SyncTimes

Patient Flow Case Study

Facing health, safety, and security concerns in exam rooms with no communication system for clinical or security staff, Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) evaluated and implemented the SyncTimes RTLS, Workflow Communication, and Analytics Solution in their Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center (81 exam rooms) and Upper Tanana Health Center (8 exam rooms, 4 trauma rooms).

Results

Through the TCC-SyncTimes partnership, the following was accomplished within 8 months

28%
decrease in patient alone time in the exam room

24%
increase in productivity (visits/provider hour)

14%
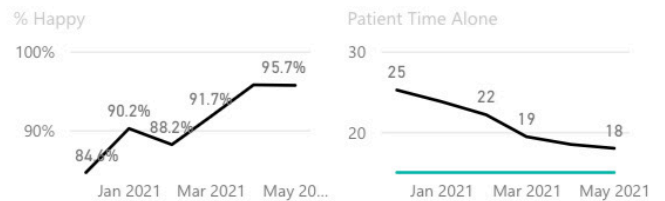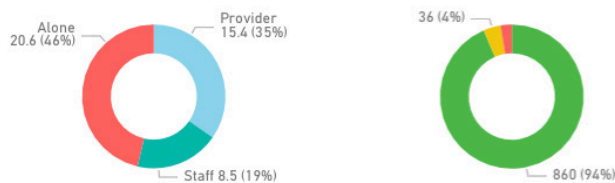2.9–minute (14%) increase in average patient time with support staff & provider

13%
increase in top-box patient satisfaction measured at the point-of-care
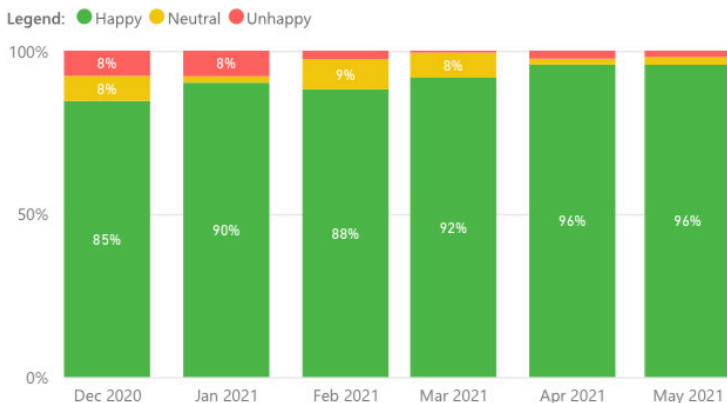
Drastically reduced response times to code & duress events

"Since starting SyncTimes our employee and patient satisfaction have increased significantly. We have been able to improve on communication, safety, alone times, and flow of patient care. Not only do our patients now have a way to request for help but our staff do as well. They can discreetly get security to come to the room without alerting the patient. The best improvement to safety is the code button, allowing staff to get a lot of help quickly during a code. I would have to say the best part of this purchase for our company is the support SyncTimes offers us. I strongly recommend this product to all health centers."
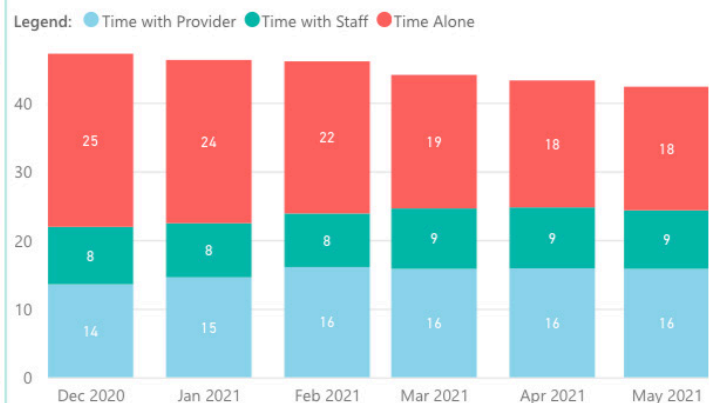
**Trinity Marrapodi,
RN, Primary Care Nurse Manager**

Alone 20.6 (46%)
Provider 15.4 (35%)
Staff 8.5 (19%)

36 (4%)
860 (94%)

% Happy
100%
90%
84.4%   90.2%   88.2%   91.7%   95.7%
Jan 2021   Mar 2021   May 20...

