

## **Rapid Process Improvement Workshops**

### ***Frequently Asked Questions***

#### **What is a Rapid Process Improvement Workshop?**

A Rapid Process Improvement Workshop (RPIW) is an improvement workshop meant to pull together multiple employees from the organization to analyze and improve a complex, common process. An RPIW has a fundamental operational goal: to create a more reliable, efficient, patient driven process. If successful, an RPIW can lead to higher quality with less time/energy/resources needed to make the process run. Analysis and redesign are always taken on with the patient as the focal point. What would the patient value? What should they expect out of a highly performing healthcare provider?

It is important to recognize that an RPIW is also an educational event. Participants will be instructed in how to understand a complex process in new ways, to draw upon the upstream and downstream components to strengthen their own performance, and to “see” the ward/unit on which they work in new ways. They will be positioned to lead further change efforts.

#### **What is the format?**

An RPIW is a facilitated event that typically runs over several days. Participants are taken through steps of defining the problem/core process under analysis, mapping its current performance and then eventually designing a new, improved future state. Great care is taken during the workshop to incorporate the input of front line employees and patients, as well as to understand the current state of operations by going to the ward/unit to observe, measure, and get input from those who work within the system on a daily basis. There are several characteristics that can set the RPIW up for particular success:

- 1) Daily involvement of leadership. Senior leaders will be involved in the chartering of the workshop, and daily in debriefs of the group’s progress to ensure that there is agreement on direction, scope, and that changes evolving are consistent with overarching organizational priorities. Resource needs are also addressed in these debriefs.
- 2) A “hands – on” approach: teams will spend a significant amount of time observing and analyzing the process under refinement first hand. Thus, time is spent at the facility, on the ward/unit, seeking the input of front line staff.
- 3) An emphasis on consolidating change, training, and sustainability – embedded from the start. Significant time will be spent in the workshop facilitating changes by disseminating new practices, training staff in new procedures, and communicating objectives to a broad cross section of stakeholders. Long term sustainability is the goal.

### **What is expected of me as a participant?**

The several – day workshop period is spent dedicated to the event, and typically means stepping out of one's "day job" for that time for core participants. Some may be asked to be "on call" for the RPIW, meaning that their input is necessary for only part of the event. These staff will be asked to block out time to meet with the core team during certain periods only. Participants will be asked to manage other responsibilities in such a way that their full attention can be provided to the team.

The purpose of an RPIW is redesign. The environment is meant to be one of safe, open discussion. Your facilitator will review "rules of engagement" at the beginning of the event to ensure that all share a like vision of the professional, supportive environment necessary to allow for positive change.

### **Why is the workshop so intensive? Are several days really necessary?**

RPIWs are necessarily intensive for two principal reasons: First, the educational component - a "how to" of rigorous process improvement - is meant to allow participants to apply similar methodologies to other problems in their work environments. In short, they will both "do" and learn. Secondly, RPIWs are typically focused on processes that are complex, ill-standardized, and often have been the focus of prior, ineffective change efforts. Several days to vastly improve such a process and hold the gains is often very little when contextualized as such.

### **What happens after the RPIW?**

After the workshop RPIW teams are still involved with monitoring and sustaining the new process. Teams will probably need to meet weekly for 1-2 months to ensure the process is stabilized, accomplish any follow-up action items, and review the process. Reviews are usually completed at 30 days and 60 days to ensure that the new process is being followed and improvements have been sustained.

### **Point(s) of Contact for Questions:**

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