy to make the business case. Investing in patient safety is always the right thing to do.

[2]National action plan to prevent HAI: Road map to elimination (April 2013)



3 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MATTERS

In today's world, more than ever before, it's not enough for hospitals to be prepared for accidents and acts of nature like fires, floods, and hurricanes. Events such as mass shootings and terror attacks must be seriously considered as part of any hospital's emergency preparedness checklist. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) proposed a rule on emergency preparedness in late 2013 because the agency believed that the emergency preparedness requirements for healthcare facilities, at the time, were "not comprehensive enough to address the complexities of actual emergencies."

CMS recommends that a **comprehensive emergency management** program includes all of the following 5 phases[3]. No small undertaking, with everything else you've likely got on your plate—but critical to creating the safest care environment for your facility.

80% of organizations rely on first responders in an emergency

1) **Hazard Identification:** Health care providers should make every effort to include any potential hazards that could affect the facility directly and indirectly for the particular area in which it is located. Indirect hazards could affect the community but not the provider, and as a result interrupt necessary utilities, supplies or staffing.

2) **Hazard Mitigation:** Hazard mitigation includes activities taken to eliminate or reduce the probability of the event, or reduce its severity or consequences, either prior to or following a disaster or emergency.

3) **Preparedness:** Preparedness includes developing a plan to address how the provider will meet the needs of patients and residents if essential services breakdown as a result of a disaster. It will be the product of a review of the basic facility information, the hazard analysis, and an analysis of the provider's ability to continue providing care and services during an emergency. It also includes training staff on their role in the emergency plan, testing the plan, and revising the plan as needed.

4) **Response:** Activities immediately before (for an impending threat), during and after a hazard impact the immediate and short-term effects of the emergency.

5) **Recovery:** Activities and programs implemented during and after response that are designed to return the facility to its usual state or a "new normal."

[3]CMS.gov: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertEmergPrep/HealthCareProviderGuidance.html



3 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MATTERS

Once you've got your plan in place, the greatest challenge is making sure that everyone on your staff knows about it. **Four key questions** that any Operations Management leader needs to be able to answer, in a heartbeat, include:

1. **How do you make important response information accessible to your staff?**
2. **How do you make updates to the plan and make everyone aware of them?**
3. **How do you track and trend the results of EOC tours and QA rounding?**
4. **How are incidents reported and reviewed?**

4 FOCUS ON CREATING A DATA-RICH DECISION-MAKING ENVIRONMENT

All signs point to healthcare operations management leaders continuing to function in an increasingly data-rich decision-making environment. Most would agree that using data to drive our most important decisions makes the most business sense, and that's especially true when it comes to compliance. The challenge comes in finding the most efficient, cost-effective ways to **capture, manage and report** on that data—day in and day out.

Keeping good data gives management both insight and control over every aspect of hospital operations and plays a critical role in all of the most important aspects of facility management including:

BUDGETING AND CAPITAL PLANNING: Keeping accurate records of dollars spent in all areas of your operations makes it much easier to plan for budget and staffing needs. Data of this kind also helps plan for capital replacements so that you avoid surprise expenses and potential business interruptions.

COMPLIANCE: You and your Environment of Care committee need trending data on deficiencies in order to make better decisions about patient and staff safety, survey preparedness, and staff training.

PATIENT CARE EXPERIENCE: Do you know how quickly your team is responding to daily requests? Do you know if they're prioritizing the work appropriately and hitting your internal targets for turnaround times? Having this sort of data, as well as documentation on individual jobs if a question ever arises, is key to managing the patient care experience at your hospital.

5 EMPHASIS ON COST REDUCTION

No surprise here; the trend of both patients and the industry as a whole is the **demand for more value for less capital expenditure**, and it's never far from the minds of operations leaders who want to see their organizations succeed. Strategies such as consolidating specialized care facilities in a metro area and hiring consultants to identify opportunities for cost reduction are standard practice in cities nationwide. From a facility management standpoint, it's critical that you're aligned on business metrics and how facility management affects those numbers. It's important to know your costs in all of the following areas:

- Materials costs
- Contractor costs
- Labor productivity and costs
- Amount of work and cost by location and category
- Individual asset costs
- Capital expenditures
- System-level costs

CONCLUSION

With a major **transformation** occurring across the healthcare industry, healthcare operations leaders and managers are laser-focused on delivering the best experience, best care and best possible outcomes for consumers. Though things like patient safety and emergency preparedness are always top of mind, they, along with patient consumerism, the increasing reliance on data-driven decisions, and the ongoing focus on cost savings are key areas to watch in 2016. Forward-thinking healthcare leaders are tapping into **advanced tools and resources** to help them reduce compliance risks, deliver better customer service, and increase productivity. When you're ready to learn more, we're here to help.

About Dude Solutions

Dude Solutions, parent company of SchoolDude and FacilityDude, is a leading software-as-a-service (SaaS) provider of operations management solutions to education, healthcare, government, commercial and membership organizations. Over the last 15 years more than 7,000 organizations have selected Dude Solutions' award-winning software for facilities, energy, safety, IT and a growing suite of related enterprise applications to increase efficiencies, improve service and save money. For more information, please visit http://www.dudesolutions.com.