

1 Problem

CANCER MEDICATION DISCARDED Cause Map

What When	Problem(s)	Cancer medicines wasted, thrown out
	Date	Ongoing
	Time	N/A
Where	Different, unusual, unique	Many drugs distributed in one-size-fits-all vials
	Facility, site	United States
	Unit, area, equipment	Health care facilities
	Task being performed	Administering cancer medication

Impact to the Goals	
Patient Safety	?
Employee Safety	?
Environmental	Disposal of leftover cancer drugs
Compliance	None
Patient Services	Increased cost for medications
Schedule/ Operations	?
Property	Increased cost for Medicare, insurers
Labor/ Time	?

Patients and insurers pay big for discarded cancer drugs

A recent study has found that the size of vials used for cancer drugs directly results in waste, and a significant portion of the high - and steadily increasing - cost of cancer drugs. The researchers estimate that about \$2.8 billion is spent by Medicare and other insurers paying for medication that is discarded.

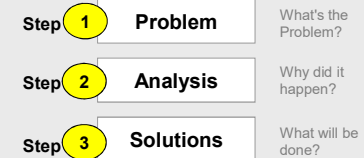
"You have these incredibly expensive drugs, and you can only buy them in bulk. What's really interesting is they're selling these drugs in smaller vials in Europe, where regulators are clearly paying attention to this issue."

- Dr. Leonard Saltz, head of the pharmacy and therapeutics committee, Memorial Sloan Kettering and a co-author of the study

Cause Mapping is a Root Cause Analysis method that captures basic cause-and-effect relationships supported with evidence.

CAUSE MAPPING

Problem Solving • Incident Investigation • Root Cause Analysis

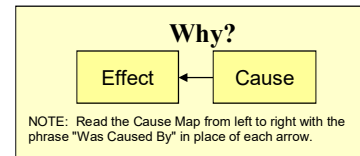
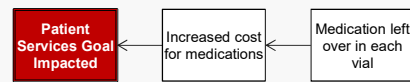


2 Analysis

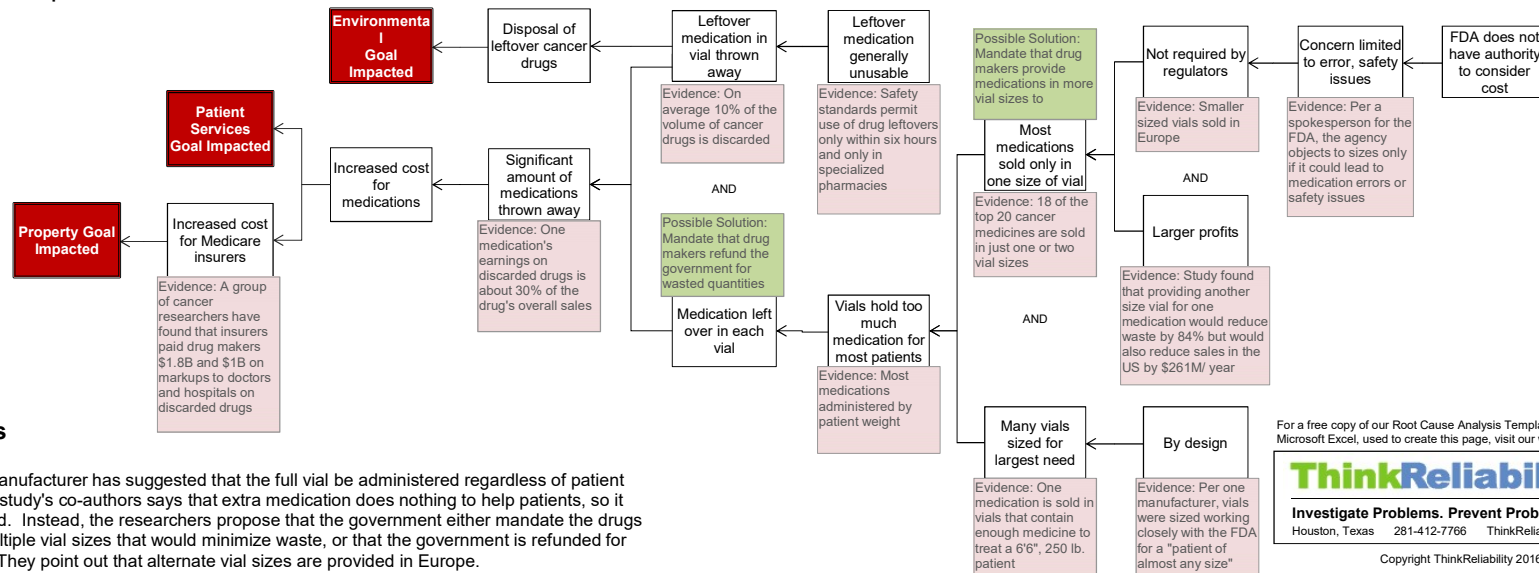
Basic Level Cause Map - Start with simple Why questions.

Basic Cause-and-Effect

With most cancer medications available in only one or two sizes, usually designed to provide an amount of medication for the largest patients, many times medication is left over in each vial.



More Detailed Cause Map - Add detail as information becomes available.



3 Solutions

At least one drug manufacturer has suggested that the full vial be administered regardless of patient size, but one of the study's co-authors says that extra medication does nothing to help patients, so it would still be wasted. Instead, the researchers propose that the government either mandate the drugs be distributed in multiple vial sizes that would minimize waste, or that the government is refunded for wasted quantities. They point out that alternate vial sizes are provided in Europe.

For a free copy of our Root Cause Analysis Template in Microsoft Excel, used to create this page, visit our web site.

ThinkReliability
Investigate Problems. Prevent Problems.
Houston, Texas 281-412-7766 ThinkReliability.com

Copyright ThinkReliability 2016