In Lean management, there are three kinds of waste (known as the 3 M’s of waste), comprised of activities that are considered necessary or value-added and others that are unnecessary or non-value added. Because Lean was developed by the Toyota Production System in Japan, they use three Japanese words, Mura, Muri, and Muda, to define the 3 M’s of waste. It is important for an organization to determine which practices are wasteful, so that they can be eliminated.

**Mura**

Mura is the waste of unbalanced workflow. It exists when workflow is out of balance and workload is inconsistent and not in compliance with the standard. Needs and demands have natural variation which we often make worse with no standardization, handoffs, delays, economies of scale, lack of skills and training.

**Muri**

Muri is any activity that will overburden personnel, material, or equipment. It occurs when the work process is not safe, not stress free, or engaging at some level. The causes are many, but typically stem from: too much waste, too much to do and not enough time, and poor ergonomics.

**Muda**

Muda represents any activity in the process that does not add value. There are two different types of Muda:

- **Type I**: non-value added activities that seem to be essential, but are not. In order to eliminate this waste, business conditions need to be changed.
- **Type II**: non-value added tasks that can be eliminated immediately.

The 3 M’s do not appear separately. When a process is unbalanced (mura), this leads to an overburden on equipment, facilities, and people (muri), which will cause many non-value adding activities (muda).

**Forms of Waste**

- Defects
- Overproduction
- Waiting
- Not utilizing Human Potential
- Transportation
- Inventory
- Motion
- Extra Processing

By Sandra Kidd

An operating room (OR) must maintain a sterile environment; anyone who enters the room wears protective clothing, shoe covers, masks, caps, and other coverings to prevent the spread of germs. Likewise, the OR and all of its equipment go through a stringent sterilization process in order to destroy microorganisms that could transmit disease. One of the tasks required of OR staff is to wipe everything down every morning. On February 25, 2016, a staff member in the Roseburg VA Medical Center (RVAMC) OR noticed a few little black specks, similar to pepper, on the cleaning cloth and immediately reported it. Due to safety concerns and the protection of our Veterans, the OR was instantly closed, until further notice.

The ventilation system for the OR was more than 25 years old and would cost an estimated $1 million to replace. It was determined that the system could be overhauled at a much lower cost ($35,000) and would facilitate re-opening the OR much faster (six months vs. several years). The renovations included; ductwork to increase air flow; replacing belts, sheaves, and filters; cleaning coils; sealing leaks; and reinsulating the ductwork. These improvements should last for at least 10 years.

The OR will proudly re-open for services beginning April 20, 2017. The new ventilation system exceeds current OR suite standards, with 24 air exchanges per hour, which is four more than the national standard. The services we provide include general outpatient cases, such as hand and podiatry procedures; general surgery; hernia and hemorrhoidectomy; as well as urology and cataract procedures.

Rest assured, the OR staff have been working diligently to maintain their skills throughout this process by working in the OR at the Eugene Health Care Center, which works as a single service along with the RVAMC OR.

We, as a healthcare system, are proud to have such dedicated and amazing staff, who truly care for our Veterans safety and wellbeing.
Employee Engagement

By Sandra Kidd

The relationship between an organization and its staff is one of the essential building blocks of a high-performing organization. Organizations that nurture a culture of highly satisfied and committed employees are best positioned to reach their goals in safety and quality. To build such a culture, the organization needs to concentrate on where to drive change in order to create and sustain an engaged, patient-centered environment that reduces stress for caregivers, support staff, and patients. By listening to our employees and tailoring improvement measures accordingly, leaders can identify the distinctive drivers of engagement, target improvement opportunities, and celebrate individual and group successes. In turn, employees who are engaged in their work will be highly motivated, remain committed to the mission, stay focused on achieving VA goals, and drive the organizations future.

Most people who work in the healthcare industry have a desire to help people. Additionally, those who work for the VA have a strong desire to help Veterans. The vast majority also want to feel that they have contributed to the mission in a meaningful way. When there is no connection to their work, they tend to disengage, which influences everything from service to quality, productivity, and retention.

Successful organizations continually seek insights by surveying their employees, interpreting the feedback data, communicating their findings, and implementing the needed changes at all levels to create and sustain a more motivated, energetic, and engaged workforce.

VISN 20 has been selected to pilot the new VA Employee Engagement program. One year ago, the VA Puget Sound Health Care System became the first pilot facility and the Roseburg VA Health Care System (RVAHCS) will be the second pilot facility. All other facilities within VISN 20 will start their programs before the end of this year.

The Employee Engagement program harnesses our collective energy, drives grassroots change, and activates our purpose to serve those who have borne the battle. Purposeful change requires empowering employees at all levels, especially our front-line. You may see the pilot team around RVAHCS throughout the year; please share your ideas with them on how we can activate our purpose and make a difference for our employees and Veterans. We want to hear from all of our employees.

In order to track our progress, we are asking all...
employees to complete a brief survey. The data collected will set a baseline assessment of feedback from RVAHCS employees regarding their ability to identify and make needed changes in the work environment and mobilize grassroots change. The survey should take approximately 5-10 minutes of your time to complete. The results of this survey will help determine how well the program enables us to 1) live our purpose, 2) actively engage, and 3) connect with the right skills and resources. In order to get the best results, we need every employee to participate and be absolutely honest; the survey is completely anonymous.

If you have any questions regarding the survey instrument or locating/accessing the survey results, please contact: Jesse Hand at jesse.hand@va.gov. We appreciate your support and thank you for participating in the survey.

The Employee Engagement Pilot program is sponsored by the Office of Patient Centered Care and Transformation and is headed by Dr. Jill Draime.

The survey is for EMPLOYEES ONLY and closes at 5pm on April 28th, 2017.

The survey can be accessed at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PLT_Roseburg

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**KNOW THE LINGO**

Employee Engagement is achieved through grassroots movement. It is change that is driven by employees at all levels, rather than organized and mandated by leadership.

Because successful grassroots efforts touch a wide range of people within an organization, they are an effective means to create and sustain lasting change.

**Congratulations** to our Women Veterans Program who sponsored the 2017 Go Red Challenge at RVAHCS.

Taher Christensen, Women Veterans Program Manager, submitted the project in the national challenge and won a $1000 grant. The grant will go towards Go Red activities next year. Thank you all for supporting our women Veterans!
The RVAHCS Relay is a monthly electronic publication produced by the Public Affairs Office at Roseburg VA Healthcare System.

Questions / Comments / Article Submission / Ideas / Etc.
Please email us at: VHAROS-PublicAffairs@va.gov

For RVAHCS Events—Please visit our calendar at:
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