sentara nurse
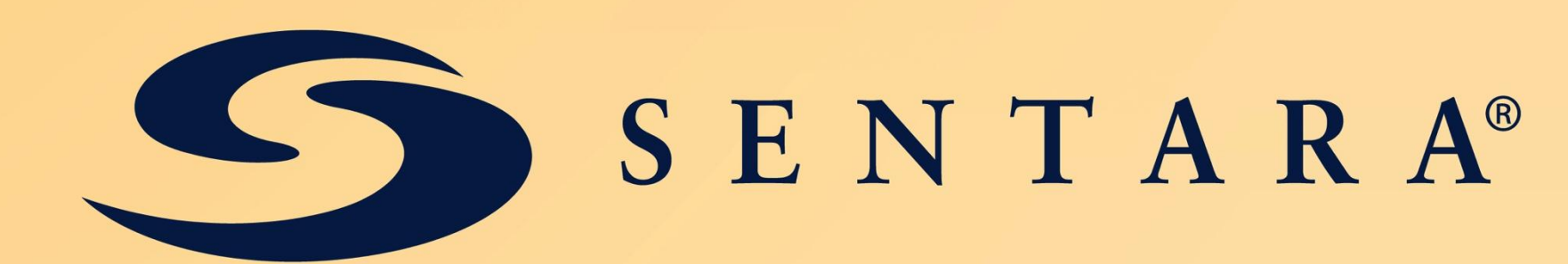
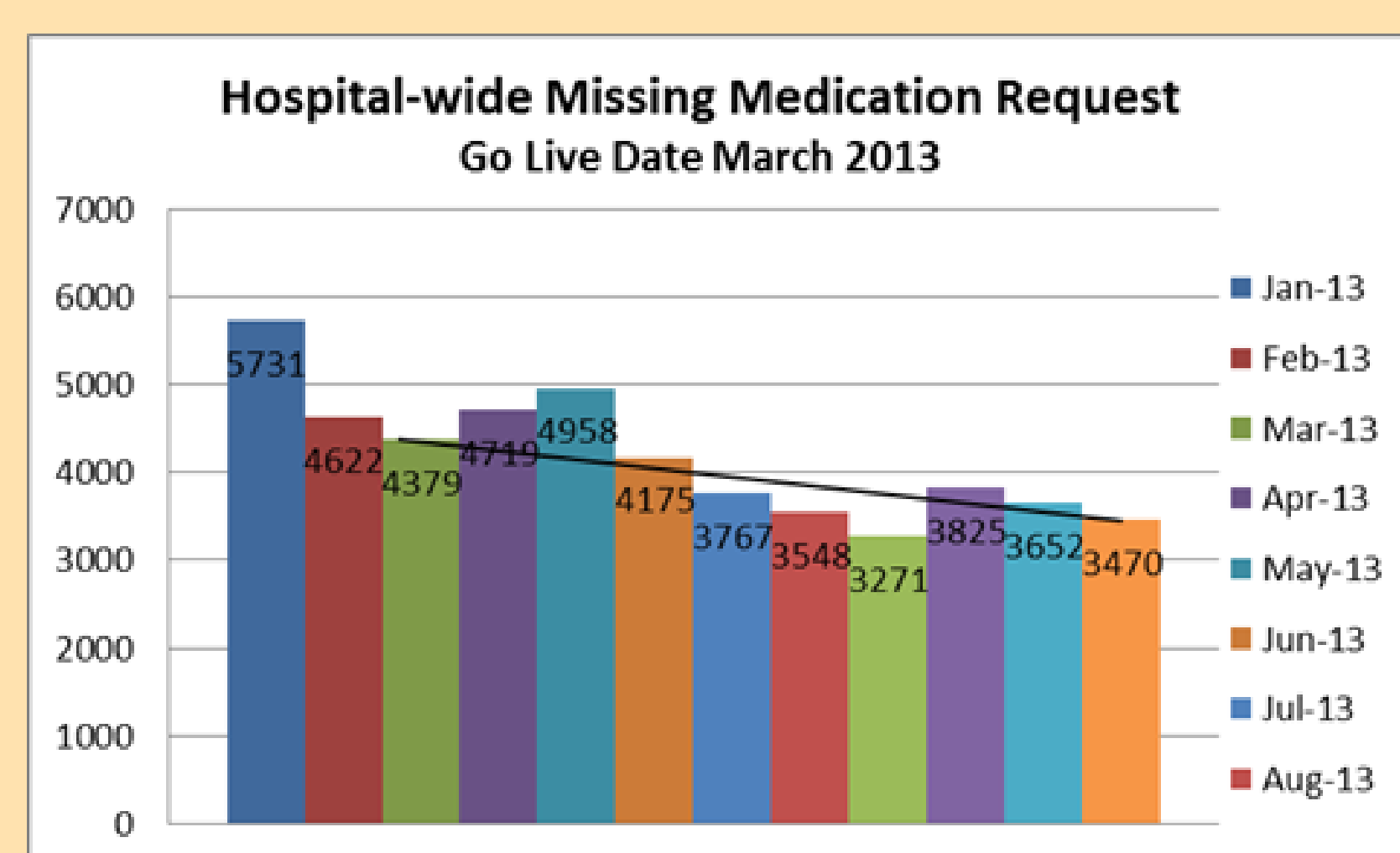# Streamlining Medication Availability through a Nursing-Pharmacy Collaborative

