

Hospital strives for transformational improvement*

Client's challenge

A healthcare provider embarked on a bold strategy to move into *US News and World Report's* ranking of the top 20 hospitals in its specialty class by 2010 and top 10 by 2020. With the endorsement of the board of trustees and chief executive officer, the organization articulated a plan to bring together the best people, ideas, and technology, following the fundamental belief that patients deserve the highest standard of care and service. The transformational plan identified two primary, related goals:

- To launch a multi-year, enterprise-wide process-improvement (PI) program
- To implement an integrated suite of clinical, administrative, and financial IT applications across the organization

Hospital leadership adopted the Institute of Medicine's six quality aims for patient care—safe, effective, efficient, timely, patient-centered, and equitable—as a common framework and narrative for defining quality and PI across the organization.

PricewaterhouseCoopers' Advisory solution

The client tapped PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) for advice on governance design and organizational structure for the transformation. In addition to providing program- and project-management assistance, the firm contributed subject-matter insight in perioperative, emergency, and ambulatory services. Furthermore, the PwC team embedded sustainable change management into each initiative, emphasizing coaching, mentoring, and training of the people who would carry out and sustain the transformation.

The client turned to PwC to execute a comprehensive effort to identify, organize, and prioritize PI opportunities. PwC and an internal PI steering committee selected four hospital services with the highest probability of immediate positive impact on clinical quality and most benefit to patients and families:

- Perioperative
- Emergency
- Ambulatory
- Inpatient

The committee's overarching goal was to improve access and throughput for each service.

Realizing it could not achieve quality and efficiency goals without an integrated IT system, the hospital brought IT under the transformational umbrella. This approach infused a PI mind-set into the enterprise application teams and a technology-enablement mind-set into the PI teams. Clinical, operations, and IT staff collaborated in the change effort. This integrated organizational approach enabled significant improvement in stakeholder ownership, communication, and education among teams and within the organization.

Hospital clinicians contributed valuable subject-matter knowledge and insight into the transformational efforts. They established priorities and contributed thought leadership. Clinicians also served as change agents to communicate, monitor progress, and gain additional peer involvement.

Impact on client's business

Launching the transformation propelled the organization forward and taught it some valuable lessons to further its high-performance mission:

- Align the executive team and key physician leaders before rolling change initiatives out to the organization.
- Define a common PI language and framework to apply broadly across initiatives and embody the technology enablement element.
- Create uniform messaging from the top of the organization.
- Integrate PI and IT governance and team structure to enhance the probability of achieving desired business and clinical benefits.
- Make IT a part of PI efforts to improve stakeholder involvement, ownership, and accountability.
- Integrate PI and IT initiatives through tight alignment and collaboration between the CIO and quality and PI executives.

Eighteen months into the long-range initiative, the hospital finds itself near the top 20 in the *US News and World Report* rankings. More importantly, the hospital has improved the quality of care and service for its patients and families. It has realized significant quantitative improvements in perioperative, emergency, and ambulatory services. The client also has progressed in creating a culture of transformation that should sustain its quality effort in years to come.

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