



# A Hard Days Night (and I've Been Working Like a Dog)

PAH Focusing on Fatigue  
Dr Mellissa Naidoo



## Overview

- Why look at ward call?
- What did we do?
- What did we find?
- What is the evidence?
- Where to from here?





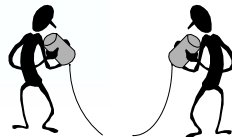
***“He who runs behind truck is exhausted,  
he who runs in front of truck is tired.”***

*Confucius, 551-479 BC*



## Why look at Ward Call?

- Extremely busy
- Constant interruptions due to frequent paging
- Poor communication
- **‘Unnecessary’ tasks**
- Inefficient
- **Little or no education**
- RMOs loathe it
- **Patient safety**



***... Can we improve the hospital after  
hours for both doctors and patients?***



## What did we do?

- Shadowed & recorded tasks for
  - Medical & Surgical Ward Call
  - Super Resident
  - Night Ward Call
- Data analysis
  - Pager patterns
  - Breakdown of Tasks



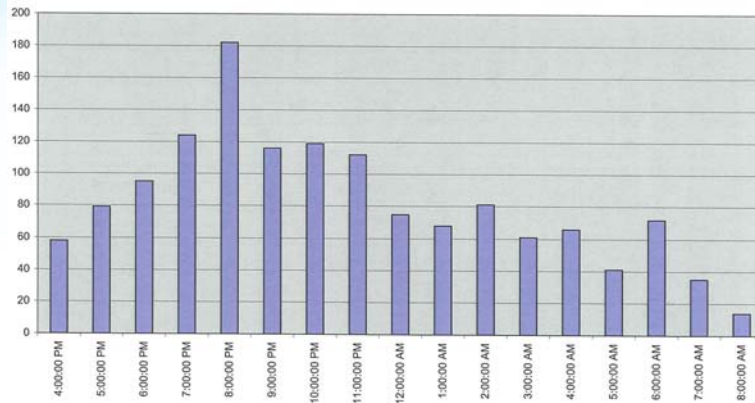
## What did we find?

- 41 shifts
- 1279 pages
  - Average of 4.17 pages/hour
  - **24% insufficient information**
  - **15% number only**
- 1621 tasks recorded
  - Average of 4.9 tasks/hour
  - **22% day tasks**
  - 21% tasks requested by other means





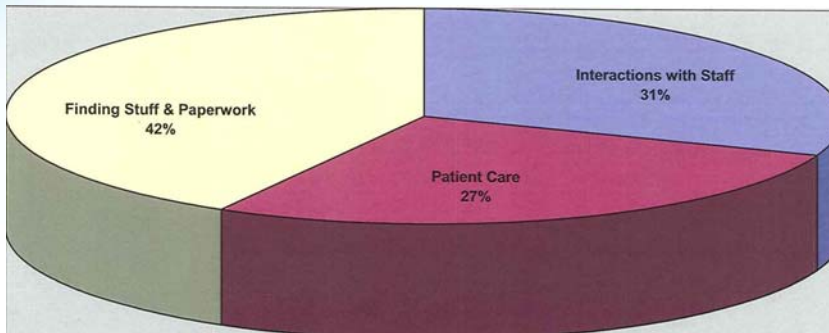
## Activity After Hours



*Peak Activity occurs between 7pm & 9pm*



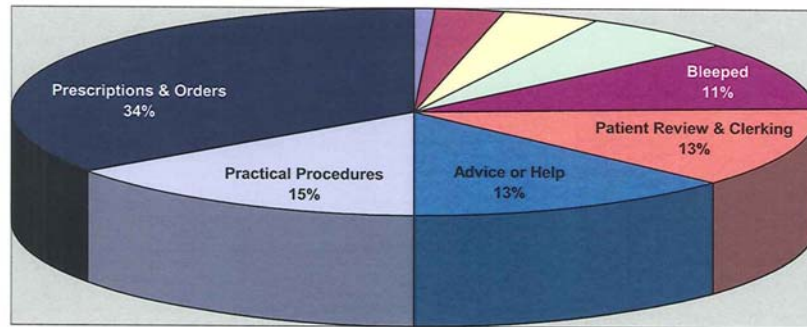
## What does ward call do?



