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Failure Factors in Lean Six Sigma Implementation in Healthcare

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Abstract: Lean Six Sigma (LSS) is an implementation method that combines Lean methodologies (waste reduction) with Six Sigma methodologies (continuous improvement). As such, LSS aims to continuously improve outputs/outcomes and to eliminate wasteful processes. Successful implementation of LSS improvement projects have allowed industries to save money by eliminating many forms of waste such as excessive production, scrap, and rework. Customer satisfaction is maintained by implementing standard work and inspection stations to ensure quality and prices can also be stable or reduced due to reducing costs to do business. LSS has been implemented in many different industry settings. While there are many publications of successful implementation of LSS in healthcare, this work is interested in learning from unsuccessful LSS implementation efforts. This paper provides a literature review that analyzes the failure factors of LSS efforts in healthcare in the hope of pointing out pitfalls to avoid in new implementation efforts.

Keywords: Lean Six Sigma, Healthcare, Failure Factors