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S E N T A R A ®

BACKGROUND

Due to DNV findings of unsecured medications, nursing and pharmacy partnered to ensure all medications were secure, all medications were easily accessible, and to eliminated the need to "hunt" for the needed medications. A missing medication request report showed the PCU had the highest amount of missing medication requests (see graph below).

Hospital-wide Missing Medication Request
Go Live Date March 2013

A Nursing-Pharmacy LEAN collaborative was implemented to find solutions. Several problems were identified on the Progressive Care Unit. Nursing identified seven possible locations for RN's to retrieve the medications for their patients.

Locations considered unsecured were:

- the tube station and
- the Nurse Servers. Nurse Servers (picture below) are essentially closets that are accessible from both inside and outside the patient room that store patient medications, syringes, and other sharps.

Multiple medication locations tended to increase workflow for both nursing and pharmacy. Nursing needed to check multiple locations and the pharmacy needed to refill and redeliver medications. The process created additional work, staff and patient frustration and decreased productivity in both departments.

OBJECTIVES

- Eliminate unsecured medications
- Decrease locations where medications are retrieved
- Increase productivity of Nursing and Pharmacy departments
- Foster collaboration between pharmacy and nursing involving front line members of the team
- Comply with DNV standards

METHODS

- Pharmacy used time studies and reviewed missing medication reports.
- Nursing did a survey to RN's on where and how they found their daily medications.
- A Nursing-Pharmacy LEAN collaborative had a brainstorming session with front line staff to identify barriers..
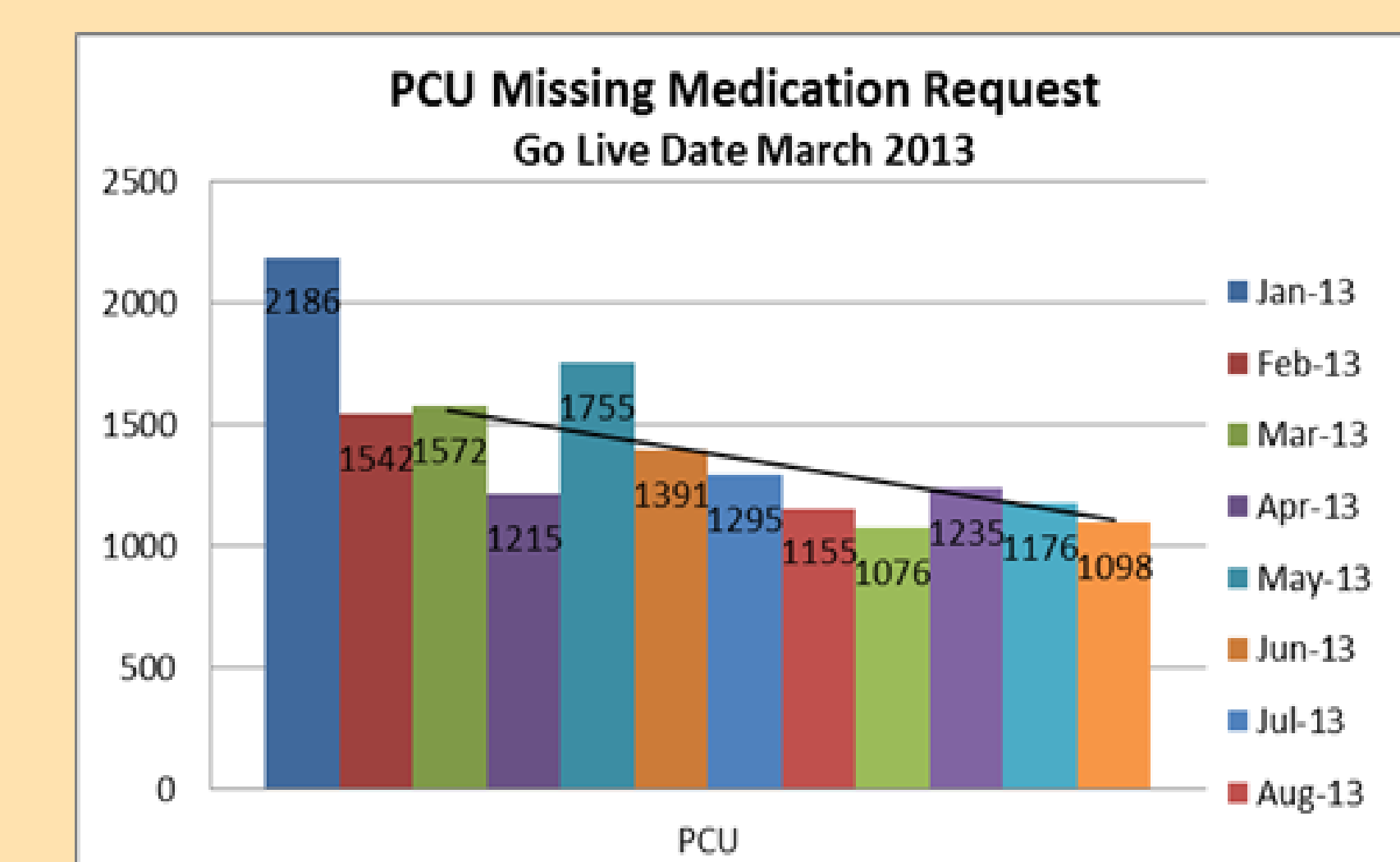
IMPLEMENTATION

