PATIENT THROUGHPUT

Improving Patient Throughput from the Emergency Department to the Inpatient Units

A Performance Improvement Project at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital

PROBLEM STATEMENT/PURPOSE

Patients admitted to the Progressive Care Unit through the Emergency Department were waiting on average 156 minutes (up to 236 minutes) after the decision to admit was made between the Emergency Department and Hospitalist teams before arriving on the Progressive Care Unit.

METHODOLOGY/INTERVENTIONS

An interdisciplinary group met to analyze the data and brainstorm possible solutions. An iterative PDSA model was used to drive improvement.

- Map the workflow to determine barriers.
- Collect real time reasons for barriers.
- Implement a reliable paging system for ED/PCU communication.
- Change the hand-off report to eliminate "telephone tag".
- Change the time the, "Decision to Admit", order is placed by the Emergency Department providers to allow for more accurate time stamp.
- Optimize Cerner FirstNet tracking board to communicate bed readiness with Progressive Care Unit team.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT CONTACT

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RESULTS
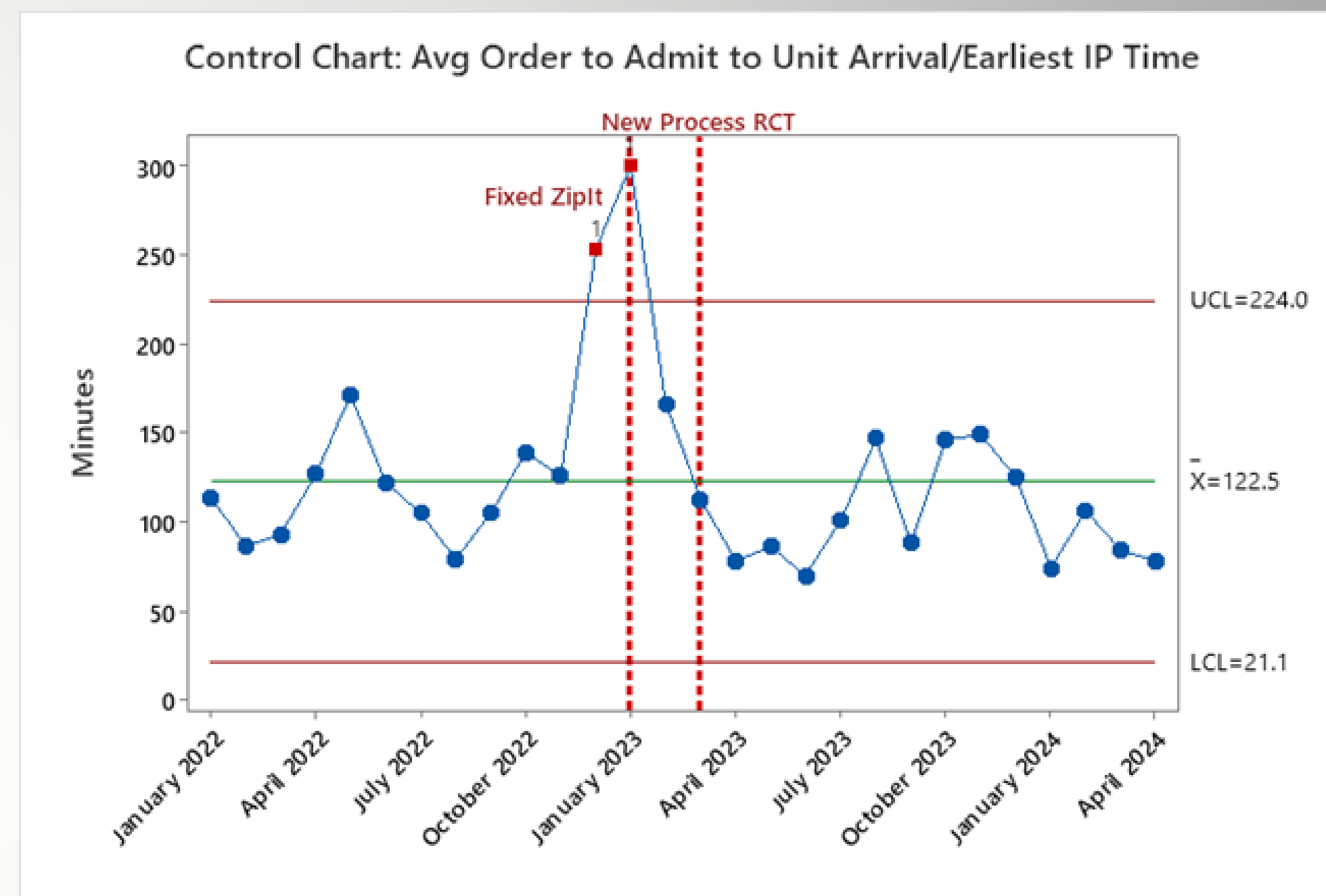
CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implementing new processes decreased the median decision to admit time to 22 minutes, and decreased the median arrival to the inpatient unit to 75 minutes after the order to admit was placed.
- ED throughput times are now below other local hospitals.
- Additional interventions are being explored to improve timeliness of Med-Surg discharges, which will increase bed readiness and further decrease throughput time.