PATIENT DEATH IN ER

After 8 hours waiting for emergency treatment, man found dead

A man seeking treatment for a rash at a Bronx hospital was found dead eight hours later, of as-yet unknown cause.

"Probably this scenario in this shape and form has happened in any big hospital in New York City."
- Hospital spokesperson

1 Problem

What When

Problem(s) Patient death in ER without being seen

Date January 13, 2014

Time 6:40 AM (patient found dead)

Different, unusual, unique Patient did not respond to 3 calls to be seen

Facility, site Bronx, New York hospital

Unit, area, equipment Emergency room (ER)

Task being performed Seeking treatment for rash

Impact to the Goals

Patient Safety Patient death while waiting to be seen

Employee Safety N/A

Environmental N/A

Compliance N/A

Patient Services Patient did not see doctor

Schedule/Operations Extended wait at emergency room

Property/Equipment N/A

Labor/Time Insufficient staff

Frequency Rare, but similar cases have been seen

2 Analysis

Basic Level Cause Map - Start with simple Why questions.

Per the hospital

- Patient Safety Goal Impacted
- Patient death in ER
- Patient did not respond when called

Per victim/patient advocates

- Patient Safety Goal Impacted
- Patient death in ER
- No medical staff checked on patient

More Detailed Cause Map - Add detail as information becomes available.

Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 12, 2014</td>
<td>10:00 PM</td>
<td>Patient checked into the Emergency Room (ER)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Patient told to wait to see a doctor in ER</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:35 PM</td>
<td>Patient returns to waiting room</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 13, 2014</td>
<td>2:00 AM</td>
<td>Security guard wakes up patient in waiting room</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:45 AM</td>
<td>Surveillance video records patient walking around room</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6:40 AM</td>
<td>Patient found dead during security pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Per the Hospital spokesperson: “His name was called several times on several occasions, and he did not respond... People have personal responsibility when your name is called, you have to get up and see the doctor.”

The wait at the emergency room for this hospital is an average of 306 minutes - more than 5 hours. The national average is 137 minutes and the average in the state of New York is 155 minutes.

Says an ER worker: “There’s no policy in place to check the waiting room to see if people waiting to be seen are still there or still alive.”