Office Redesign: Give “PEAs” a Chance

Cheryl B. Aspy, Ph.D.
Professor, Family & Preventive Medicine
OUHSC – College of Medicine
Oklahoma City, OK
The Problem

- Practice-Based Research Network (Oklahoma Physicians Resource/Research Network - OKPRN) projects required practice redesign to implement RTC protocol to increase preventive service delivery.
  - AHRQ funded Diabetes Care project
  - AHRQ funded TRIP project

- Practices have great difficulty redesigning their procedures without help because of continuous workflow.
The Problem

• Other projects required patient recruitment and enrollment – which meant that someone in the practice must be certified for protection of human subjects – a 3-step process at our institution including a 1-day seminar – highly impractical for clinic staff

  – RWJ P4H project
  – AZMATICS
  – Wellness Portal
The Solution

Practice Enhancement Assistants - PEAs
What is a PEA?

• **A Practice Facilitator**
  – Develops a relationship with a group of practices over a period of time, in order to help them to evaluate and improve their quality of care.
  – Helps the primary care team to:
    • assess the current state of the practice.
    • plan, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of office system interventions that enhance prevention.
Requirements to be a PEA

- Master’s degree in a health related field (e.g., MPH in Epidemiology or Health Promotion)
- Experience in healthcare
- A current driver’s license and car *(have help will travel.....)*
- Information Technology skills
- Interpersonal skills
Requirements to be a PEA

Training provided in the following:

• Administrative and departmental procedures
• Human subjects protection training
• Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
• Practice-based research skills
• Medical records review (chart auditing)
• Rapid cycle quality improvement process (PDSA cycles)
• Group facilitation and motivational methods (quality circles)
• Practice characterization model, change management approaches
• The Chronic Care Model and its implications
• Practice visits (shadowing PEAs in practices)
• Health information technology implementation and utilization
• Past and ongoing OKPRN studies
• “Best practices” study methodology
• Preventive services guidelines and implementation
• Billing and coding (E&M Coding), coding resources
• Electronic Practice Record (demographics, progress notes, and plans for practices)
• Handouts, patient education materials, practice resources
• Project-specific training
How Do PEAs Work with Practices?

• Usually assigned 8 practices and visit each one every other week – 1 day per week meet with other PEAs to discuss projects and share ideas.

• Begin by meeting staff, developing relationships, and observing practice function.

• Recommend that practices implement weekly staff meetings – attend and facilitate as needed.

• Provide any office assistance they can to build relationship, e.g., provide patient education materials, BMI charts; file charts; data entry.
How Do PEAs Work with Practices?

- A PEA can help a practice implement changes suggested by research or clinical practice guidelines to improve the quality of care.
- A PEA can help a practice use health information technology.
- A PEA can help in the facilitation of research (e.g., patient enrollment, staff training)
How Do PEAs Work with Practices?

• Conventional methods include:
  – medical records review, feedback, benchmarking, and academic detailing

• Practice facilitation techniques include:
  – observation and characterization of practices and their readiness to change, coordination of Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) quality improvement cycles within the practices, identification of effective strategies and exemplar practices, “cross-pollination” of good ideas and solutions between practices, and implementation of health information technology
What has Been the Outcome?
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• Practices have consistently reported their satisfaction and appreciation for PEA services.

• PEAs have demonstrated their contribution to project outcomes in both RCTs and Intervention Trials:
  – Mammography
  – TRIP
  – P4H
  – EPSDT
What Is Innovative About PEAs?

• There is no other position in health care that unites the community practitioner with the academic researcher like a PEA:
  – PEAs provide a link between the academic center and the community practice and this allows each to be influenced by the other.
  – Good ideas or “best practices” in one practice are cross-pollinated into another via the PEA.
  – PEAs are both “us” and “them” due to their strong ties to the practice and to the academic center.
PEAs and Projects

- P4H – Prescription for Health - RWJ Funded
- TRIP – Translating Research into Practice
- EPSDT Quality and Rate Improvement
- Development and Testing of a Wellness Portal
And Finally,

- PEAing – What PEAs do
- PEA Pods – The practices they facilitate
- Split PEAs – Half-time PEAs
- PEA Soup – Weekly problem solving time
- Keeping the PEAs – Funding sources
- PEAs on Earth – HIPAA & PHS Training
- Steamed PEAs - A hot day in Oklahoma
- PEAs be with you – What you learn today
- All we are saying is - Give PEAs a chance
References


References, cont’d

