Continuous quality improvement checklist

Continuous quality improvement (CQI) can improve patient outcomes by strengthening practice processes, enhancing data quality and digital health, and supporting better patient care. Ideally, CQI activities involve small, incremental adjustments to existing processes that lead to sustainable, long-term improvements and add value to your practice.

Step 1: Form your CQI team

- [ ] Designate a CQI lead and supporting team members
- [ ] Have a CQI team meeting to get started
- [ ] Plan CQI team roles according to staff skills, interest and position
- [ ] Set up a shared file/folder for the change team to share documents

Step 2: Choose your topic, tools and timelines

- [ ] As a team, choose what area you want to focus on. Brainstorming is a great place to start
- [ ] Investigate what work your practice is currently doing in this space
- [ ] Look at your data – this becomes your baseline measure
- [ ] Do a stocktake of existing processes and resources
- [ ] What are the key barriers you will need to overcome?
- [ ] What are the enablers that you will need to make change happen?

Step 3: Define and document your goal

- [ ] What are you trying to achieve, change or do? Make sure your goals are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound)
- [ ] Check if your goal is valid by asking yourself how will you know if the change is an improvement? Will this change add long-term value to your practice and the health outcomes of your patients?
- [ ] Document your plans

Step 4: Choose your activities and timelines

- [ ] What are you going to do to help you achieve your goal? Pick one or two small improvements to start with as they are more likely to be sustainable
- [ ] Document your chosen activities. Detail what activities you want to try, your proposed timelines and how you are going to monitor your progress

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Step 5: Engage and communicate with practice staff

- [ ] Discuss with your wider practice team what you are trialling and why
- [ ] Get staff feedback on the proposed change plans and incorporate their ideas (creates ownership)
- [ ] Plan and document the role of team members in the CQI process

Step 6: Communicate with patients

- [ ] Consider patient messaging and ask, 'what is in it for them?'
- [ ] Display posters, information sheets and brochures for patients
- [ ] Plan additional calls to action or communications to patients (e.g. email, SMS, direct communication, opportunistic screening)

Step 7: Get started

- [ ] Ensure the CQI team have dedicated time to do their required tasks
- [ ] Train practice staff in key messaging, including how to respond to frequently asked questions

Step 8: Check in

- [ ] Plan regular meetings with the CQI team to track and monitor progress
- [ ] Monitor the data and document what it is telling you
- [ ] Communicate progress regularly with your practice staff via a noticeboard, email, group chat or staff meetings

Step 9: Evaluate the activity

- [ ] Review final data
- [ ] Reflect on how the CQI activity went. What went well? What did you learn? What activities are you going to adopt, what activities are you going to adapt and what activities are you going to abandon?
- [ ] Present data and results at the next practice staff meeting
- [ ] Document your results

Step 10: Review and celebrate

- [ ] What do you need to do now to embed the current changes?
- [ ] Update workflow documents, position descriptions and policy and procedure manuals to embed the changes you have made
- [ ] How will you celebrate your successes?
- [ ] What are you going to try next? Consider setting stretch goals

Notes:

alliedhealthcollaborative@brisbanenorthphn.org.au brisbanenorthphn.org.au/allied-health

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