A New Approach: Sustaining Quality Training Standards During Times of Rapid Change

Regulations change. Staff workflows are diverse. Electronic medical records evolve. How do you stay ahead of the curve?

Change is constant, and resources are limited.

TRAINING time competes with staff PRODUCTIVITY

It’s every organization’s challenge: meeting growing demand for training complexity while keeping learning engaging and timely.

The Question: How to sustain new training initiatives or address large changes without adding burden to already extensive training curriculums?

Resource strategy and new, dynamic learning tactics allowed the Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD) to reduce expensive Documentation Training classroom time by 40–70%, while still adding new content.

At the end of 2010, “Getting it Right, Making It Great” was our organization-wide initiative in response to the Mary Thornton training on documenting “The Golden Thread.” This initial roll-out training was designed to educate all of our staff on how to implement the clinical documentation quality concepts into practice. We were unable to sustain it as a separate class from our normal Electronic Health Record Navigation class due to multiple competing resource needs. Extra classes needed to be scheduled to accommodate temporary staff and student flux, along with customized handouts and specific workflows, addressing the diversity of needs in a classroom setting was becoming quite unwieldy. The resulting training overload, easily applicable for other subjects and agencies, proved widely successful: reducing classroom time and allowing flexibility in the face of changing standards and initiatives, ultimately getting clinicians into their direct care roles faster and more efficiently. The sustained benefits? Reduced anxiety for new staff and — most importantly — the ability to be face-to-face working with our consumers faster.

Goals & Value-Added Results:

Consolidate Changes

Merge roll-out trainings into existing modules that have overlapping topics, interest, and context.

- Removed topic overlaps, resulting in classroom time reduction from 12 hrs to 8 hrs
- More potential productivity time for staff, with less travel time to class, and reduced time in the classroom
- Maintenance of training materials for just one class rather than two
- Flexible positioning to facilitate smoother transition to new EHR next year

Timely Training

Provide training a timely manner to staff—consolidation of training allowed us to offer class twice a month rather than once a month.

- Staff are prepared more quickly, and performing work with less anxiety
- Reduced training burden for supervisors, and more consistent “ messaging” of expectations
- Reduced risk of poor documentation

10 DAYS faster

Staff get what they need to know about quality documentation standards.

Being able to offer the class twice a month also eliminated our need to schedule additional classes to accommodate temporary staff and student fluxes.

Leverage Learning Opportunities

Employ operational processes and quality practices that reinforce new material and learning acquisition.

- Peer Review — design questions to assess how well staff are able to apply and implement concepts/skills trained
- Manager’s Tool Kit — create reference materials, exercises, and activities collaboratively with Program Managers, for use during team meetings and individual/group supervision
- Electronic Record Programming — “mistake-proof” what you can: alert messages, hard stops, automated routing
- Utilization Management — monitor variation from expectations to address and ensure consistency in practice

Electronic Medical Record Navigation + Quality Content = Quality Documentation Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Training Group</th>
<th>Required Classroom Time Reduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescriber</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Greatest time reduction was for Prescribers—our most expensive staff members, which also lends to significant cost savings.

Recommendations:

- Reduce silo’d trainings—find the overlap in topics and help people “connect the dots”
- Be strategic with timeliness—provide what they need to know, when they need to know it
- Take advantage of opportunities for learning repetition and evaluation—operational processes support, reinforce, and evaluate acquired competence
- Diversify your training delivery resources—consider electronic options that increase accessibility and repetition of information, and preserve classroom time for experiential learning

Strategic Use of Training Delivery Modes

On-Line Modules

- Information Presentation. Great for giving general information, acting as pre-requisites for classroom training, conducting quizzes to assess understanding, and tracking completion of required trainings. Video captures in these modules make great “how to” instructions that can be stored in a “toolbox.”

- Handouts

- Experiential Activities

- Video & Audio

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