

Component 10 - Fundamentals of Workflow Analysis and Process Redesign

Unit 4-3 - Acquiring Clinical Process Knowledge

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Common Clinic Processes

- Patient check-in
- Patient visit
- Prescriptions
- Assimilating received documentation
- Labs
- Other Diagnostic Tests
- Referral / consult
- Disease Management
- Billing

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2

Identifying Practice Processes Example

- By Phone Appointment Scheduling
- New Patient Intake and Registration –
using paper chart
- Receiving and Communicating Lab
Results – using a paper chart
- Routine Prescription Re-fill – no EMR

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3

Identifying Practice Processes Example: Answers and Discussion

- Appointment Scheduling
- Patient check-in
- Patient visit
- Prescriptions
- Assimilating received documentation
- Labs

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4

For each process

- Process variations used by the clinic
- For each of these
 - Main Activities
 - Roles
 - Locations
 - Flow
 - Information Needs
 - Likely exceptions

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5

The act of acquiring the
knowledge is just as important
as the resulting diagrams.

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6

Where to get the information

- Process participants
- Facility procedure manual
- Information used and produced in the process

Process Participants

- Clinic providers and staff that take part in a process at a healthcare facility are a main source of knowledge about the processes.
- The process owner and individuals who perform the process are the most important.
- These are the individuals that you should observe or interview to acquire process knowledge.

Identifying Process Participants Example

Scenario: By Phone Appointment Scheduling

Patient Patty wakes up at 5:30 am for the third day in a row feeling awful, she has a roaring headache and a fever. She decides that it is time to see her primary care provider, Doctor Dan, at Suburban Family Clinic. She thinks they open at 8:00 am. She sets her alarm clock for 8:00 am and goes back to sleep.

At 8:00, she awakes and finds the office phone number. Receptionist Ronald answers. Patient Patty asks Receptionist Ronald for the soonest appointment with Doctor Dan. Receptionist Ronald states that 9:30 is the earliest. Patient Patty says that 9:30 is fine. Receptionist Ronald adds her to the schedule for 9:30.

Identifying Process Participants

Example: answers and discussion

Process participants:

- ✗ Patient Patty
- ✗ Doctor Dan
- ✓ Receptionist Ronald
- ✓ Receptionist Ronald's manager

How to get the information

- Observation
- Process walkthrough (I call this structured observation)
- Interviews
 - Structured *versus* unstructured
 - Group *versus* individuals
- Read documents

All of this means that you will need to ask questions

What Questions to Ask

"I keep six honest serving men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who."

– Rudyard Kipling

The First Questions

Should concentrate on getting the list of core processes that a clinic performs, and which ones are:

- Critical to patient care
- High volume
- Could be greatly improved by Health IT

Ask the questions that help you complete the Context Diagram

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13

For Each Process, the Analyst Needs to Know:

Who (what role) performs the process

What the steps of the process are, what exceptions occur, what information is needed for each step

When the process starts

Where the steps take place

How each step of the process is performed and in what order things happen

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14

Knowledge Acquisition Plan

Visit 1 with Practice Manager

1. Complete mission/vision
2. Create clinic context diagram
3. Start process Inventory

Visit 2, process owners & participants

1. List of processes to walkthrough
2. List of process participants / roles to observe and/or question
3. List of questions for each participant/role

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15

Initiating a Relationship with a Clinic

- Obtain from your employer a scope of work
- First meeting:
 - Review your scope of work
 - What you will do
 - What you need for clinic to do
 - How long it will take
 - Review what to expect
 - Go over your knowledge acquisition plan
- Provide an agenda in advance of initial meeting
- Use plain language

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16

Anticipated Barriers to Your Acquiring Knowledge

- Concern about change
- Clinic time and resource constraints
- Your time and resource constraints
- Lack of computer literacy

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17

Meeting Summary Report

- After meeting with a clinic you will likely need to provide a report to document your work to date: Knowledge Acquisition report
- Should Contain:
 - Information about the meeting
 - Context diagram
 - Process Inventory
 - Process diagrams

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18

Summary

In unit 4-3, we have covered the following:

- Creating a process inventory
- Identifying process participants
- Different methods of obtaining information
- Creating questions for knowledge acquisition visits
- Creating a knowledge acquisition plan
- Initiating a relationship with a clinic
- Barriers to knowledge acquisition
- Meeting Summary Report

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19

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20
