

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT LOG

- DATABASE FOR UNDERSTANDING EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT UTILIZATION -

The Emergency Department (ED) Log stores patient tracking information from the ED. Begun in 2001, the initiative went live on July 1, 2002. The ED Log is central to the support of the Clockwork ED initiative of The Clinical Advisory Board Company and provides the basis for the 13 surveillance measures of the initiative including patients seen, leaving without being seen, admission rates, return rates and a variety of length of stay measures. These are calculated and posted monthly on the Health Care Effectiveness Team website.

The ED log was designed and built with existing resources as a partnership among all the hospitals, the Health Care Effectiveness Team and the computer services group of the Health Sciences Center. The only costs have been the purchase of some server hardware and the time spent by the participants. The savings of avoiding the costs of the paper log more than offsets the cost of the electronic ED Log, which is essentially a free patient tracking system useful in process improvement in all Health Care Services Division Emergency Departments.

The ED Log is used to support the implementation of the 20 evidence-based best practices of The Advisory Board Company's Clockwork ED initiative. The data are used to identify opportunities and priorities and to track improvements. All software tools are off the shelf and industry standard, allowing for easy access by local hospitals to their own data. Length of stay and other critical measures may be sorted by triage level, time of day, day of week, provider and scores of other ways.

In addition to supporting the Clockwork ED initiative, the ED Log has been used to support physician and fast track scheduling as well as additional best practice innovations such as secondary triage. With the Clockwork ED, the ED Log has increased competition for increase patient flow in the emergency departments and has demonstrated the utility of a patient tracking infrastructure.