Introduction to the Model for Improvement

The Model for Improvement is a flexible improvement method designed to promote a structured process/framework for experiential learning. It utilizes the knowledge of people involved in the work and assists improvers to target changes predicted to lead to improvement for a specific issue or in a specific system. These changes are then tested and revised through iterative Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles to produce sustainable improvement.

Key features of the Model for Improvement include

- Flexible improvement framework
- PDSA methodology
- Emphasis on
  - Aims and measures
  - Initial small tests of change
  - Widespread testing
  - Implementation and spread

The Model for Improvement is structured around two major sections, each with several key components.

Section one includes the aim, measures and potential changes. First, your aim-what are you trying to accomplish? Your aim should be specific as to your population and describe how much and by when. Second, your measures-how will you know that a change is an improvement? Measures should be aligned with the aim and feasible to collect and analyze. Third, your changes/interventions-what changes can you actually put in place to achieve the aim? Good ideas for changes arise from the insights of individuals working in the system (especially those with front-level experience), or they can be suggested by other systems or areas that have demonstrated a better approach to the problem.

Section two focuses on testing these changes using PDSA cycles.

Content included in this document is provided as a brief overview of the Model for Improvement. Visit the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) web site-http://www.ihi.org/ for additional information.

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