

Applied Learning Project

Blood from a stone: Building a psychology program for a new service line during a pandemic with no resources

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Identifying a need

- Pediatric sleep problems are often behavioral and require multiple long clinic visits at short intervals to treat
- Successful Pediatric Sleep Centers use multi-disciplinary teams to achieve the education, intervention and emotional support it requires to change an entire family's dynamic and routine

Setting: The UBMD Pediatrics Sleep Center (est 2019) = 1.3 FTE physicians + shared office support staff

- Financial standing tenuous due to poor initial productivity in the sleep lab from COVID among other factors
- Pandemic made the finances more urgent for the department, led to furloughs, staff turn over
- Clinic visits required to provide counselling to families were time-intensive and prolonged wait times worsening quality of care (negative feedback from referring providers)
- Follow-up visit compensation not worth time and patients lost

PROBLEM: Resource heavy need, limited return on investment, new program in the middle of a pandemic

Explanation of the Project

Project primary objective: To expand the psychological services for children seen in the UBMD Pediatrics Sleep Center

Steps to attainment:

1. Describe the need
2. Determine the type of provider to be able to supply that
3. Determine appropriate team member capabilities, department resources available for this
4. Reach out to other divisions to pool resources, research previous similar endeavors
5. Identify what the investment would be
6. Identify sources of financial support
7. Determine a plan to ensure financial sustainability

Building a team

- With three different (shared) secretaries and two managers in the first three months of the sleep center's existence, the first step was to *establish* a team with consistency and buy-in
 - Q1 2021 set up weekly meetings to ensure collective team knowledge and goals (included all people involved)
 - Regular feedback to each member about performance and work load, new work flows
 - Immediate communication about wins and losses in the lab and clinic (reminders about why our work is important)
 - Improved the connection between the sleep lab company, our department and Kaleida (managed friction, contract disputes and delays with regular multidisciplinary meetings with all parties at the table)
- Generated partnerships with clinics and providers with similar needs to begin a dialog that could lead to a solution:
 - Robert Warner Center
 - Pharmacy
 - Autism Center
 - Child Psychology
 - Community mental health providers
 - CMO of Oishei to learn previous efforts and other areas with similar need

OBSTACLES	SOLUTION	STATUS
Staffing shortages in the sleep lab = longer wait times, low revenue, poor patient/referring provider satisfaction	Aggressive recruitment, expanded candidacy, job fairs, outreach, elective rotations	PARTIALLY RESOLVED: 50% of positions filled
Ongoing financial strain in the practice making any investment a challenge	After dialog with Kaleida and UBMD, creative funding sources identified	PENDING
Stark laws related to sharing providers between clinics if owned by Kaleida or UBMD	Created a plan for patient flow to avoid this	RESOLVED
Admin questioning financial compensation for BH services	Clarified with billing	RESOLVED
High no-show rates and cancellations due to ongoing pandemic-related issues distracted away from this effort because hampered revenue	Triple format confirmations for sleep studies, no-show fee, lose spot in line, change referral pattern	ONGOING: NSH was up to 20%, now is 2% in the last 3 weeks

Project Outcomes

1. Identified viable financial support to invest in a full time psychologist until financially self-sufficient
2. Identified a collaborative team to ensure the psychologist has patient volume: GI, Sleep Medicine, Robert Warner Center and Endocrinology
3. Identified a sustainable financial plan to retain and justify the psychologist
4. Laid the groundwork for future mental health providers if this first step is successful



January
2022

Apply for funding



Spring 2022

Recruitment



Q3 2022

Start date



SAIL INSTITUTE

Empowering Strategic, Academic,
and Innovative Leadership

Academy Outcomes

- What has this project done for our community?
 - We will now be able to better support the psychological needs of children with a diversity of medical problems (not just Sleep)
- What the SAIL institute taught me that helped in this project?
 - Leverage, team work, playing to my strengths
 - Thinking outside of the norm
- What might you do differently leading a future project?
 - Ask for help sooner
 - Ensure that all people's needs are met



Final Thoughts and Reflections

Listening can be more powerful than talking. Hearing what your colleagues are thinking and offering can create a happier, more productive team.

Be in the right place at the right time.

Questions



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