

Spotlight on...Jackie Nitschke Center

The Jackie Nitschke Center (JNC), located in Green Bay and named for the wife of Packer Ray Nitschke, is a National Leader in Addiction Recovery. Their mission is to provide affordable quality alcohol and drug treatment in a home-like environment to improve the quality of life for adult clients and their families.

During the 2011-2012 STAR-SI Program year, the JNC chose to apply Quality Improvement Lean Principles to further improve their services. Lean's basic premise is about reducing waste and focusing on what's valuable to the customer. The change team chose to reduce waste and inefficiency in the process of transitioning a client from Residential to the Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP). Prior to applying Lean Principles to their organizational processes, the JNC successfully transitioned 46% of their clients from their Residential Program to the IOP; their change project goal was to increase successful transitions to 75%.

JNC's change leader began by conducting a Lean process called Value Stream Mapping to identify steps and sub-steps of the transition process. Education about the process was then provided to the staff so they could increase their focus on fulfilling all steps of the transition process and increase communication and teamwork between residential and IOP patients. As a result of this change, successful transitions improved by 18%. The second rapid cycle involved a change to the group clinical supervision process, shifting the focus to the importance of shared priorities and standards of accountability, allowing the team to improve successful transitions to 73%...an improvement of 27%.

The change team learned that consistency comes when everyone is on the same page and that the repetition of training and practicing skills is critical to successfully making process changes when transitioning clients from one treatment modality to another. The next step the change team is experimenting with is incorporating an IOP counselor into the Residential program.