# Orthopaedics Phone Improvement

## The Problem

The average time to answer an incoming call to the Orthopaedics Department was over 2 minutes. This resulted in abandoned calls (lost business!) and patient dissatisfaction. The root cause analysis revealed that many of the calls the received by the Call Center were not related to appointment scheduling. Approximately half of the calls received were related to questions only the administrative assistants had the information to answer.

## Aim/Goal

By separating the calls into two distinct queues we aimed to increase the percentage of calls answered to >96% and reduce the time to answer to <20 seconds.

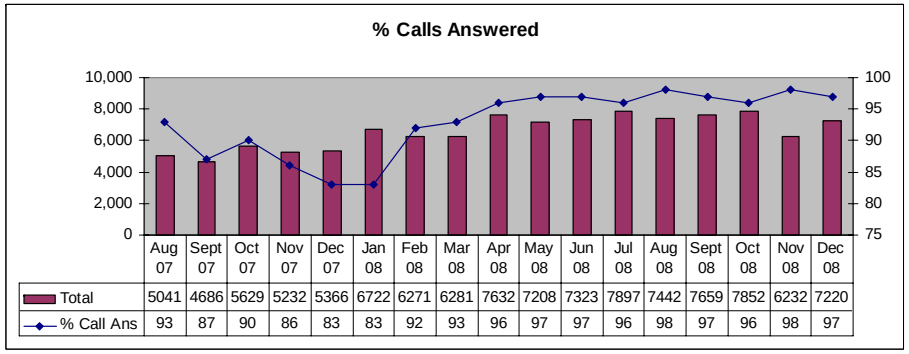
## The Team

- Orthopaedics Call Center
- Orthopaedics Administrative Assistants
- Sarah Chaput
- Stacy Lewis
- Deb Vona

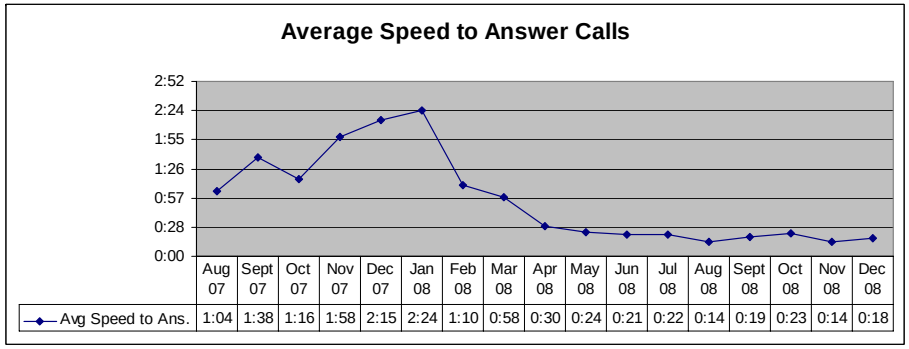
## The Interventions

- On April 1, 2008 we changed the message heard by patients calling into the Department. Patients were directed to select from 2 options. All calls related to appointments are now directed to the Patient Service Representatives and all calls related to clinical questions, surgical procedures and disability forms are directed to the Administrative Assistants.

## The Results/Progress to Date




| | Aug 07 | Sept 07 | Oct 07 | Nov 07 | Dec 07 | Jan 08 | Feb 08 | Mar 08 | Apr 08 | May 08 | Jun 08 | Jul 08 | Aug 08 | Sept 08 | Oct 08 | Nov 08 | Dec 08 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 5041 | 4686 | 5629 | 5232 | 5366 | 6722 | 6271 | 6281 | 7632 | 7208 | 7323 | 7897 | 7442 | 7659 | 7852 | 6232 | 7220 |
| % Call Ans | 93 | 87 | 90 | 86 | 83 | 83 | 92 | 93 | 96 | 97 | 97 | 96 | 98 | 97 | 96 | 98 | 97 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Avg Speed to Ans. | 1:04 | 1:38 | 1:16 | 1:58 | 2:15 | 2:24 | 1:10 | 0:58 | 0:30 | 0:24 | 0:21 | 0:22 | 0:14 | 0:19 | 0:23 | 0:14 | 0:18 |

## Lessons Learned

Getting the call to the most appropriate person the first time reduced the length of the calls, allowing us to answer more calls. Patient satisfaction scores related to the ability to get the clinic on the phone have improved significantly.

## Next Steps/What Should Happen Next

We continue to monitor the progress on a daily basis. As we identify issues that slow down our ability to answer calls (multiple patient calls regarding status of RX refill) we analyze the workflow and make modifications.

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**For More Information Contact**
***Deborah Vona***
*Administrative Director, Orthopaedics*
*dvona@bidmc.harvard.edu*