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‘Hands up!’ For Service Improvement: Do You Surrender?

Abstract

Engaging clinicians in service improvement can be challenging. However, despite ever-increasing workloads and tough fiscal demands, clinicians in Queensland aren't being forced to surrender. Hands are up to volunteer for service improvement projects with the Collaborative for Healthcare Improvement.

Queensland Health's Collaborative for Healthcare Improvement (CHI) offers motivated clinicians the opportunity to participate in service improvement projects they feel are important. CHI is a statewide network of over 400 healthcare professionals, including over 40 senior medical staff, working together to improve patient care with the assistance of a core group of skilled facilitators, educators and data managers.

The CHI Cardiac Collaborative comprises members from 15 hospitals committed to improving outcomes for patients with CVD (acute coronary syndromes and congestive heart failure). Starting with process and outcome measures based on current best practice, members are provided with problem definition and change management workshops, methodologies for collection of data as part of routine practice (i.e. scanning technology), and ideas and tools for service improvement interventions. To inform members of areas that may benefit from service improvement, members' own real-time data (in addition to all member hospitals' aggregate, de-identified data) are available via their desktop computers. Data collection methods and service improvement interventions chosen by clinicians are implemented and, for the benefit of all members, results are routinely presented Collaborative-wide in bi-annual forums.

Early success of the CHI Cardiac Collaborative is demonstrated through improved clinician networking and the implementation of various service improvement strategies across the state, as well as improvement in processes such as increased numbers of patients receiving appropriate therapies and in outcomes such as decreased hospital lengths of stay.

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