

Six-step analysis can help improve practice logistics

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(HealthDay)—A six-step analysis can help redesign and improve the

outpatient health care process, according to a study recently published in the *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*.

Erik Martijn van Bussel, M.D., from University Medical Center Utrecht in the Netherlands, and colleagues demonstrated how to evaluate and optimize the triad of demand, (future) capacity, and access time of an outpatient clinic using a structured six-step [method](#). The demonstration involved one year of patient data (25,000 appointments) from an orthopedic outpatient clinic.

The researchers found that the six-step method provided valuable insights for improvements. The overall match between demand and capacity was adequate, but the variability in capacity was much higher than that in demand, leading to delays in access time. Holidays and subsequent weeks were a great influence on demand, capacity, and access time. Unfavorable characteristics of the outpatient clinic were revealed with the six-step method, so that with only minor adjustments, a better match between demand, supply, and access time could have been reached. The six-step method also led to a clinic-specific prediction and decision model for [demand](#) and [capacity](#).

"Using the six-step method, practical improvements in outpatient logistics were easily found and leads for future decision making were contrived," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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