Identifying Waste

Lean is a continuous process improvement methodology that focuses on identifying and eliminating non-value added or wasteful activities. Value is defined from the perspective of the community/populations we serve. By knowing what your community/population values helps one to identify the value-added or those activities which are truly needed. Lean focuses on 8 types of wastes. The acronym **DOWNTOWN** is used to help remember the 8 types of waste.

Defects

Overproduction

Waiting

Non value-added processing

Transportation

Inventory

Motion

Employee (Underutilizing)

Examples of the 8 Wastes

Defects-Is the work accurate and complete?
- Charts or reports with incorrect or incomplete information
- Inaccurate data entered into computer, on reports, etc.
- Mislabeled containers, forms, reports, etc.
- Clients on hold and their phone call lost

Overproduction- Are there forms, services, activities that are being done that aren't really needed?
- Overstaffing of flu clinic when it isn't flu season
- Printing all forms instead of capturing the information in a computer
- Multiple forms with same information
- Staff meetings held when it could have been shared in an email

Waiting
- Clients waiting for services
- Nurses waiting to use scales to weigh children OR staff waiting to use the copier/fax machine
- Waiting for a response back via email, etc.

Non-value added processing-Does the activity/task add value for clients?
- Reports reviewed by multiple people or multiple sign-offs
- Passing customer calls around (phone musical chairs)
- Multiple chairs/stations during clinic visit

Transportation-Is there excess movement of supplies, patients, and/or materials?
- Moving a client from room to room
- Too many mouse clicks on your website before getting to the information
- Having to walk between buildings, floors, etc. to get services

Inventory-Are there too many materials/supplies on hand?
- Files in a cabinet that are no longer used
- Overstocked supplies or outdated supplies, files, etc.

Motion –Is there excessive motion of staff?
- Staff searching for information, supplies, etc.
- Walking from the front of the office to back of office to get something

Employee (underutilization)—Is your agency tapping into skills, talents, and abilities of your staff?
- Is there a way to cross train people to do other jobs?

WASTE WALK

Use the Waste Walk worksheet to identify wastes that you see.

Area: _____

Date: _____

OBSERVED WASTE	Defect	Overproduction	Waiting	Non-value added Processing	Transportation	Inventory	Motion	Employee Skill/Knowledge	IMPROVEMENT IDEA
	8 WASTES								

THE 8 WASTES

DEFECT	Product or service that does not meet customer demand due to quality issue (include rework)
OVERPRODUCTION	Make more than, earlier than, or faster than required
WAITING	Wait for equipment, supplies, people, test results, etc.
NON-VALUE ADDED PROCESSING	Effort adds no value to product or service from customer's viewpoint
TRANSPORTATION	Excess material movement
INVENTORY	Supply in excess of single-piece flow
MOTION	Any movement of people or machines that does not add value to product or service
EMPLOYEE AS A RESOURCE	Not using people's knowledge, skills, and abilities