

Productivity Monitoring Best Practices

Productivity monitoring (PM) is essential for any organization's bottom line. Several PM Best Practices are critical to ensure effective and comprehensive benchmark (BM) standards and metrics are being used to measure your required labor needs. Some of these Best Practices include:

- Involve leadership.** Ensure your senior and department leadership staff are involved, assist in developing, and understand the specific PM and workload measurement standards in use for each department.
- Establish standards that represent all job functions performed in each department.** Often, similar functions are performed across different departments. All the labor needs required for a specific type of function, regardless of which department the employee's time is charged to, must be captured when standards are being developed for the BM to be valid and be used to accurately monitor productivity.
- Understand what is unique about each position, where staff hours are charged, and each department within your organization.** It is common to find employees with similar titles performing very different tasks. For example, your risk manager (RM) may also perform tasks related to patient safety or infection control, where another organization's RM may perform only RM functions. Staff may perform work in and charge their hours to multiple departments. There are no valid "one-size-fits-all" metrics and "organization twins" really do not exist. Accurate and reliable benchmarks must reflect your unique departments and their specific required workload. Monitoring productivity at the function-based workload (FBW) level is key to the development of accurate and reliable benchmarks.
- Utilize a valid statistic(s) for each department.** The PM statistic volumes must reflect the variable staff requirements. The statistics must also be easily trackable at regular intervals. For example, using patient days (PD) as a statistic for an inpatient Med-Surg nursing unit is a best practice. PDs volumes optimally reflect the variable workload, and they are tracked regularly and automatically by a finance department.
- Track and monitor productive, as well as non-productive time.** This information will help to clarify, for example, if a fluctuation in productivity is related to productive staff time or to non-productive vacation, leaves of absence, or sick time use. A typical ratio of paid-to-worked hours is 12%.



The Growing Urgent Care Industry

The urgent care clinic (UCC) business model has gained popularity as the demand for more cost-effective alternatives to hospital care grows. The number of UCC's increased from 6,400 in 2014 to over 9,600 by the end of 2019¹. Millennials are leading the way, driving demand and increased utilization of UCCs.

The majority of these centers have adhered to the following best practices¹:

- **High traffic** location similar to any retail business
- **Increasing** geographic population
- **Onsite** X-ray and basic lab/POC testing
- **Onsite** common medication dispensing (no opioid prescriptions provided)
- **Use medical assistants** (MA) where possible for financial diligence
- **Schedule 4 patients/hour** in the UCC for optimal productivity
- **Hours** reflect patients' needs (e.g., 12 hours per day, 7 days per week).

For urgent care centers that provide lab services, the following represent the most common lab tests offered:

- **Basic Chemistries**
- **Drug Testing**
- **Glucose**
- **Hemocult**
- **Hemoglobin**
- **Influenza/COVID-19**
- **Mononucleosis**
- **Pregnancy**
- **Strep Throat**
- **Urinalysis**

UCC's can provide affordable, accessible, and high-quality medical care to patients who might otherwise experience lengthy wait times in emergency departments or while awaiting an outpatient physician appointment.

AMS has assisted clients nationally, assessing the operations of existing UCCs, as well as the planning, research, and development of new UCCs.

¹Urgent Care Association of America "2019 Urgent Care Benchmarking Survey Results" 2020

For more information on how we can help you, contact info@aboutams.com or call (781)272-8001.