



# Gifford Medical Center

## **Quality Improvement Project** Radiology Report Turnaround Time

### **Project aim**

The aim of this quality improvement project is to reduce the amount of time for a radiology report to be finalized.

### **Time frame**

February 2008 to March 2009

### **Description**

Through the implementation of new technology and other system changes, the Radiology Department at Gifford Medical Center has significantly reduced the amount of time needed to finalize a radiology report.

### **Description of the problem**

Gifford has created a high-technology Radiology Department through the purchase of a 40-slice CT scanner, new bone density machine, digital mammography, a filmless radiology system and other upgrades. This technology is available locally for the convenience of patients, and Gifford's team of radiology technologists are highly skilled at professionally and compassionately performing diagnostic imagery.

Additionally, the Radiology Department at Gifford has partnered with radiologists at Fletcher Allen Health Care in Burlington, Vt., to ensure that Gifford's patients receive the same high quality diagnostic interpretation that they could expect at a large tertiary level care facility. One logistical challenge to this partnership has been the time it takes for the radiologist's interpretation of an image obtained at Gifford to be finalized into the patient's medical record.

Reducing turnaround time for radiology reports improves the quality of patient care, as well as the satisfaction of patients and physicians.

## Project goals with appropriate measures

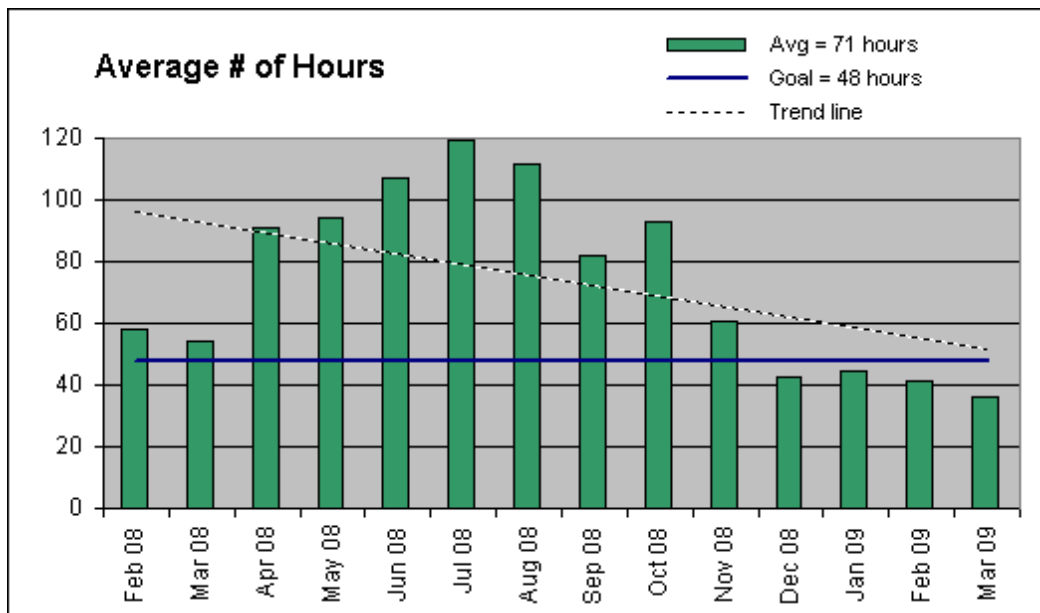
Initially, the goal of this project was to have radiology reports finalized in under 48 hours. This project has been highly successful in reaching this goal.

## Description of the intervention(s)

In February of 2008, Gifford began tracking data to assess problem areas and develop improvement strategies.

In November of 2008, an interface between the speech recognition system used by Fletcher Allen radiologists and Gifford's medical record system was installed. Using the Web-based product, radiologists can now view the image and sign off on a completed report in virtually seconds. The report then prints at the referring provider's office. This project not only boosts efficiency; it also improves referring physician satisfaction, enhances patient care, and yields cost savings in transcription and related services.

## Evaluation process and results



As the chart shows, this quality improvement initiative has significantly reduced radiology report turnaround time and met and exceeded the 48-hour turnaround time goal.

## Contact

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