

MEMORANDUM

To: Donna Griggs, Administrator of The Surgery Center at Cedar Lake
From: Barbara Chroniger, Surgery Coordinator
Date: November 18, 2XXX
Subject: Request to Conduct Research on Paperless Check-Ins

Summary

Our surgery center sees over 40 patients a day. It is imperative that processing procedures for patient information, insurance, and surgery details be fast and accurate.

What the Problem Is and Why It Needs to Be Investigated

Utilizing a paper-based check-in system requires physical documentation prior to a patient being admitted to the surgery center. There are 20-plus pages of paper in a patient's chart. These documents must be printed each time the patient is seen at the center. This paper-based process is wasteful and not cost effective; it also increases the risk of errors.

Documentation accuracy is essential to patient safety. When processes are rushed or patients are flooded with paperwork, mistakes can be made. When it comes to the treatment and safety of the patients, the center cannot afford to make mistakes. When mistakes occur in healthcare, the repercussions could be debilitating, costly, or even lead to death. An alternative to the current paper-base check-in needs to be found.

What Secondary Research Has Been Conducted About the Problem

The secondary research I have conducted strongly supports the implementation of a paperless system. The literature reviewed suggests specific software, protocols for required training, and cost-efficiency improvements surrounding the transition to a digital process. Both scholarly and trade articles detail the benefits and challenges that come with a paperless system. However, the majority of the literature provides strong support and clear guidelines for transitioning to a paperless office.

What Primary Research I Will Conduct About the Problem

During primary research I will review a sample of records in the current paper-based system to collect data on the percentage of errors that occur. I will also conduct an anonymous survey of employees that directly face the struggles of a paper-based check-in system. The survey will solicit their feedback on their current processes and a possible transition to a digital check-in system. Finally, I will evaluate the costs of the current paper-based system compared to the costs associated of a paperless system.

Why We Will Benefit from My Research and Recommendations

Many benefits will result from research on this issue. The center will achieve a better understanding of current check-in operations, identify errors that regularly occur, and prioritize how to address them. Another benefit is increased understanding of costs associated with the current paper system versus a digital check-in system. Lastly, the center would see how office performance and efficiency could improve beyond its current state.

Conclusion

The Surgery Center at Cedar Lake is a busy organization burdened by the amount of paperwork and time that go into checking a patient in for surgery. With your permission, I will conduct research on the implementation of a paperless system in order to document cost savings, increased efficiency and increased safety that accompany the implementation of a digital system.