

## Using this Guide: *Steps on a Journey*

By choosing to read this guide, you have embarked on a journey that requires you to ask key questions about your health care institution with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of end of life care provided to patients and their families. This Resource Guide will lead you through a model for improvement based on three steps: 1) conduct an audit, 2) engage stakeholders and define a goal, and 3) develop interventions for change and measure change.

**STEP I** asks you and your colleagues to identify opportunities for improvement in the quality of your institution's current end of life care. Identifying opportunities to improve requires that you conduct an audit of the care delivered. This Resource Guide takes you through the process of conducting this audit, from choosing an instrument to analyzing the data gathered.

**STEP II** involves presenting the information you obtain from the audit in an actionable manner. That is, the task of this step is to communicate the results of the audit in a way that both engages key players in your institution and facilitates the definition of a shared goal to address the results of the audit. The results of the audit may be surprising to some of your colleagues. Some of the results may not be as favorable as you would like or expect. Often, your colleagues will not want to hear any "bad" news. It is essential that key players in your institution "get on board" and participate in addressing two fundamental guiding questions for improvement: What is our overall quality improvement goal? How will we know when we've achieved it?

**STEP III** employs Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycles to implement small interventions and measure improvement. Your quality improvement team will base intervention decisions on three fundamental guiding questions for improvement: 1) What are we trying to accomplish with this intervention? 2) What change can we make that will result in improvement? 3) How will we know that a change is an improvement? These small interventions work together toward reaching the overall quality improvement goal.

*Conduct an audit.*



*Engage stakeholders & define a goal.*



*Develop interventions and measure change.*



*Visual depiction of quality improvement model*



## Organization of this Guide

[Chapter 1](#) provides background information about the Toolkit Project. [Chapter 2](#) discusses patient focused, family centered medical care and the Toolkit instruments' methods for measuring it.

[Chapter 3](#) leads you through the steps for conducting an audit, including choosing a survey tool, selecting a sample, making initial contact, informing & protecting respondents, and training the interviewers. [Chapter 4](#) covers issues involved in preparing and analyzing the information you collect.

[Chapter 5](#) offers suggestions for presenting your results in a format that is actionable, i.e. engaging key players with the quality improvement model and specifying an overall improvement goal.

[Chapter 6](#) accomplishes two tasks. First, it introduces quality improvement tools that will help you develop small interventions and measure change. Specifically, it explores PDCA cycles, process flow charts, and Ishikawa diagrams. Second, Chapter 6 addresses issues specific to the domain of physical comfort (pain and dyspnea), particularly in the context of how to implement the quality improvement model and use the quality improvement tools.

The remaining chapters follow the format of Chapter 6 by discussing issues specific to three other domains of care: shared decision-making ([Chapter 7](#)), informing and educating to promote self-efficacy ([Chapter 8](#)), and attending to the emotional and spiritual needs of the patient and family ([Chapter 9](#)).

Chapters 6-9 are organized around key items that provide necessary information for implementing the improvement model. These items are:

- Step I** questions the audit instrument asks in this domain;
- Step II**
  - the importance of this domain of care,
  - expert advice on this domain of care,
  - the basics about quality care in this domain;
- Step III** the kinds of interventions that are appropriate and measurable for this domain.



*Background Information*



**STEP I**



**STEP II**



**STEP III**

*Specific Domains of Care*

*Domain-specific key items for the improvement model steps*