Medical/Surgical Units Realigned:
Cohorting similar type cases together on the patient units has many benefits. It allows nurses and other care givers to develop greater expertise in working with patients with specific diagnoses or who have had specific procedures.

It also allows the clinical team to develop Medical Management Tools. Medical Management Tools promote the highest quality of care for patients by reducing unintended and unwarranted variation in care and by providing a useful, efficient management tool for clinicians. They include Standard Order Sets, Protocols, Pathways and Algorithms.

Medical Management Tools are designed for use where a segment of the patient’s care can be reasonably anticipated and implemented in a “routine” manner. They are based on national standards of practice as well as input from care providers at UH. UH already has many of these tools in use; Hypoglycemic Management and Adult Sickle Cell orders are examples. Part of the LOS Reduction plan is to develop Medical Management Tools for all high volume and/or high risk diagnosis and procedures. Education will be provided as new tools are initiated. Please be sure Medical Management Tools are initiated whenever appropriate and then used as part of the patient’s plan of care.

Now that the patients are grouped together, activities will focus on strengthening the Clinical Teams on each unit. Each patient unit now has a designated Physician Leader. Regular meetings will be held with the Nurse Manager, Physician Leader, Case Manger and other team members to identify system improvements to enhance quality of care and decrease LOS.

Discharge Planning Algorithm:
University HealthSystem Consortium (UHC), to which UH belongs, conducted a benchmarking project which explored patient flow challenges in academic medical centers. Two items were found necessary for efficient patient flow: 1) efficient discharge planning processes 2) Rapid bed turnaround. The findings of the project state “without consistent procedures an organization has no hope of achieving maximum efficiency and safety.”

Last year a multidisciplinary group at UH developed a Discharge Planning Algorithm for the Hospital which outlines the Discharge Planning process.

Cont’d, P.g 2