



Beyond Heroes: A Lean Management System for Healthcare

Kim Barnas

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Beyond Heroes explains how the ThedaCare Health System, based in Northeast Wisconsin, transformed their culture by redesigning their system of daily management.

Hospitals have long relied on the heroics of one brilliant nurse or doctor to save the day. Such heroics often result in temporary workarounds and quick fixes that leave not only patients and quality care at risk, but also increase costs. This is the story of an organization breaking that habit. Like a growing number of healthcare organizations around the world, ThedaCare, Inc. has been using lean thinking and the principles of the Toyota Production System to improve quality of care, reduce waste, and become more reliable. But lean thinking was incompatible with ThedaCare's old top-down, hero-based system of management. Kim Barnas, former SVP of ThedaCare, shows us how she and her team created a management system that is stable and lean, to spur continuous improvement.

Winner of a Shingo Research and Professional Publication Award!

Beyond Heroes shows the reader, step by step, how ThedaCare teams developed the system, using the stories of its doctors, nurses and administrators to illustrate. The book explores each of the eight essential components of the lean system, from front-line problem solving with the scientific method to daily team huddles and creating standard work for leaders all the way to the top of an organization. Finally, the author introduces four executives from healthcare systems across North America who have implemented ThedaCare's system and share the lessons they learned along the way.

Beyond Heroes is not just a call to action or an argument for a better healthcare system. It is a necessary roadmap through the rocky terrain ahead, one that healthcare leaders can customize to their special needs.

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