- Two medication rooms were consolidated into one central medication/supply room. Medications would no longer be stocked in the individual patient nurse servers and would only be supplied from the central medication room.
- Pharmacy delivered medications to the central supply area instead of sending the medications through one of three pneumatic tube stations.
- Pharmacy implemented a process to make timed deliveries to the unit of regularly scheduled medications.
- Nursing implemented a process in which daily medications were obtained from the central medication room and pulled for the entire shift.

RESULTS

The Nursing-Pharmacy LEAN collaborative focused on staff feedback and input.

- Fostered positive relationships among the interprofessional teams.
- Reduced the number of locations of medication supply from seven to two.
- Ensured medications were in a secure location with regards to delivery and dispensing.
- Decreased the time spent by nursing staff looking for medications.
- Decreased the time spent by pharmacy staff refilling and restocking medications.
- Decreased the number of missing medication request by 30% from 1572 requests to 1098 requests monthly.
- Decreased the total number of missing medication requests by 50% in 2013 (see graph below).
- Increased security of medication delivery through reduced tubing of medications and establishment of a comprehensive delivery process.

PCU Missing Medication Request
Go Live Date March 2013

CONCLUSIONS

Utilizing LEAN methodology Nursing and Pharmacy in a PCU found useful ways to consolidate and secure medications. By reducing the number of medication storage locations the team improved nursing's ability to more quickly and accurately identify whether a medication has been delivered or is available on the nursing unit. The change has improved productivity across both nursing and pharmacy workflows.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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