

Team Huddles: Keys to Successful Implementation

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Team huddles are brief, structured meetings designed to foster communication among members of a health care team, manage planning and coordination, and improve clinical workflows. They also offer unique opportunities to address patient needs, such as timely follow-up for patients with chronic diseases like **hypertension** and **diabetes**. Although huddles help teams communicate and provide team-based care, implementing them can be challenging. The following strategies can guide health care teams in implementing successful huddles.

Keys to Success

Value: The benefits of huddles must be clearly understood for teams to put in the additional work. Benefits of huddles include opportunities for better communication and planning, such as patient access, patient encounters, staffing, and challenges that might arise during a busy day.



Time: Quality improvement efforts such as huddles must accommodate current workloads and schedules.¹ Teams should determine huddle timing and duration that accomplish team goals without disrupting the day's work.



Buy-in: Huddles should be designed by those who will participate in them.² Primary care providers were both least likely to huddle and most likely to influence huddling practices of other team members.³ Therefore, huddles will be most successful if the providers' huddle preferences are taken into account. Team members participating in huddles reported better practice climate and work satisfaction than their counterparts who did not attend huddles.²



Implementation strategy: Huddles require preparation and leadership to share pertinent information efficiently. For example, administrative staff may review the day's schedule and report on limited available appointments, while a provider may anticipate patient needs and expectations to maximize use of available schedule slots and alternative patient interactions such as virtual visits or phone calls. During the huddle, a designated leader focuses the discussion on the day's work and encourages input from all team members to promote consistency and improve the team's culture.⁴



For more information, access Cardi-OH's expanded resource on **Utilizing Huddles to Improve Team-Based Care**

REFERENCES

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