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CASE STUDY

## How a Healthcare Organization Reduced Patient Wait Times — by Empowering Its People

Industry: Healthcare | Employees: 300

### The Situation

Patient satisfaction scores were sliding, and leadership knew it. The complaints were consistent and painful to read: registration took too long, treatment was delayed, and communication left patients feeling lost. Average wait times had crept past industry benchmarks.

In healthcare, those aren't just operational metrics — they're people's experiences on what may be a frightening day. Long waits erode trust at exactly the moment patients need to feel cared for. The team wanted to fix it, but they were buried in the day-to-day and didn't have a clear way forward.

### What We Did

We started by understanding reality before changing it. That meant mapping the actual processes, listening closely to the voice of the patient, and running a Lean healthcare assessment to see where time was truly being lost. Just as importantly, we coached the staff's leaders — because lasting improvement in healthcare lives with the people at the front line.

From there, we put practical systems in place: a streamlined intake process, brief daily huddles to keep teams aligned, visual management so everyone could see the day at a glance, and continuous improvement teams that gave staff a real voice in solving the problems they saw every day.

### The Results

Within just six months, the difference was clear — for patients and for the people serving them.

- Registration time was reduced 48%.
- Patient wait times dropped 35%.
- Patient satisfaction scores improved 22%.
- Employee engagement rose 18% — because people who solve problems feel proud of their work.

*“The biggest improvement wasn't the process — it was giving our staff ownership of solving problems.”*

— Department Leader

### The Takeaway

Faster service turned out to be a byproduct of something deeper. When you give capable people clarity, support, and genuine ownership of their work, they will improve it in ways no outside consultant ever could.

The processes mattered. But the real transformation was in the people — and that's the kind of change that keeps paying off long after the engagement ends.

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**Curious where your organization stands?** Take the free Leadership Operating System™ assessment, or book a discovery call with Tom at [northstarlc.com](http://northstarlc.com).