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# Opening an Observation Unit

Emily Zempel

CentraCare Health, zempele@centracare.com

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# Opening an Observation Unit

Emily Zempel BSN, RN, BC  
St. Cloud Hospital, St. Cloud, Minnesota



## What is Observation Status?

- Patient classification regarding severity of illness and intensity of service (medical necessity) for treatment
- Outpatient category
- Length of Stay (LOS) is measured in hours
- Anticipated LOS 8-24 hrs
  - diagnostic testing
  - monitoring
  - assessment
- Does not count toward Medicare patient's 3-day qualifying stay to cover care in a skilled nursing facility
- Generally, lower insurance reimbursement than inpatient



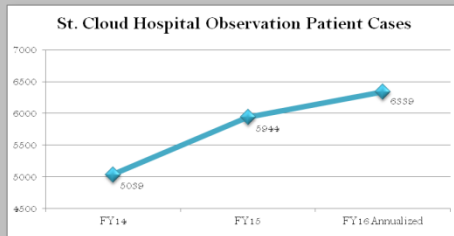
## Steering Committee

- Hospitalists: Dr. Holly Peterson, Dr. Sarah Carter, Dr. Joe Mercuri, Dr. Jeremy Skramsted
- ETC Physician, Dr. Peter Charvat
- Hospitalist Nurse Practitioner, Susan Piehl, APRN, CNP
- Hospital Medicine Section Director, Joy Plamann, MBA, RN, BC
- Additional stakeholders include 22+ hospital departments

## Benefits of Observation Units

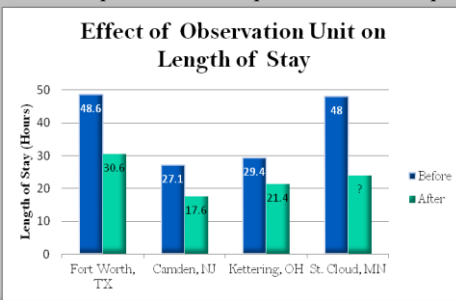
### Hospital Benefits:

- Increases patient satisfaction
- Increases inpatient bed availability
- Alleviates emergency room crowding
- Lower cost of care
- Focused care produces shorter lengths of stay
- Additional option for care of patients with chronic conditions
- Decrease risk of Medicare Recovery Audit Contractor reviews and penalties with appropriate patient classification



### Patient Benefits:

- Smaller financial burden with shorter length of stay
- More focused attention from the healthcare team
- Higher satisfaction with care
- Improved clinical outcomes
- Reduce risk of exposure to complications of hospitalization



## Observation Unit 411

- Opening June 2016
- 4<sup>th</sup> Floor of Hospital, Woods Elevator
- Remodeled 14 bed unit operating 24/7
- Not licensed for inpatient status
- Heart monitoring capacity in all rooms
- Private patient rooms with some shared bathrooms
- Designated hospitalist physician on the unit
- Other providers/disciplines by consult only as necessary
- RN and PCA staffing model
  - 1:4 RN to patient ratio daytime, 1:7 nighttime
  - 1:7 PCA to patient ratio

## Included Diagnoses

- Chest Pain
- Syncope
- Heart Failure
- Pneumonia
- Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea
- Epistaxis
- COPD
- Dehydration
- Upper GI Bleed

## References

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