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Wheyming Tina Song · Mingchang Chih ·  
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Received: 5 November 2008 / Accepted: 2 March 2009 / Published online: 28 April 2009  
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**Abstract** The objective of our project was to improve the efficiency of the physical examination screening service of a large hospital system. We began with a detailed simulation model to explore the relationships between four performance measures and three decision factors. We then attempted to identify the optimal physician inquiry starting time by solving a goal-programming problem, where the objective function includes multiple goals. One of our simulation results shows that the proposed optimal physician inquiry starting time decreased patient wait times by 50% without increasing overall physician utilization.

**Keywords** Simulation · Utilization · Patient wait time · Goal programming

employment check-ups in various institutional settings throughout Taiwan. These services are time-consuming for both the patients and the clinical personnel at the medical clinics. As such, maximal patient throughput and physician efficiency are critically important.

This analysis considers a routine medical physical examination consisting of three ordered stages: (1) registration, (2) a series of diagnostic sub-stages (xray, ultrasound, blood analysis, and electrocardiogram) not in any particular order, and finally (3) physician inquiry. The three ordered stages are illustrated in Fig. 1. We define “the confined constraint” to be the inclusion of all three stages in the PE service; that is, removing any stage from the PE service is not an option.

The intake procedures at the studied PE service is as follows: Up to 25 patients (required to refrain from

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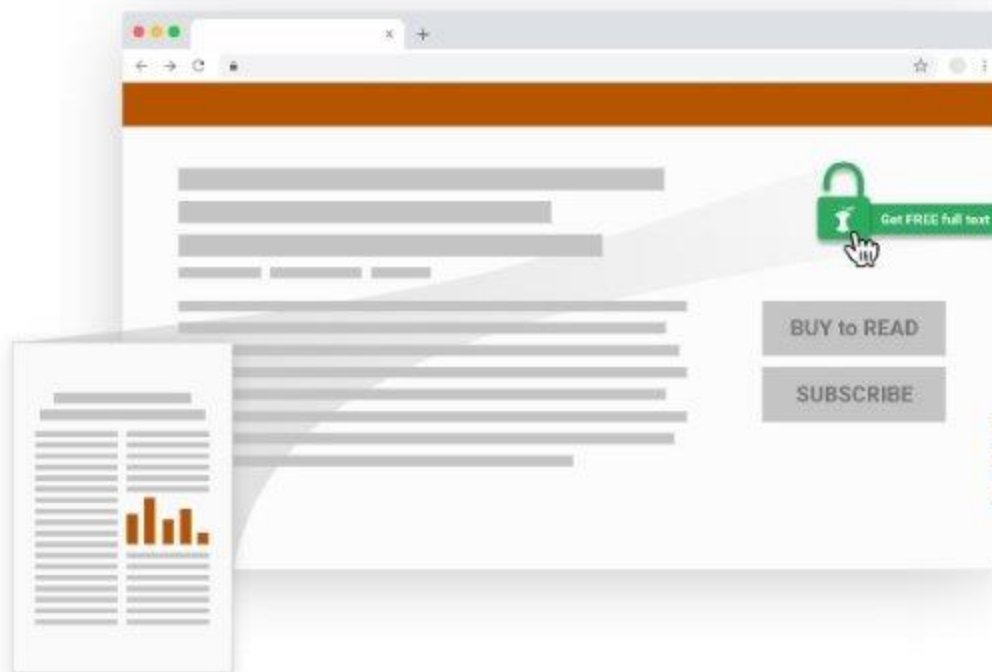


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The objective of our project was to improve the efficiency of the physical examination screening service of a large hospital system. We began with a detailed simulation model to explore the relationships between four performance measures and three decision factors. We then attempted to identify the optimal physician inquiry starting time by solving a goal-programming problem, where the objective function includes multiple

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