

## The Challenge

The Physician Credentialing process throughout this large multi-hospital system was filled with inconsistent work practices and long lead times to process new physician credentialing requests. Each campus had a manual process which also varied depending on the site.

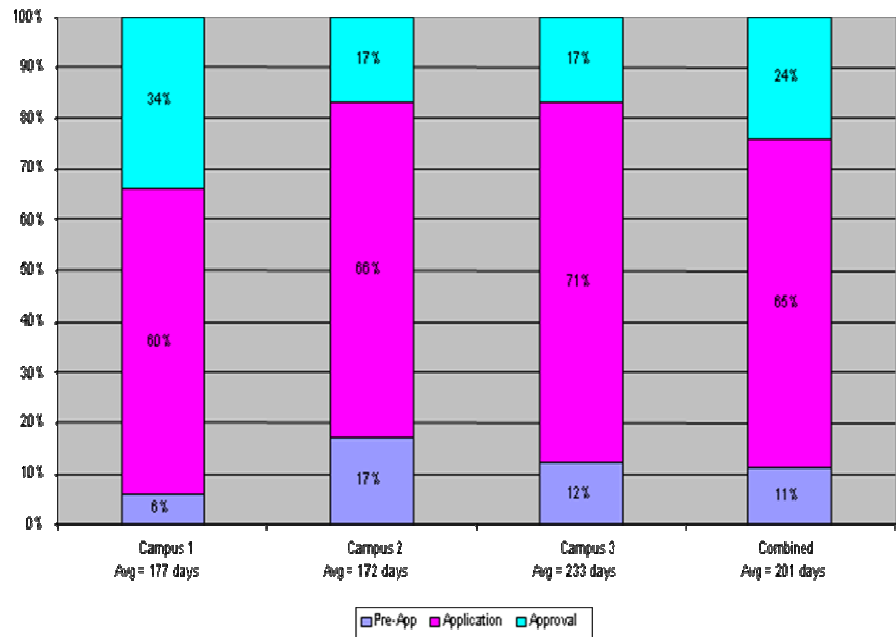
## Targets

The Team consisted of eight physicians, three medical staff office directors, one attorney and three executives. Their objectives were to:

- Reduce the time required for initial credentialing at each campus
- Facilitate multi-site credentialing
- Maintain strict compliance with regulatory standards

Furthermore, the Team wanted to make sure the new process was transparent, well understood by physician applicants, consistent with community best practice standards while reducing the lead time to 60-90 days.

## Credentialing Process at Various Stages- Before:



## Lead Times- Before:

	Total Lead Time (Days)	# Missing Items Upon First Submission
Campus 1 Average	177	2
Campus 1 Range	88 – 375	0-5
Campus 2 Average	172	3
Campus 2 Range	109-227	0-11
Campus 3 Average	233	9
Campus 3 Range	76-693	0-21

## Workshop Actions

The Team focused on their vision which was to *“develop and implement a rapid, accurate initial credentialing process that meets regulatory standards and legal requirements.”*

They began the workshop by better understanding the current processes then focused on identifying and removing the waste. Some of the waste eliminating steps included:

- Requiring an on-line electronic application and elimination of the manual process
- Establishing electronic tracking mechanism to eliminate manual processes
- Utilizing auto-faxing functionality as appropriate
- Defining standard work processes for information flow
- Aligning assigned physician number with dictation number to reduce variances

The Team made critical and substantial decisions involving many aspects of the current process. For example:

- Decided to completely eliminate the manual application process
- Determined minimal requirements for on-line applications
- Integrated “pre-application” into actual application
- Changed applicant interview process
- Standardized ancillary requirements
- Standardized primary source verification requirements
- Standardized peer reference protocols
- Revised temporary privilege request procedures

## Outcomes

Below are key examples of waste taken out of the process:

- Reduced time from initial application to physician practice from an average of 180 days to 60-90 days
- Reduced the redundant steps in the process
- Standardized then designed the essential elements of the application
- Created a simplified and transparent process
- Created a more standardized initial credentialing process across all campuses

## Results

Metric	BEFORE	AFTER
Number of steps in the Process	37	13
Number of Value Added Steps	6	8
% of Value Added Steps	14%	62%
# of steps to receive Temporary Privileges	33	10
Total Lead Time	180 days average	60-90 days

At the end of the workshop, Implementation Coaches were identified and an extensive communication/approval plan was put into place. Team physicians were assigned to seek endorsement from the various approving entities such as Medical Executive Committees and Credentialing Committees. At the time this case study was written, all necessary endorsements were received and the new process implemented.