Visualizing Your Process: Flowcharting 101

Welcome!
Objectives

- Constructing & Analyzing “As Is” Flowcharts
- Developing “Future State” Flowcharts
- Q & A
PDSA: A Four-Stage Approach to QI

Plan

Act

Study

Do
PLAN

☐ Last time we discussed:
   ■ Step Three: Examine the Current Approach
     □ Determine root cause(s) of problem

☐ During this webinar, we will be looking at:
   ■ Step Three: Examine the Current Approach
     □ What are we doing now?
     □ How are we doing it? What are the major steps in the process?
     □ Who is involved? What do they do?
Flowchart

1. Review assignment
2. Schedule review with county
3. Send county/agency copies of modules
4. Send request for what I will need.
   - List includes: Access to policies, Access to personnel records, Billing records, Patient records, Audits from auditors, Budget, QI documents, Annual evaluation
5. Reminder to county
6. Prepare for visit: Computer, Past compliance, Correct information for this FY
7. Arrive at site and set up computer, choose module
8. Administration
   - Review: Policies and all things listed in administration module
   - Document findings of things correct
   - Document items missing
   - How serious are the findings?
9. Decide to report to Julie and Judy?
10. Summarize findings at end of module and share with administration/project director
11. Repeat module steps
12. Complete follow up with administration/project director - give deadlines
13. Make sure all corrections have been completed
14. Completed by deadline
   - No
   - Yes
     - Follow up
       - Have received and reviewed all remaining items for follow up
       - Completed report to contractor
       - Report sent to Berdette as PDF? Saved to ----
15. Contact Julie as needed
16. Follow directions as given by Julie
Flowchart—picturing the process

- Why Use It?
  - To allow a team to identify the actual flow or sequence of events in a process that any product or service follows.
Flowchart—picturing the process

What Does it Do?

- Shows unexpected complexity, problem areas, redundancy, unnecessary loops
- Shows where simplification & standardization may be possible
- Compares actual versus ideal flow of a process
- Allows team to come to agreement on steps of the process and to examine which activities impact performance
- Identifies areas where additional data may need to be collected
- Serves as training aid to understand process
Flowcharting benefits for team members

- Better understanding of process (in general)
- Team members understand the process in the same terms
- Realize how this process and the people involved fit into the overall organization/agency
- Builds enthusiasm for quality and process improvement
Getting Started

- Identify the **right people** to develop the chart
- Determine **what you expect** to get from the flowchart
- Identify **who will use it** and how
- Define the **level of detail** you need
- Establish the **boundaries of the process** to be improved.
How to Construct “As Is” Flowchart

1. Determine the frame or boundaries of the process
2. Determine the steps in the process
3. Sequence the steps
4. Draw the flowchart
5. Test the flowchart for completeness
6. Finalize the flowchart
Determine the frame or boundaries of the process

- Clearly define where the process starts and ends
- Team members should agree to the level of detail needed to understand process and identify problem areas
- Decide on type(s) of flowchart to utilize
Determine the steps in the process

- Brainstorm a list of:
  - Major activities
  - Inputs
  - Decisions

- Gather information of how the process flows from:
  - Experience
  - Observation
  - Conversation
  - Interviews
  - Research
Sequence the Steps

- Arrange the steps in the order they are carried out.

TIPS

- Use Post-it notes so you can move the steps around
- Don’t draw in arrows at this point
- Remember, an “As Is” flowchart needs to represent what is happening currently
**Stop and Start:** Shows the start or end of a process

**Activity:** Reflects a single process step. Briefly describe the step inside the box.

**Decision:** Signifies that a decision is made here. It indicates a branch point. The answer determines the path taken to the next step.

**Delay:** Signifies a delay or waiting period.

**Arrows:** Point out the direction of flow from one activity or decision.
Test the Flowchart for Completeness

- Are the symbols used correctly?
- Are the process steps identified clearly?
- Make sure feedback loops are closed
- Check to see if there is only one output arrow from an activity box. If there is more than one arrow, you may need a decision diamond.
- Validate the flowchart with people who are not on the team who carry out steps in process
Finalize/Analyze the Flowchart

- Who is involved in the process and when?
- What activities are being performed? When and where is the activity performed?
- How many steps:
  - Directly produce the service?
  - Are absolutely necessary/are redundant?
  - Are checking steps?
- How many rework loops are there?
- How many delays are there?
- How many decision points are there?
- Are there ways to increase the efficiency of the process?
- What are opportunities for improvement?
Olmsted County, MN
– Performance Appraisal Process
Flowchart Variations

- Block/Macro
- Top-down
- Detailed
- Deployment
Block/Macro Flowchart

- Simplest form
- Only shows major steps

Planning a Party

- Determine party size
- Find location
- Invite guests
Top-down Flowchart

- Identifies steps within a block
- No feedback or rework loops

Planning a Party

- **Determine party size**
  - Decide on a budget
  - Decide on guest list

- **Find location**
  - Decide theme
  - Select location

- **Invite guests**
  - Complete invitations
  - Send invitations
Deployment Flowchart

- Shows people/departments responsible and flow of tasks they are assigned.
- Useful to clarify roles & track accountability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chris</th>
<th>Karin</th>
<th>Lauren</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plans ad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes ad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time to do graphics?</td>
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<td>Sends out ad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Draws graphics</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ad complete</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 11-5. Flowchart of Admission from Emergency Department to Surgical Bed

Reprinted, with permission, from Holston Valley Hospital and Medical Center, Kingsport, TN, 1990.
Detailed Flowchart

- Most complex chart
- Includes in detail: inputs, activities, and outputs
- Also includes rework loops, decision points, & delay symbols
- Used to design the ideal process flow
- Used for orientation/training purposes
- Points to potential data collection needs
Future State Flowchart

- Graphical representation of the improved condition of a process.
- Maps out the process as it should be, with all possible flow problems and errors eliminated.
QUESTIONS?
Thank you for joining us!

The next webinar ~

“Identifying and Prioritizing Solutions”

will be held January 11th from 9:30 to 10:30 AM.