

- 8:30-10:30 every Friday -
Monarch Room -

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FROM: Gordon Mosser, MD
DATE: September 24, 2008
SUBJECT: Quality Improvement Project

3rd year Residents

The ambulatory care rotation includes a group project aimed at improving a clinical care process at Regions Hospital or in Adult & Seniors Health within the HealthPartners Specialty Center. The purpose of the project is to learn methods of process improvement. Learning these methods is one part of one of your residency program's goals, namely, acquiring competence in practice-based learning and improvement.

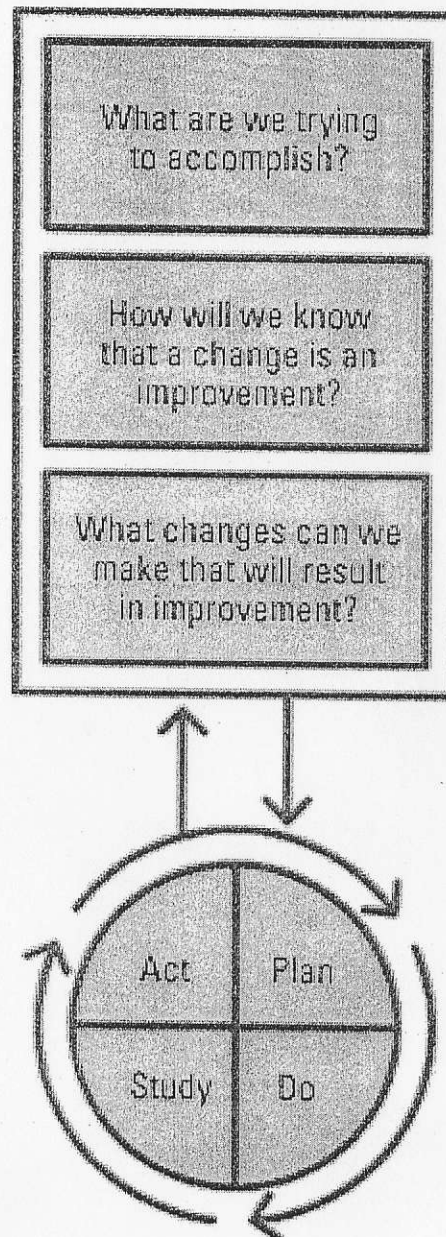
Steps in the Project

1. Choose a clinical process as the topic for your project. (More on this below.)
2. Review the medical literature on the topic to establish what is good care for the topic in question.
3. Set an explicit aim for improving the chosen process of care and define a measure of attainment of that aim.
4. Study the current process of care as it exists either in Regions or in Adult & Senior Health, making a flowchart of that process.
5. Measure baseline performance of the process, that is, measure how well the chosen aim is currently being achieved.
6. Generate a list of possible changes that could be made to improve the process so that it performs better, that is, achieves the aim more frequently or at a higher level.
7. Devise criteria for choosing among the possible changes; then make a choice and plan a test of change on a limited scale.
8. Test the change on a small scale, including measuring the effect of the change.

This last step may or may not be achievable. It depends upon how far you are able to progress during the rotation.

These steps are shown in the attached diagram.

Meet every Friday Morning.
Competency (3) - Acquire systems point of view.
Hospital Medicine - Fellowship - Jerome Sig



Model for Improvement

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What are we trying to accomplish?

How will we know that a change is an improvement?

What changes can we make that will result in improvement?

Then:

Plan, Do, Study, Act

PDSA

Source: The Improvement Guide, 1996

Characteristics of a Topic Suitable for the Project

The first step in the project will be for you, as a group, to choose a topic for your project.

A clinical process is a series of steps in the care of a patient, for example, the initial assessment of a patient with chest pain in the ED, followed by stabilization, followed by transfer to the CCU, and so on. The purpose of the project is to learn about methods for improving clinical processes. Your group will learn how to improve a clinical process by focusing on one process as an example, that is, on a particular sequence of clinical care events.

Improvement of the chosen process is defined as (1) an improvement of some outcome of clinical care or (2) an improvement in a clinical care process that has been proven to lead to better outcomes. For example, mortality among patients with myocardial infarction is an outcome. Administration of aspirin to this group of patients is a step in clinical care that has been proven to improve the outcome.

The topic can be either an inpatient process or an ambulatory care process. It needs to be one that can be studied either at Regions Hospital or in Adult & Seniors Health. It could be a new topic or one that a previous group of residents has worked on. If it is the latter, you would pick up where former a former group left off.

The following are clinical processes worked on by previous groups doing this rotation. They would be suitable choices.

- Production of hospital discharge summaries,
- Hand-offs of patients from one resident group to another at change of shift,
- Inpatient medication reconciliation at the time of admission,
- ✈• Prophylaxis against deep vein thrombosis in hospitalized medical patients,
- Ambulatory care for patients with diabetes,
- Inpatient care for patients admitted for exacerbation of COPD,
- ✈• Glycemic control among patients admitted to the Medicine service.
- Ambulatory care for patients with chronic pain.
- Accuracy and completeness of discharge summaries for patients transferred to Transitional Care Units.

Regions Hospital and Adult & Seniors Health are already working on several topics now. They too would be suitable choices. You may want to make some inquiries about what is being worked on so that you can tie your efforts into one of these projects. Some current projects are focused on:

- Avoiding harm to inpatients from one or more of these high-alert drugs:
 - ┐ anticoagulants
 - ┐ sedatives
 - ┐ narcotics
 - ┐ insulin
- Preventing adverse inpatient drug events by:
 - ┐ optimizing medication reconciliation on admission to hospital
 - ┐ avoiding predictable drug interactions
 - ┐ eliminating incorrect dosing
 - ┐ eliminating predictable drug allergies by eliminating prescription of drugs to which patients are known to be allergic
- Eliminating central line-associated blood stream infections
- Improving outcomes for ambulatory care of people with diabetes as reflected, for example, in:
 - ┐ HgbA1c control
 - ┐ LDL control
 - ┐ blood pressure control
 - ┐ daily use of aspirin
- Improving outcomes for ambulatory care of people with depression as reflected, for example, in:
 - ┐ systematic diagnosis through use of the PHQ-9 instrument
 - ┐ remission of symptoms within 6 months of initiation of treatment

Establishing Criteria for Choosing Your Topic

In making your selection of a topic, please go through the following steps.

Brainstorm a list of possible topics. This list could include some or all of the topics already listed as well as new ones you identify in group discussion.

Then construct a list of criteria to use in making your choice. Here are some possibilities:

- The topic is one that most or all of you are interested in working on.

- Improvement of the process is measurable.
- There is room for improvement in clinical process—to the best of your knowledge.
- It is likely that the process could actually be improved. (This improvement need not be achieved by you during this rotation, but it needs to be likely that it could be achieved eventually.)

Also, the project will be more engaging if you feel you will be able to gain some clinical knowledge for treating individual patients even though this is not the prime focus of the project.

The prime purpose of this project is for you to learn about process improvement, that is, improvement of the environment or context or system in which individual physicians (and nurses and others) provide clinical care to individual patients. You can learn process improvement *and* improve your clinical knowledge at the same time. We can do a bit of both.

Choosing Your Topic

After constructing the list of criteria, revisit the brainstormed list of possible topics and add any new topics that occur to you as a result of discussing the criteria for choice.

Discuss the topics on your list with respect to each of the criteria you have chosen and, finally, take a vote (actually a "multivote").

Please remember that the topic is to be defined as a clinical process that needs improvement, defined by citing a health outcome or an improvement in some clinical care process that has been proven to lead to a better outcome. The topic should not be defined by stating some particular action to be taken, for example, writing an order set or changing some portion of the electronic medical record. Choosing an action to take comes later, that is, after understanding the process and the causes of the shortfall in performance.

Conducting the Project

We will meet most Friday mornings to work through reviewing literature on your chosen topic, setting an aim for the improvement to be made, setting a measure of attainment of the aim, measuring baseline performance in the hospital or clinic, exploring choices for action for improvement, and so on.

Some of the work will be done at other times in pairs or small groups. We will not need to meet every Friday morning.

At the end of the rotation, you will make a group PowerPoint presentation on your project to Dr. Sufka and Dr. Wallnutt (chief residents) and others at morning report at Regions.