



Improving Team-Based Health Care: A Case Study

Thought Leadership Report

MainStream GS, LLC and our strategic business partners have deep expertise in improving patient safety. MainStream recently assisted a DoD health care organization in assessing and improving its Team-Based Health Care efforts within four of its medical facilities.

Background

The four DoD medical facilities had varying levels of historical performance standards ranging from above average to below average. These ratings were based upon the Surgeon General's (SG) expectations in terms of standard work relative to best practices supporting patient safety through Team-Based Health Care.

MainStream was engaged to assess and recommend improvements to these four facility's Team-Based Health Care programs and to recommend actions to improve patient safety throughout this DoD health care organization.

Actions

The MainStream team conducted an in-depth assessment of the current state Team-Based Health Care approach utilized at these facilities. The assessment included whether, how, and to what extent:

- Team-Based Health Care has been adopted into the behavioral mindsets of the stakeholders
- TeamSTEPPS, a patient safety program developed by the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality, has affected that condition
- Safety, standards, and service has been affected by Team-Based Health Care

In addition, hundreds of stakeholder interviews and surveys were conducted by MainStream resulting in a representative sample size of the total population. Additional in-depth clinical and administrative observations were made, which provided qualitative data in support of the survey responses.

It became evident that while process improvements were being accomplished, the organization lacked a standardized approach to incorporating enterprise-wide best practices. Some of these "standard work" practices included the training of new personnel on proper protocols, briefing personnel on critical issues requiring immediate attention, systemically including junior personnel and civilians as part of

the team, and removing barriers that inhibit developing a Team-Based Health Care delivery.

Furthermore, the use of TeamSTEPPS had not yet positively or negatively affected the advance of Team-Based Health Care. As a part of the engagement, MainStream developed an actionable set of near and longer term recommendations to improve the extent to which Team-Based Health Care is adopted into the culture.

Recommendations

The SG and hospital leadership understood the need to establish a vision in collaboration with the organization's executive leadership in order to align and implement the needed changes. Near term, MainStream recommended re-establishing the stakeholder's understanding of how Team-Based Health Care is delivered and each team member's specific roles within that delivery system. For example, defining what the 'Team' is in Team-Based Health Care delivery. MainStream also recommend improving the stakeholder's understanding and use of the individual tools of Team-Based Health Care and providing professional development and growth opportunities to team members throughout the organization.

Longer-term, MainStream recommended the organization align and deploy operational and change strategies that relate to Team-Based Health Care delivery throughout all levels of the organization. This included a priority rating system, which allocates resources to the most critical areas of opportunity. The longer-term recommendation also included utilizing policies and procedures for standardization of organizational behaviors as well as adopting a real time decision making approach in support of a continuing improvement agenda.

If you are interested in finding out more about tools that can help you Increase Performance and Sustain Gains feel free to contact MainStream at info@mainstreamgs.com or 877-785-4888.

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