Summary:
Patients are placed in beds immediately and registered and seen by providers as staff becomes available. This eliminates bottlenecks within the emergency department (ED) and reduces wait times for patients.

Category:
- A: Arrival
- B: Bed Placement
- C: Clinician Initial Evaluation & Throughput

Key Words:
- Door-to-Doc
- Patient Satisfaction
- Queuing
- Rapid Intake
- Registration
- Wait Times

Hospital: John F. Kennedy Medical Center
Location: 65 James Street
Edison, NJ 08818

Hospital Metrics:
(Taken from the American Hospital Directory)
- Annual ED Volume: 23,992
- Hospital Beds: 424
- Ownership: Not-for-profit
- Trauma Level: Not Designated
- Teaching Status: Yes

Tools Provided:
- None

Clinical Areas Affected:
- Emergency Department
- Registration
- Triage

Staff Involved:
- ED Staff
- Nurses
- Physicians
- Registration Staff
Innovation
Prior to implementing bedside triage and registration, ED patients at JFK Medical Center experienced long wait times to be seen by a triage nurse and would wait further for registration before they could see a physician. Patients were stacked in a linear fashion with physicians unable to see unregistered patients even when the physician was available.

The hospital changed the triage and registration process to create a more fluid, non-linear design for patient care. Under this design, patients are placed in beds immediately and they are registered and seen by the providers as staff becomes available. Patients do not need to be registered in order to see a physician. This design eliminates bottlenecks within the emergency department (ED) and reduces wait times for patients.

Results
Bedside registration and triage has reduced throughput times across the board. Specifically, door to triage time (although difficult to track) has dropped from an estimated 25 to 17 minutes; door to physician time has dropped from 50 minutes to 38 minutes; and door to discharge time has dropped from 3 hours to 1 hour, 45 minutes.

Additionally, patient satisfaction scores have improved. Patients have reported being surprised and gratified that a medical person (whether triage nurse or physician) has gotten to them a lot faster than they are used to. The Press Ganey patient satisfaction score for the ED has jumped from 65 to an 80-81 raw score.

Innovation Implementation
The concept of bedside triage and registration offered the opportunity to bring everything to the patient and allow the physician to see the patient before registration. Dr. Michael Cali, ED Chair, reports that a highly inclusive discovery, decision and retraining process was conducted in order to implement this practice. A breakout session was conducted to discuss the concept within the ED and then the decision was made to move forward.

A request was made to administration for 14 rolling wireless laptops to be used for bedside registration. (JFK Medical Center has three registrars and treats 51,000 patients annually.) Following approval by hospital administration, triage and registration staff were retrained. Dr. Cali reports that a critical component of the retraining was having staff understand that patients do not need to go sequentially through each stage of their care.

Patients now go directly to a bed and can see a physician prior to being registered, which has resulted in reduced throughput times and improved patient satisfaction.

Advice and Lessons Learned
According to Dr. Cali, a major factor leading to the success of the practice was having the staff involved in the discovery process by using a breakout session concept. Experience indicated that a change imposed without the buy-in of the staff simply would not work, thus staff involvement was a critical component.