Spaghetti Diagram

What is it and how can it help me?

A spaghetti diagram is a visual representation showing a continuous flow line that traces the path of an item or individual through a process. This activity can be used to identify redundancies in work flow and opportunities to expedite process flow. Spaghetti diagrams are great to do on a white board or a flip chart with participation from the whole team.
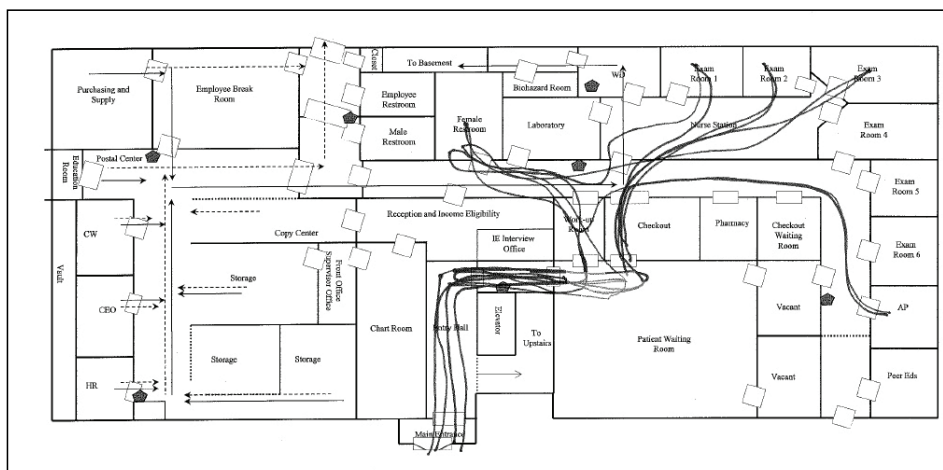
A spaghetti diagram:

*   Helps identify waste and bottlenecks
*   Uses a continuous flow line to represent a process
*   Describes the process as it *is* not as it *should* be.

How to use this tool:

1. Draw a simple diagram of the space or system you wish to diagram, such as your clinic floor plan. (Tip: an Emergency Exit Plan is an easy and accurate map to use.)

2. Put the diagram on the wall, white board, or flip chart. Ask for a volunteer to come up and help. Give the volunteer a marker and ask him/her (with help from the rest of the group) to draw the process (e.g. a patient's path through a particular visit type, or staff conducting a specific task). The volunteer should use a continuous line along the path, connecting all points.

3. The volunteer should explain each step in the visit to the group as it is drawn. The group should help by telling the volunteer where to go next. Remember: this is a representation of what a process *really is* not what it *should* be.

4. Once the process is mapped, identify any bottlenecks and unneeded steps/stops. Work as a group to explore ways to eliminate unnecessary tasks, or waste.

Example

Spaghetti Diagram Worksheet

TITLE: