Improvement Methodology

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Most people would like to ‘do something about quality’ but don't have the time.

They are too busy dealing with complaints, making good [correcting] mistakes, doing the wrong things right and doing what they do twice.

paraphrased from Øvretveit 1992
Describe an experience that left you feeling ‘uncomfortable’ – a situation where things could have gone better. *NOT* negligence ... but a situation when optimal care was not provided.

www.patientvoices.org.uk
The Model for Providing Care

Patient with needs → Access System → Assess → Diagnose → Treat → Follow-up → Clinical Outcomes

Functional Health Status → Satisfaction against need → Total Costs

Balanced measure of care

It is the system …

Every system is perfectly designed to produce the outcome it achieves!

paraphrased from Berwick (1996)
Process mapping ...

Select a process

Map the process

Analyse the current situation

Identify opportunities to improve
Map the process
Analyse current situation

- Lots of steps
- Delays
- Bottlenecks
- Reworked loops

Diagram showing steps and loops.
Identify opportunities to improve

With as few steps as possible

Each step must **add** value to the process.
“Good work .... but I think we need just a little more detail right here.”
The tribal wisdom of the Dakota Indians, passed from generation to generation, states that when you discover that you are riding a dead horse the best strategy is to dismount.

However modern management best practice within government and large organisations has developed other strategies, including the following:

**Change Riders.**

- Say things like “this the way we always ride horses”
- Appoint a committee to study the horse.
- Arrange to visit other sites to see how they ride dead horses.
- Hold training sessions to improve dead horse riding ability.
- Compare the state of dead horses in today’s environment.
Re-classify the dead horse as “living, impaired”.

Pass legislation declaring that “this horse is not dead”

Harness several dead horses together for increased the speed.

Do a cost analysis study to see if contractors can ride it cheaper.

Offer the horse career counselling and the option of a transfer to a less stressful position of equivalent status.

Check with IT Support to see if the whole network is down, or if it is just the horse.

Promote the dead horse to a Senior Management position.
To stop riding dead horses …
use a model for improvement
A model for improvement

Aims

Measurement

Ideas, hunches, other people etc.

What are you trying to accomplish?

How will you know that a change is an improvement?

What changes can you make that will result in the improvements you seek?

Three fundamental questions for improvement

How to make change happen

Act

Plan

Study

Do

Aims

What are you trying to accomplish?

Measurement

How will you know that a change is an improvement?

Ideas, hunches, etc.

What changes can you make that will result in the improvements you seek?
The PDSA Cycle

How to make change happen …

Act

What changes are to be made? Next cycle?

Plan

Objective
What do we want to do? Plan to carry out the cycle (who, what, where, when)
Plan for data collection

Study

Analyse the data
What did or didn’t work?
Summarise what was learnt

Do

Just do it!
Carry out the plan
Document problems and unexpected observations

Walton (1989)
A model for improvement

Aims

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The health service has many heroes. The staff who work harder, predict problems and compensate for shortcomings. Heroic thoroughness may make patients' lives a little safer but a real improvement in the quality of care provided to patients is not created by heroes who compensate for the flawed processes.

The real heroes are those who change the system to remove the flaws!
Bibliography


Berwick DM (1996) A primer on leading the improvement of systems. *BMJ* 312 619-622


Available on line at; [http://www.institute.nhs.uk/improvementleadersguide](http://www.institute.nhs.uk/improvementleadersguide)


Improvement Leaders’ Guides

General Improvement Skills
- Improvement knowledge & skills
- Process mapping, analysis and redesign
- Working with groups
- Involving patients and carers
- Evaluating improvement
- Sustainability
- Technology in improvement
- Delivering improvement

Process and systems thinking
- Measurement for improvement
- Matching capacity and demand
- Improving flow
- Working in systems

Personal and organisational development
- Managing the human dimensions of change
- Redesigning roles
- Building and nurturing an improvement culture
- Leading improvement

www.institute.nhs.uk/improvementleadersguides
Useful Links

www.institute.nhs.uk  NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement

www.ihi.org  Institute for Health Care Improvement (USA)

Any questions?