Patient Time Alone
30
25
22
19
18
20
Jan 2021   Mar 2021   May 2021

Surveys

Legend: ● Happy ● Neutral ● Unhappy

	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021	Apr 2021	May 2021
Unhappy	8%	8%				
Neutral	8%		9%	8%		
Happy	85%	90%	88%	92%	96%	96%

Patient Experience in Exam Room

Legend: ● Time with Provider ● Time with Staff ● Time Alone

	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021	Apr 2021	May 2021
Time Alone	25	24	22	19	18	18
Time with Staff	8	8	8	9	9	9
Time with Provider	14	15	16	16	16	16

SyncTimes analytics demonstrating TCC's reduction in alone time and correlated increase in top-box patient satisfaction.

TCC Background

TCC's Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center (CAIHC) serves Alaskan Native people from 30 villages across a 235,000 square-mile region of Alaska. The clinic had operated in a wing of the local hospital until the construction of the new facility, which opened in 2012. As the health center quickly reached capacity, leadership identified new challenges in providing an excellent experience to both patients and staff.

Lacking Communication System

In evaluating its workflows, TCC discovered that staff had no simple way to communicate effectively from the exam room. Critically, staff could not alert the code blue response team in the event of a health emergency without leaving the patient in distress to seek help. Requesting assistance in a room, even for routine medical tasks, was a time-consuming task.

Wasted Effort Searching

Staff experienced wasted time and motion searching for other team members in the health center. Staff could frequently be found wandering hallways, searching for team members and equipment (EKG machines, vitals carts, etc.)

Long Wait Times

Without a communication system, patients were sometimes left alone in the exam room for over 30 minutes. While TCC's EHR provided basic door-to-door cycle times, quality and operations teams lacked adequate data to drive performance improvements.

Evaluating Solutions

TCC evaluated over a dozen solutions to address these deficiencies.

Initially, care teams used flags to indicate patient needs and room statuses. This helped to identify the room status but failed to notify staff in team rooms.

The teams tested the use of wireless doorbells to communicate emergencies from the room, but they were unable to identify the room triggering the alert. This required staff in team rooms to always monitor the doorbells.

TCC also evaluated voice-based systems but were concerned at the impact of interruptions and privacy complications in a high-touch primary care environment.

As TCC planned construction on its Upper Tanana Health Center in Tok, leadership looked for a solution that would effectively solve each of these challenges.

SyncTimes Background

The SyncTimes system helps health centers reduce chaos and streamline patient flow. The system incorporates real-time locating, a custom visual workflow system, and an operational analytics platform. This results in reduced patient wait time, increased patient and staff satisfaction, and additional capacity, within existing facilities and teams.

TCC recognized SyncTimes could address these workflow challenges, in making it easier to communicate, locate staff, and measure and improve patient wait times.

> "I save so much time because I can easily locate my co-workers and equipment from my laptop. I used to spend a lot of time looking for providers and vitals carts, which negatively impacted the patient's wait time. I love how I can get alerts on my desktop or phone when my provider needs something."
>
> **Kim Showalter,**
> CMA, CMA Team Lead, Workflow Governance Team Lead

The Partnership
Customizing Initial Workflows & Go-Live

TCC and SyncTimes assembled an implementation team, which worked to align the SyncTimes system with TCC's specific clinical workflows. This work enabled the care teams to experience a smooth transition to the SyncTimes system.

Workflow Governance Team

At go-live, the implementation team was inundated with requests to transition additional workflows to the SyncTimes system. TCC established a workflow governance team, including SyncTimes representatives and cross-functional TCC staff. This team evaluates workflows to migrate to SyncTimes, plans these transitions, and ensures staff are trained prior to migration.

> "The SyncTimes team has given us all the tools and resources needed to manage the workflows and icons to our organization's needs. They have been there every step of the way offering solid guidance and data so that we can visualize and act on our progress. We can now call for an emergency from any patient care room and the patients can easily summon support staff while alone in the room. It is very efficient and easy to use. Our patient safety and wait times have improved exceptionally and we are very pleased with the system."
>
> **Kim Showalter,**
> CMA, CMA Team Lead, Workflow Governance Team Lead

Patient Experience Team

TCC's patient experience team quickly identified the opportunity to improve patient satisfaction through decreasing wait times. Patient experience staff use surveys provided by SyncTimes in the exam room to be notified immediately when a service recovery is needed. The system also notifies them immediately when a patient's wait exceeds 15 minutes. The patient experience team then works with the care team to round with the patient.

> "The goal is to be proactive instead of reactive when it comes to customer service. Rounding using SyncTimes notifications is a win-win because we are connecting with and supporting patients, family members, and staff as a whole."
>
> **Leilani Sauer,**
> MA, CPXP, Customer Experience Manager