Conducting a Mock Tracer in your Health Center

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Understanding the Tracer Methodology

Benefits:

- Educated staff will understand and support the survey process
- A tool to continuously assess compliance
- Provides important information to identify broader risks and areas for improvement
Tracer Methodology - Approach to Evaluation of Standards Compliance

- Traces a number of patients through the organization’s entire health care services
- Assesses relationships among disciplines and important functions
- As cases are examined, surveyor identifies performance issues in one or more steps of the process – or in the interfaces between processes
Patient Care Tracer Activity

- Comprises 50-60% of onsite survey time
- Approximately 90 minutes in length
- Starts in setting where tracer patient is located
- May include sequential following of the course of care – but no mandated order for visits to other care areas
Tracer Visits Include:

- Observation of delivery processes:
  - Medications (includes immunizations)
  - Assessments (in exam room with patients)
  - Education/Counseling
  - Operative Procedures
- Individual/family interviews
Tracer Visits Include:

- Staff level interactions regarding
  - Performance measurement
  - Daily roles and responsibilities
  - Training and orientation

- Review of policies and procedures, as needed
Systems Tracers, Interactive and Scheduled

- Provide a forum for discussion of important topics related to the safety and quality of care at the systems level
- Relate to organization’s findings and structure
- Allow the exchange of educational information on key topics including:
  - Medication management
  - Infection control
  - Continuity of care
  - Data Management
Tracer Selection Criteria

- Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilization
- Medication Management
- Environment of Care
- Dental Services
- Equipment Maintenance
- Referral Tracking
- Patient Self Management Goal Setting
Conducting a Mock Tracer

Ten Step Process

Four Phases

- Phase 1: Planning and Preparing
- Phase 2: Conducting and Evaluating
- Phase 3: Analyzing and Reporting the Results
- Phase 4: Applying the Results
## Phase 1: Planning and Preparing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning and Preparing for the Mock Tracer</th>
<th>Sample Time Line</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Establish a Schedule</td>
<td>Month 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Determine the Scope</td>
<td>Month 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: Choose “Surveyors”</td>
<td>Month 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4: Train your “Surveyors”</td>
<td>Month 1 &amp; 2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Phase 1: Planning and Preparing

Choose those playing the role of the surveyor(s):

- Inform executive-level leaders, managers, other leaders of the process
- Select quality-focused communicators
- Select physicians and other LIPs
- Include staff from Human Resources, Information Management, and other areas
Phase 1: Planning and Preparing

- Make it a part of your regular PI program
- Target the top compliance issues and past areas of non-compliance
- Focus on high volume/high risk and low volume/high risk areas
- Target time sensitive tasks
- Examine populations served
- Share the plan with everyone in your health center
## Phase 2: Conducting and Evaluating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conducting and Evaluating the Mock Tracer</th>
<th>Sample Time Line</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 5: Assign the Mock Tracer</td>
<td>Month 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 6: Conduct the Mock Tracer</td>
<td>Month 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 7: Debrief about the Process</td>
<td>Month 3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Phase 2: Conducting and Evaluating

- Match the expert to the subject
- Collect data
- Be flexible and open
- Hold an open forum
  - Allow team members to present
- Ask your team for feedback on the process
## Phase 3: Analyzing and Reporting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analyzing and Reporting the Results of the Mock Tracer</th>
<th>Sample Time Line</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 8: Organize and Analyze the Results</td>
<td>Month 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 9: Report the Results</td>
<td>Month 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase 3: Analyzing and Reporting

- Preview and file your data
- Rank and prioritize the problems
- Publish a formal report
  - Present as a panel
  - Post for feedback
- Report in a timely way
- BE sure to highlight the positive!
## Phase 4: Applying the Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applying the Results of the Mock Tracer</th>
<th>Sample Time Line</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 10: Development and Implement Improvement Plans</td>
<td>Months 5-7</td>
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</table>
Phase 4: Applying the Results

- Hand-off to managers
- Work with your Performance Improvement (PI) Team
- Share the plans with your entire health center
- Monitor the plans
- Prepare for your next mock survey!
Infection Control (IC) Mock Survey Example

- Your mock “surveyor” meets with staff who manage the infection control program for an overview of activities
  - How do you structure responsibility for IC in your health center?

- Explores program and roles
  - What background do you bring to your IC work?
Explores program and roles

- How often do you meet relating to IC issues?
- What process do you use for data management?
Infection Control (IC) Mock Survey Example (cont.)

- Identify infection control risks and data analysis
  - What have you identified as your greatest IC risks?
  - What indicators or studies do you use to identify data to collect?
  - What data analysis do you perform?
  - What methods do you use?
Identify infection control risks and data analysis

- Do you use any guidelines or studies to help structure your work?
- What kind of education and training do you provide to staff?
- How do you measure staff compliance with hand hygiene?
Identify infection control risks and data analysis

- How effective are your intervention strategies and measurement?
- Are you following the guidelines for the CDC?
Infection Control (IC) Mock Survey Example (cont.)

- Speaking with staff in patient care areas
  - What kinds of infection control practices are you taught about?
  - Can you tell me what the center’s hand hygiene policy is?
Infection Control (IC) Mock Survey Example (cont.)

Speaking with staff in patient care areas

- How do you protect yourself and others from potential exposure to infectious patients and family members?
- What do you do when you suspect that a patient or family member at the center has an infectious condition?
# Mock Tracers for Ambulatory Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tracer Questions</th>
<th>Correct Process Observed</th>
<th>Areas of Concern</th>
<th>Follow-Up Needed</th>
<th>Required Written Documentation</th>
<th>Required?</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview Subject:</td>
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Questions
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