

Time, cost of plans to improve patient flow in the ER vary

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Megan McHugh, Ph.D., from the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, and colleagues examined the time and expenses associated with implementation of patient flow improvement strategies to reduce [emergency department overcrowding](#). One hundred twenty-nine informant interviews with members of the hospitals' patient flow improvement team in six Urgent Matters hospitals were conducted immediately after strategy implementation and about six months later.

The researchers found that eight strategies were implemented. Per strategy, the time spent on planning and implementation ranged from 40 to 1,017 hours. The strategies were primarily led by

[nurses](#), and more time was spent on planning and implementation by nurses than others. Strategies that involved extensive [staff training](#), large implementation teams, or complex changes in process were the most time consuming. Sizable expenditure was involved in three strategies and ranged from \$32,850 to \$490,000. The most costly expenditures were construction and addition of new personnel.

"This study provides important preliminary data on the time and expenses involved in the adoption of patient flow improvement strategies and lessons learned from the experience of six hospital teams," the authors write. "Our results may offer guidance to hospital and department leaders and nurses on setting appropriate expectations for the time and expenses associated with implementation."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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