

## Pod-and-huddle ED Model Speeds Processes



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Emergency departments (ED) are usually designed in a linear flow, attaching nurses or physicians to particular patients and specific tasks. However, this type of system is vulnerable to uneven staff low, high patient levels, and a backflow of ED discharge.

If an ED was designed to be more versatile and facilitate more effective teamwork, it would look something like a pod - a unit within a unit. The pod would consist of a single physician, a lead nurse, one clerk, one bedside tech, and three or four registered nurses. Each pod would be accountable for eight to ten beds for every 12 hour shift.

The new design, applied in Sharp Memorial Hospital in San Diego has proven to be effective as it brings forth the concept that the entire healthcare team in that particular pod is responsible for all the patients within that pod. The core concept of the pod is that everyone is in charge of everyone.

Christopher Walker, MS, RN, NP, CNS, director of emergency services at Sharp Memorial Hospital in San Diego points out that the biggest advantage of this model is staff satisfaction. "There's nothing worse than someone having a nice quiet day, thinking over what their patient population is, and the person adjacent to them is drowning."

In addition, the communication system in a pod is more effective. The hourly huddles where all pod members come together and give a status update of patients and address any changes that might be needed results in a more cohesive team environment.. Since the team works together everyday, there is better communication and people become more accustomed to each other's style of work.

Overall, this versatile concept of ED can result in improved patient care, more effective teamwork and greater staff satisfaction.

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