

June, 2015

# Get in or Get out: Implementation of an observation unit in a community hospital

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“Get in or Get out!”

# Implementation of an Observation Unit in a Community Hospital

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## Problem

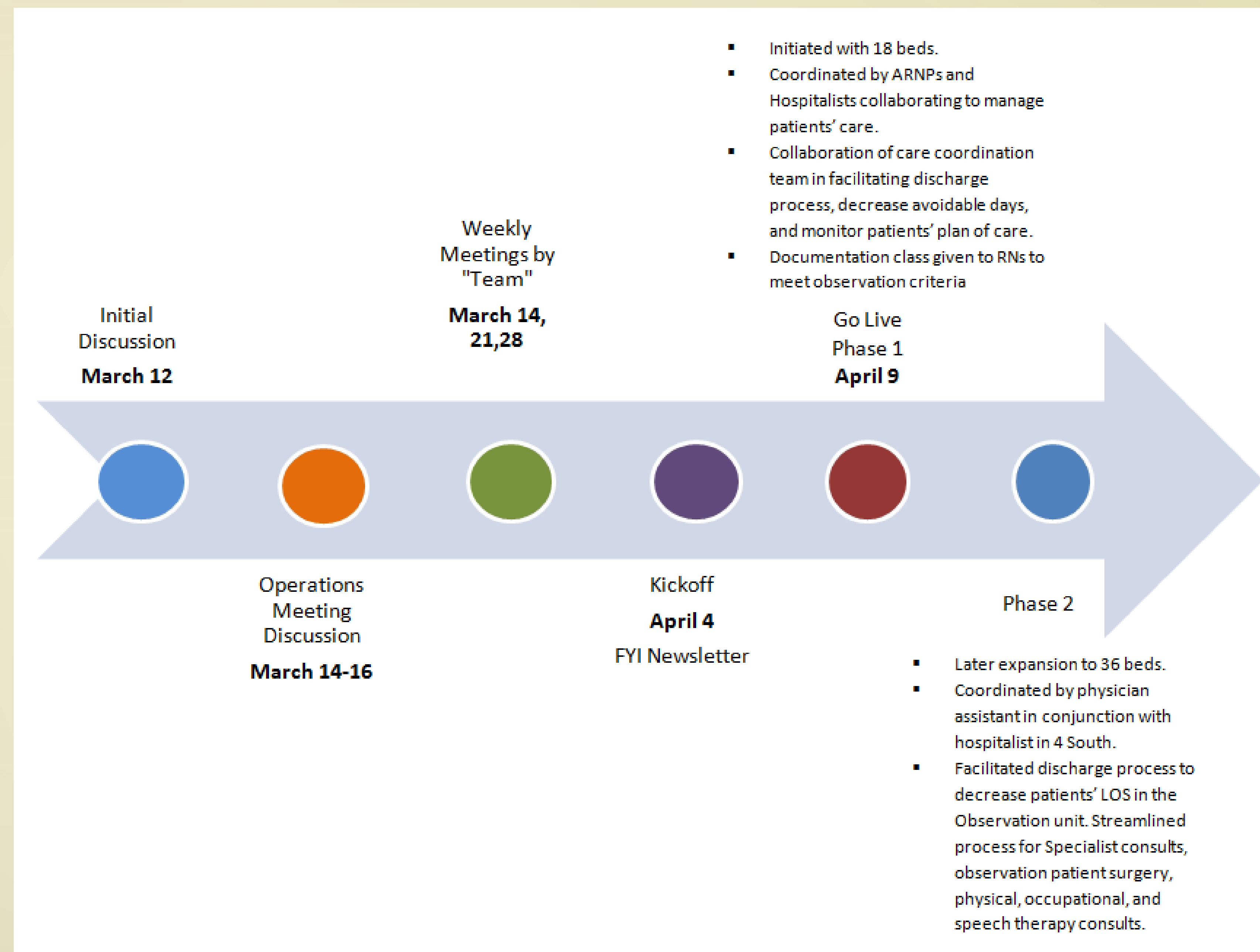
Observation care allows practitioners time to decide whether the patient meets criteria from inpatient services or if they can be discharged. According to different regulations, observation status should be within 48 hours. At West Kendall Baptist Hospital (WKBH) the length of stay (LOS) of patients in the observation unit was between 38-42 hours before a decision was made to admit or discharge the patients. A pilot project was created to reduce patient's LOS to a target goal of 24 hours while still providing the best and safest treatments to patients.

