Hone in first on your biggest areas of opportunity for improvement in each of these three throughput segments by examining the metrics in your dashboard as explained earlier. Then ask key questions to diagnose where the problem lies:

**Figure 3.5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Flow Challenge</th>
<th>Ask:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Front-End Issues       | • Is triage efficient?  
                          | • Is patient immediately bedded if a bed is open?  
                          | • Does the provider see the patient quickly after they are bedded?  
                          | • Does the ED have open beds to place patients? |
| Middle Issues          | • Is the unit clerk able to enter orders in a timely way?  
                          | • Is the computerized physician order entry (CPOE) system user-friendly and timely?  
                          | • Is the nurse able to execute orders in a timely way?  
                          | • Do essential services execute in a timely fashion?  
                          | • Is the doctor able to expedite the disposition?  
                          | • Do admitting physicians call back in a timely manner? |
| Back-End Issues        | Did these activities happen in a timely way?  
                          | • ED nurse’s report  
                          | • Inpatient nurse’s acceptance of report  
                          | • Inpatient floor’s acceptance of patient  
                          | Also:  
                          | • Does an inpatient bed exist to admit?  
                          | • Does the admitting doctor hold the patient in the ED?  
                          | • Does the hospital have a pre-diversion plan?  
                          | • Does the hospital have a high-capacity protocol? |