



Published on FierceHealthFinance (<http://www.fiercehealthfinance.com>)

Lean, Six Sigma taking hold at hospitals

By anne

Created Dec 19 2009 - 10:27pm

Sure, Lean and Six Sigma management tools were well-known to healthcare leaders well before the recent economic collapse--but this year, they seem to have become more of a "must have" than a "nice to have" for many execs. According to a study from the American Society for Quality, released during the first quarter of '09, more than half of hospitals [1] had kicked off some degree of Lean deployment, and 42 percent some degree of Six Sigma.

It's telling that the hospitals implementing these two strategies were primarily in the early stages, with only 4 percent reporting "full" deployment of lean and 8 percent of Six Sigma. It seems pretty evident that hospital execs were "scared straight," if you will, into imposing new levels of discipline on their operations.

Come the first quarter of 2010, let's see if the hospitals pushed onto the bandwagon actually stay there. Our guess is that more than half will have backed off completely, as changing the way you think about day-to-day operations is a huge challenge. Still, maybe we're too cynical. Wouldn't it be nice to think that the recession had at least a few useful effects?

Related Articles:

[Talking lean management and EMRs with Simpler's Mike Chamberlain](#) [2]

[Hospital CEOs: Reform savings goals doable with lean, Six Sigma](#) [3]

[BIDMC uses lean production approach](#) [4]

Source URL:

<http://www.fiercehealthfinance.com/story/lean-six-sigma-taking-hold-hospitals/2009-12-19-0>

Links:

[1] <http://www.fiercehealthfinance.com/story/lean-six-sigma-management-becoming-more-popular-hospitals/2009-03-24>

[2] <http://www.fiercehealthcare.com/story/q-mike-chamberlain-simpler-healthcare/2009-06-24>

[3] <http://www.fiercehealthfinance.com/story/hospital-ceos-reform-savings-goals-doable-lean-six-sigma-toyota-methods/2009-09-10>

[4] <http://www.fiercehealthcare.com/story/bidmc-uses-lean-production-approach/2007-09-17>