## Population

Patients admitted for observation with an age range of 18 years and above. Diverse cultural backgrounds as well as different diagnoses.



## Implementation



## Outcomes

After the implementation of the pilot project a significant decrease in the patient's LOS was noted. Prior to implementation LOS average 40 hours. Post implementation the LOS decreased to an averaged of 29 hours from May 2012 to September 2012 (see Figure 1).

## Conclusion

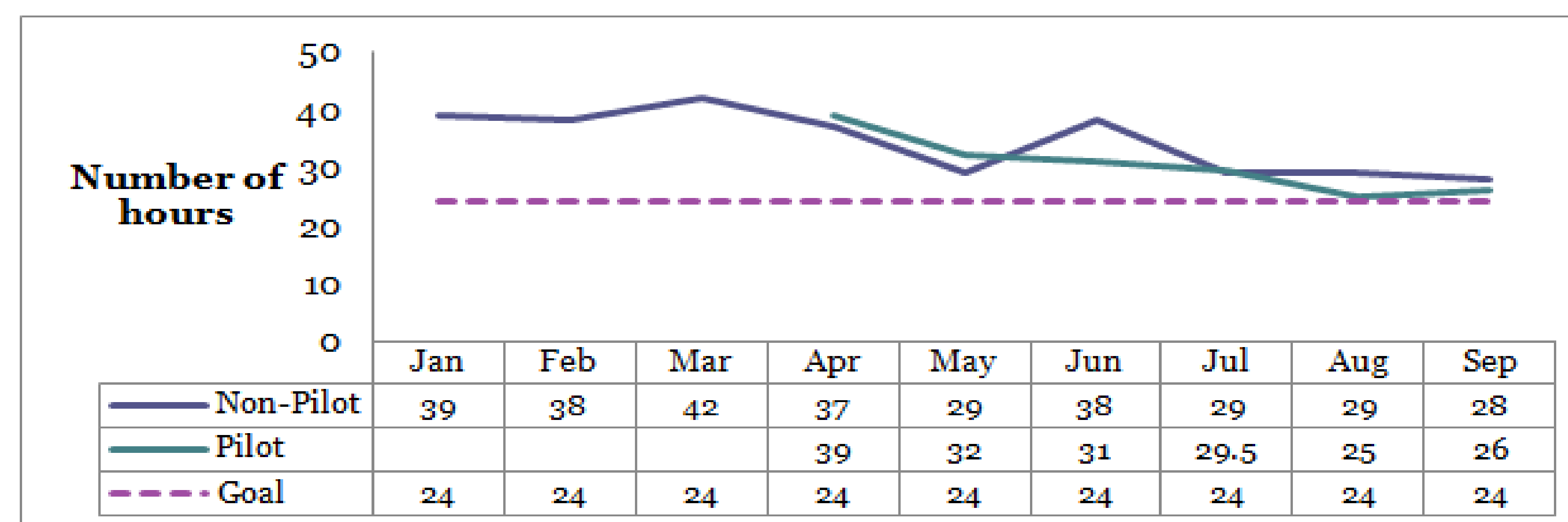
The observation unit was successful in reducing and sustaining the reduction in patient's LOS. This was accomplished as a result of collaborative inter-professional approach sustained throughout the pilot project.



## Figure 1: Comparison of length of stay

Length of stay (LOS)

Figure 6: Median length of stay (hours) of observation patients



## References

Centers for Medicare Services. (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Transmittals/downloads/R2282CP.pdf>

Ross, M.A., Hoekenberry, J.M., Mutter, R., Barrett, M., Wheatley, M., & Pitts, S.R. (2013). Protocol driven emergency department observation units offer savings, short stays, and reduced admissions. *Health Affairs*, 32(12), 2149-2156.



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