*Less than 30% of tasks relate to direct patient care*



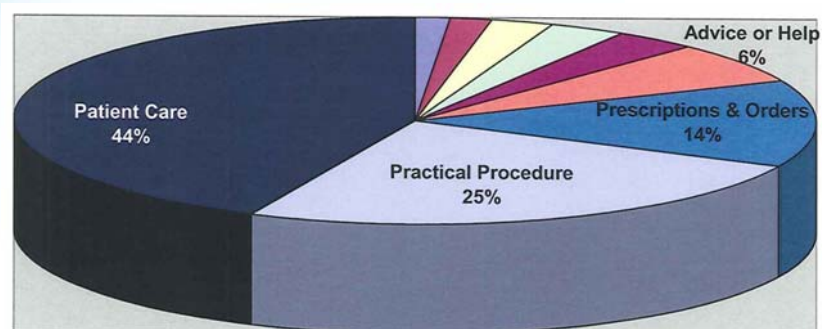
## Most Frequent Tasks



*Medication & fluid orders are the most common tasks*



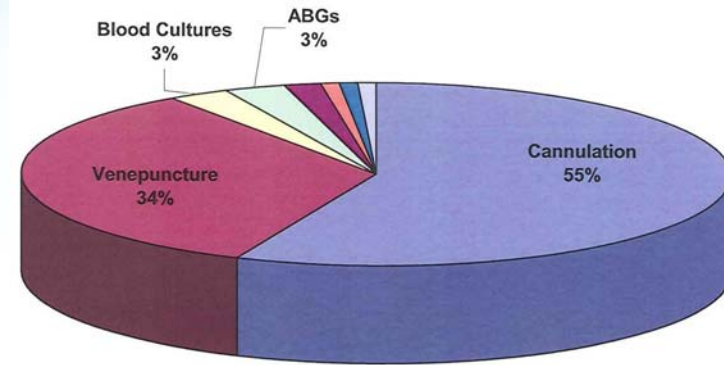
## Tasks by Time



*Less than 50% of time is spent on direct patient care*



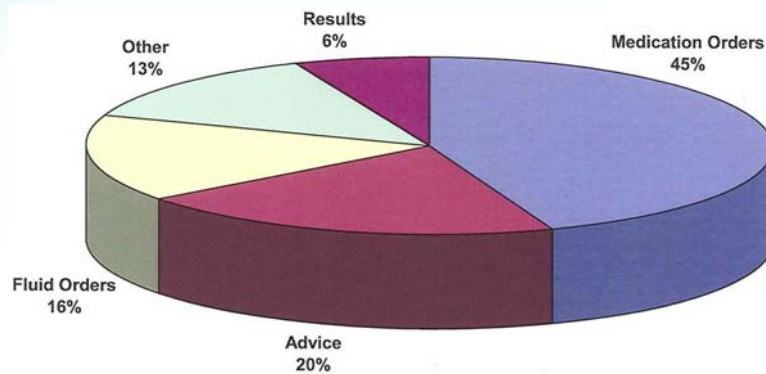
## Practical Procedures



*25% of total task time is spent on procedures*



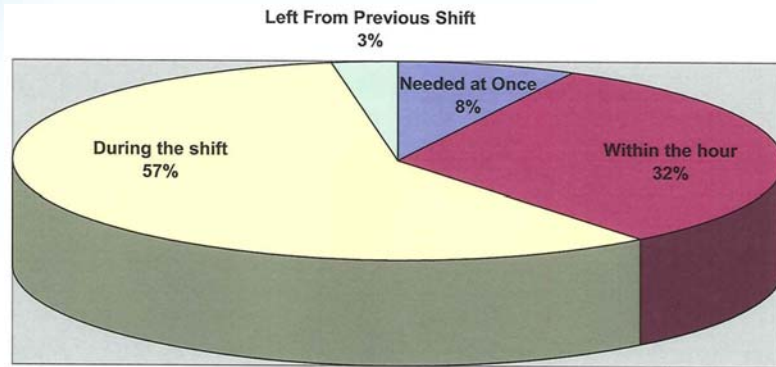
## Phone Tasks



*46% of all tasks are dealt with by phone*



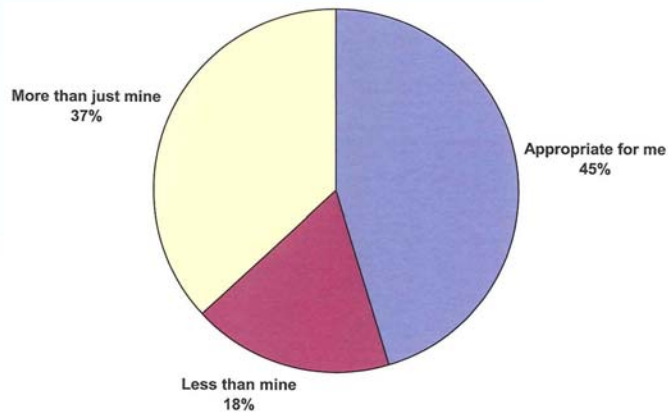
## Urgency of Tasks



*Over 50% of tasks are non-urgent*



## Skill Level Required



*Less than 50% of tasks considered appropriate*



## What is the Evidence?

- Paging
  - Frequency – Morton (2006) NZMJ
  - Patterns - Harvey et al (1994) Can Med Assoc J
- Work interruption
  - workload
  - errors – Reason 1990, Human Error; Volpp 2003 NEJM
  - Inefficiency - Coiera 1998 BMJ; Blum 1992 Am J Dis Child
  - Stress – Chiu et al. (2006) NZMJ
- Patient care
  - Delays & disruption – Katz, 1988 NEJM
  - Poor continuity – Modernisation Agency, 2004
  - Patient safety concerns – Ting, 2005, AHR



## How can we make it better?

- Decrease interruptions
  - Pager policies
  - Filtering
- Improve Communication
  - Technology & Tools
  - Handover & Senior support
- Reduce Workload
  - Extended Hours Services
  - Hospital at Night Models





*"Excuse the interruption, but is now the right time for the surgeon to be looking to buy an automobile online?"*



## The Real Outcomes

- Moving past anecdotes
- Shifting perceptions
- Moving towards solutions





# Thanks

- Ward call doctors
- Medical Students
- QH Alert Doctors Strategy
- PAH Fatigue Project Team
  - Rachel Currie
  - Elizabeth Miller
  - Dr Lizbeth Jordan

