
Holding the Gains: Sustaining the Momentum

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“There is nothing more difficult to plan,
more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous
to manage than the creation of a new order of
things....”

-Nicolo Machiavelli, The Prince

Creating a New System



BETTER



Table Exercise

- Think of a time in your experience when a successful change was implemented, but the gain did not “stick”
- Why weren't the gains held?

Ovretveit* Research Studies

“There are some indications that outcome improvements can be sustained, but less evidence of continuous improvement or institutionalisation of the methods. What is clear is that many collaboratives and teams did not make time to learn about and planning how to sustain improvements.”

IHI BTS Research Study (2003)

Holding the Gains Survey:

- Population: Successful teams of completed IHI collaboratives (from 1997 through 2002)
- Stratified Random Sample of $n = 25$
- Written survey with 16 questions around tracking performance, current levels, strategies to sustain and spread results
- Phone Surveys for nonresponses
- Survey conducted between Feb – May, 2003

IHI BTS Research Study (2003)

Survey Results:

- **89.5% still tracking performance of performance measures**
- **Current level of performance?**
 - **89.5% better or significantly better**
 - **10.5% same**
 - **0% worse or significantly worse**
- **Top reasons for holding the gains**
 - **Senior leadership strategy**
 - **DATA: Planned early and continued to track monthly**
 - **Continued to use improvement methods and internal collaboratives**

“What is your current level of performance compared to the end of the final learning session for the key outcome measure?”

BTS Successful Teams	Much Better	Better	Same	Worse
13 initial responders	3	8	2	0
20 follow-up responders	7	4	8	1
33 Total Teams	10 (30.3%)	12 (36.4%)	10 (30.3%)	1 (3.0%)

Summary

97% of teams at least “held the gains” from the BTS

67% of teams are now performing better than at end of BTS

Lessons from IHI Research

- **The power of internal publicity**
- **Commitment to real sustainability versus “quick hits”**
 - **Leadership**
 - **Resources**
 - **Ambition**
- **Understanding that the end of the formal collaborative is only the beginning (and that success is only a step in the right direction)**

Readiness for “Holding the Gains” and Spread

- Success of collaborative team
- Intention to hold gains
- Organizational priority
- Leadership responsibility clear

Holding the Gains

- Supportive Management
- Structures to Foolproof Change
- Robust, Transparent Feedback System
- Shared Sense of System
- Culture of Improvement
- Formal Capacity-Building Programs

Supportive Management

- Board and executive team:
 - Creates accountability systems
 - Effectively communicates measurable improvement aims
- Executive team celebrates successful attainment of improvement aims

Structures to Foolproof Change

- **Managers of improvement:**
 - **Document successful processes in guidelines and training materials**
 - **Develop tools (e.g., checklists, pre-packaged “kits” of materials used in applying the intervention) and technology to support sustained implementation**

Robust, Transparent Feedback System

- The hospital has in place a measurement system that regularly generates data on performance
- The hospital publicly displays improvement data on all improvement interventions

Culture of Improvement

- Everyone in the organization is clear on major performance improvement activity and can explain their role in it
- Staff view quality improvement work as part of their job
- Managers of improvement activity:
 - Write job descriptions to reflect improvement responsibilities
 - Create opportunities for all stakeholders in improvement to share ideas and express concerns

Formal Capacity-Building Programs

- Managers of improvement activity closely consider the composition and skill base of participating teams, working to enhance confidence and core competencies
- Every stakeholder in the organization is introduced to the content of any new improvement intervention and provided ongoing training in quality improvement methods

Some Ideas to Try....

- Establish and document standard processes
- Make changes to job descriptions
- Use measurement and audits
- Pay attention to orientation and training
- Assign ownership
- Address the social aspects of change

Address the Social Aspects of Change

- Provide information on why the change is being made and how the change will affect people
- Show appreciation for people's efforts
- Understand and address the causes of "resistance"
- Publicize the results and learning

NJHA Pressure Ulcer Collaborative

- Ran collaborative for rolling five years
- Consistently saw 60-70% reduction in incidence
- Developed and now implementing universal transfer form
- Wrote articles, presented at conferences

NJHA Pressure Ulcer Collaborative

■ Now continuing

- Listserv
- Website
- Annual pressure ulcer conferences
- Toolkit
- Plaques
- Many have gone on to be IHI mentor organizations

Discussion

- What ideas did you hear that you can begin to work on tomorrow to hold the gains for your improvement?
- What experience have you had in successfully holding the gains that you can share with others?

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