Enhancing the Mortality Review Process and Leveraging Technology to Do It

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Introduction

Research indicates medical errors as the third leading cause of deaths, with national estimates suggesting that 14-56% of inpatient deaths are preventable. To address this issue, the mortality review process was designed to be the driving force in identifying opportunities and driving improvement in systems, processes, and outcomes. By adopting a multidisciplinary approach, establishing a standardized review process, organizing a formal review committee, and leveraging technology, we have successfully boosted clinician responses to mortality queries, pinpoint areas of focus for improvement, reduce our observed-to-expected (O/E) ratio, and reduce the number of decedents falling below the Vizient threshold.

Measurement

In this process, the O/E (Observed/Expected) Ratio and Vizient Threshold data source was employed, ensuring accuracy and alignment with industry benchmarks. The team, in pursuit of continuous improvement, utilizes a diverse set of tools such as run charts and fishbone diagrams to analyze trends and develop meaningful process improvement solutions.

Methodology and Analysis

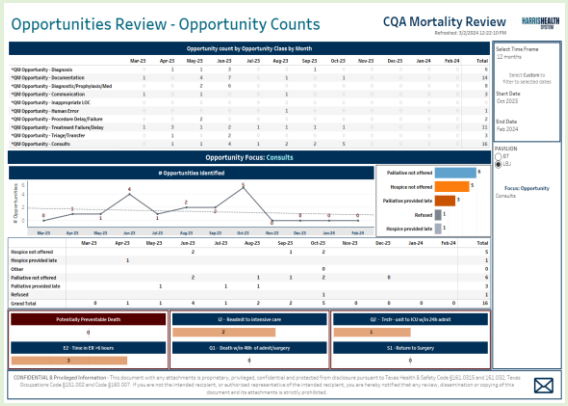
The multidisciplinary team undertook a comprehensive root cause analysis, the outcomes of which were systematically organized into a fishbone diagram to focus on key challenges.

- Low response rate with clinician completing reviews
- Difficulty in capturing opportunities and identify trends with paper process
- No visualization of data to identify trends to drive significant improvement

One of the prominent findings was the necessity to harness technology to enhance our ability to visualize trends. Initial processes were entirely manual, limiting our capacity to fully extract insights from the wealth of information identified during reviews.

Implementation

An electronic review tool facilitated a standardized review process ensuring that all pertinent data was captured. The information derived from the electronic review tool was aggregated into a dynamic dashboard, enabling visualization of opportunities with quality of care and documentation concerns as well as highlight response rate across the organization.

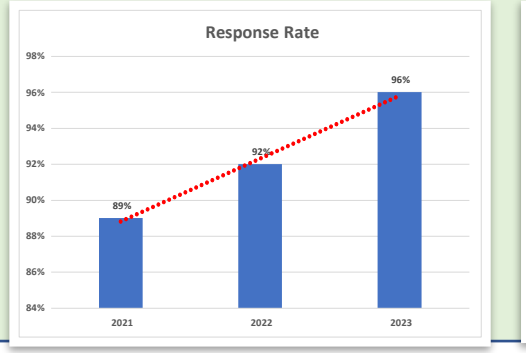


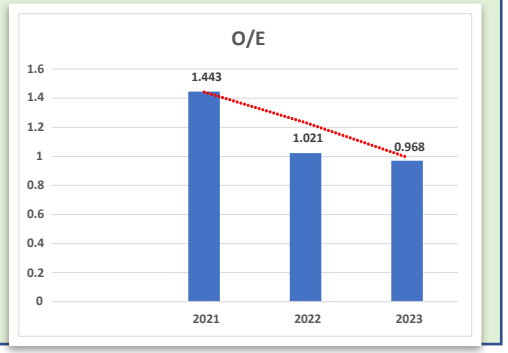
Results

The commitment to continuous improvement, increased engagement, and robust reporting has yielded significant advancements in our mortality review process.

Keys to success:

- Implement a multidisciplinary approach to address gaps in systems and process to improve outcomes
- Use data to identify trends by leveraging technology to create robust dashboard visualizations
- Utilize a standardized tool to guide reviews





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