Lean in veterinary practice

Lean is a philosophy with a laser focus on quality, first developed by the car company Toyota after the Second World War. It has been recognised in the medical profession as a way to improve quality and reduce delays. By adopting some of the Lean tools and behaviours, hospitals have been able to improve reliability and outcomes, while also cutting physical waste and time waste[i]. It represents a group of methodologies and a philosophy that develops a unified organisation-wide approach to work, and a strong culture[ii]. RCVS Knowledge have defined eight veterinary principles of Lean which aim to reduce waste and improve the quality of care.
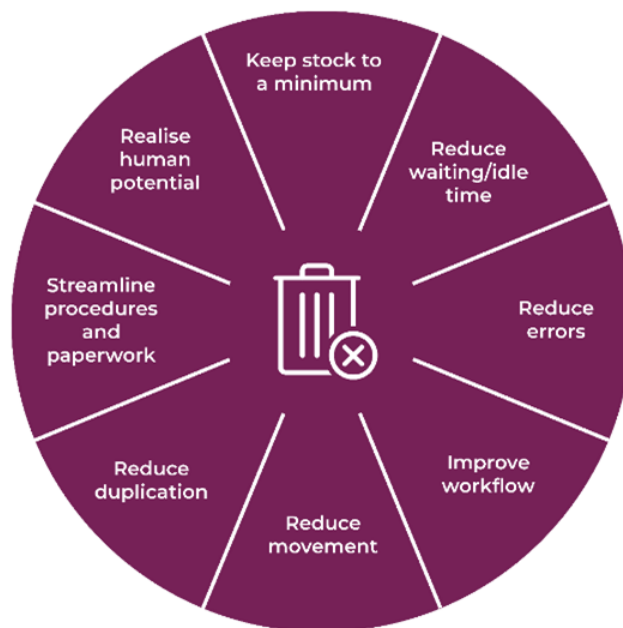

Figure 1: Lean in Veterinary Healthcare by RCVS Knowledge

More information

Access our articles titled Lean into Change, and Keeping Practice Lean, and webinar available at rcvsknowledge.org.

This was published on 16th March 2023. The image is available in other formats upon request.

[i] Spagnol, G.S., Min, L.L. and Newbold, D. (2013) Lean principles in healthcare: An overview of challenges and improvements. *IFAC Proceedings Volumes*, 46 (24), pp. p. 229–34. https://doi.org/10.3182/20130911-3-BR-3021.00035

[ii] Lawal, A.K. et al. (2014) Lean management in health care: definition, concepts, methodology and effects reported (systematic review protocol). *Systematic Reviews*, 3, no. 103. https://doi.org/10.1186/2046-4053-3-103