

PDSA Cycle 1

Aim: what are you trying to accomplish?

To improve identification of the treating team and recall the name(s) of doctors to 80%, within one week of admission.

Plan: what will your test be?

Distribute ID cards to patients during their first encounter with the consultant-led ward round on the respiratory ward. ID cards list the named consultant and treating medical/surgical team. Survey patients at the end of the day to assess if they can recall the named consultant and/or any member of the treating team. Repeat the survey following 5 days on the ward to assess if this information was retained long term. A parallel cycle will be performed on the vascular consultant-led ward round as well.

Prediction: what do you think will happen as a result of your test?

As patients will have the use of a simple memory aide, recall of the named consultant and/or member of the treating team will improve on both respiratory and vascular wards.

Do: what happened when you carried out your test?

Respiratory ward: Improved short-term recall and awareness of doctor's names was clearly evident (Figures 1 & 2, cycle 1). Patients however could still not retain this information after a few days spent on the ward as ID cards were found to be too small and often went missing.

Vascular ward: A dramatic improvement in patient recall was observed as predicted (Figure 3).

Study: how did the results of your test compare with predictions?

Respiratory ward: Firstly, the initial results of short-term recall improved as we predicted, albeit not as high as 80% (Figures 1 & 2, cycle 1, Wednesday). Secondly, the initial improvement was not sustained and the results of long-term recall declined, which was the opposite of what we predicted. (Figures 1 & 2, cycle 1, Monday).

Vascular ward: A dramatic improvement in patient recall was observed as predicted, likely due to pre-operative introductions to the treating team in most of the surgical population. These patients were often discharged soon after their procedures therefore long-term recall was not possible to assess.

Act: how will you change your previous test in light of what you have learned?

We discovered that patients with poor recall were either losing the ID cards initially distributed, they were being damaged or in fact they were just too small. ID cards were then re-fashioned to have a larger font and to be permanently fixed to the bedside in protective plastic sheets.

PDSA Cycle 2

Aim: what are you trying to accomplish?

To improve identification of the treating team and recall the name(s) of doctors to 80%, within one week of admission. To improve both short- and long-term recall of the above.

Plan: what will your test be?

Distribute larger ID cards to patients during their first encounter with the consultant-led ward round on the respiratory ward. Cards were placed in protective plastic sheets and fastened to bedside tables. As before, ID cards list the named consultant and treating medical/surgical team. Survey patients at the end of the day to assess if they can recall the named consultant and/or any member of the treating team. Repeat the survey following 5 days on the ward to assess if this information was retained long term.

Prediction: what do you think will happen as a result of your test?

As patients will have the use of a simple, now larger, more durable and permanently fixed memory aide, short- and long-term recall of the named consultant and/or member of the treating team will improve.

Do: what happened when you carried out your test?

Respiratory ward: Improved short- and long-term recall of the named consultant and/or single member of the treating team was demonstrated (Figures 1 & 2, cycle 2, Wednesday and Monday).

Study: how did the results of your test compare with predictions?

Respiratory ward: Short-term recall improved as we predicted, again however not as high as we initially predicted. However, this information was clearly retained following 5 days on the ward, as recall remained stable, and in fact improved to our target aim of > 80% for the named consultant.

Act: how will you change your previous test in light of what you have learned?

Further cycles can be performed to determine if a more durable and/or permanent ID card will be of even greater benefit. However, this current format clearly leads to a more sustainable means of retaining information.