Piddle, Fiddle, and Diddle: Reducing Incidental Worked Time and Unleashing the Unknown Savings

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Definition
Incidental worked time (IWT) is additional time a staff member is on the clock before or after the start or end of their original shift or during a scheduled meal break.

Piddle: To spend time in trifling activities.
Fiddle: Pass time aimlessly, without doing or achieving anything of substance.
Diddle: Pass time aimlessly or unproductively.

Causes
 Unscheduled – arriving for a complete shift that has not been scheduled
 Early Arrival – clocking-in before the start of a scheduled shift, unless requested by a leader
 Missed Lunch – remaining on duty through a planned meal break
 Late Departure – remaining on duty after the end of a scheduled shift, unless requested by a leader

Objectives
Review strategic and operational approaches to managing IWT.
Create targeted actions to identify and eliminate preventable and / or repetitive circumstances.
Evaluate IWT data to determine when and why the variances to scheduled time are occurring.

Strategies for Reducing IWT
Failure to focus on data at regular intervals will result in poor outcomes.

 Unscheduled
• Review early in/late out punches within the time and attendance system.

 Early Arrival
• Evaluate placement of time clocks within units to impact early in and late out punches.
• One manager commented that “All of my early-ins are because staff worry they will forget to clock in and have to walk back out to the elevator.”
• Review when closing out payroll, conduct 1:1 conversations.

 Missed Lunch
• Implement “lunch buddy” system.
• Assign lunch time within defined work area (45 min.).

 Late Departure
• Mentor Charge Nurses to ensure staff are able to leave on time.
• Focus on “Power Hour” – final hour of the shift – timely, standardized handoffs.
• Deliver consistent bedside shift reports.

Communication
Identify frequent offenders and share expectations related to clocking in and out. Inspect what you expect, and hold employees accountable to the expectation. Provide updates to staff – help them understand the goal, why it is important, and what it means to them personally.

Results
Fiscal Year 2014
Reductions in Early Arrivals: $156,200
Reductions in Late Departures
-$28,000 (< 30 minutes)
-$45,600 (30 - 60 minutes)
$62,600 (60 - 240 minutes)
Total Late Departure Reduction: $11,000
Total IWT Savings: $167,200

Discussion
In nursing and other therapies clinical justification exists for 40% of IWT. Reviewing the causes will give nursing leadership teams the ability to reduce the remaining 60%. A clear plan of action related to who will monitor IWT and holding staff accountable to scheduled time is essential. Discuss with clinical nurses why they feel they need to arrive early. Ensure all nurses take a lunch. Discuss with clinical nurses the reasons that cause them to be late leaving for home. Remind clinical nurses that nursing is a 24/7 job. As a team, we all pick up where our peers have left off.

Next Steps
Leveraging the shared governance councils to drive clinical nurse involvement at the unit level to reduce IWT.
Promoting emphasis on reducing IWT and the relationship to improving quality of worklife.

References:
Avantas. Managing Incidental Worked Time. Avantas.com/whitepapers