Implementing Quality Improvement to Meet the Joint Commission's Requirements for Health Equity

Presenters: Dr. Salman Ashraf, Dr. Nada Fadul, Dr. Erica Stohs, and Jeff Wetherhold

Project ECHO®

UNMC

Objectives

1. Review the Joint Commission's Health Equity requirements for health care organizations (effective July 1, 2023)

2. Discuss examples of quality improvement (QI) projects which align with the Joint Commission's requirements

3. Recognize the ways in which different roles can contribute to QI projects to promote health equity

Review of Phase 1

Presenter: Dr. Salman Ashraf

UNMC ID Health Equity and Quality Improvement Project ECHO Objectives

By the end of Phase 1, participants will be able to:

- Explain the relationship of principles of health equity, cultural sensitivity, infection prevention and control, and quality management.

- Develop the skill set to address COVID-19-related health disparities and provide quality healthcare with a culturally sensitive, equity-minded approach.

- Implement a quality improvement project that addresses a need at the facility level related to health disparity or cultural sensitivity.

Phase 1 Project Overview

COVID-19 Response/Infection Control/Long COVID Module

Health Equity Module

Quality Improvement Module

Cultural Sensitivity Module

Project Vision

To eliminate health disparities and improve the wellbeing of all Nebraskans

Project Mission

To implement state-wide, cutting-edge quality improvement programs with the support of tele-mentorship and coaching from highly-qualified subject matter experts
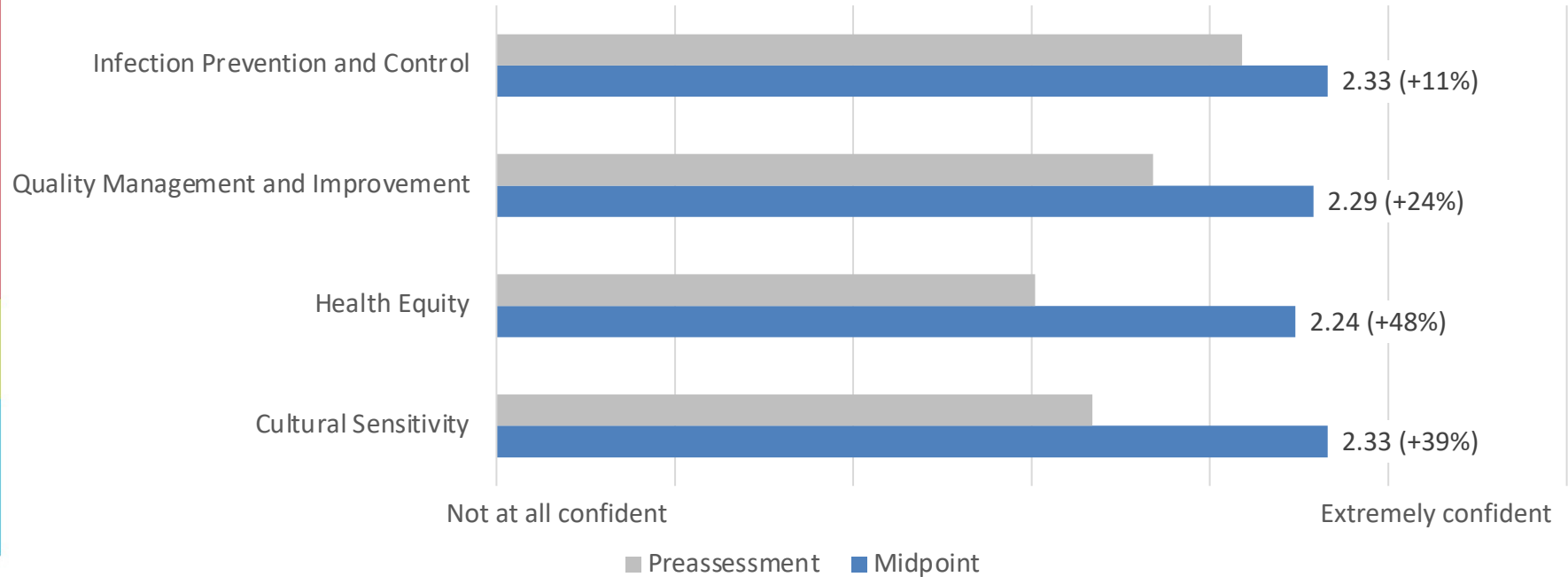
Phase 1 Sessions

- 38 sessions convened from November 2021 - May 2023

- Each 90-minute session included:
  - 1-2 didactics, each focused on a content module
  - 1 case study or discussion to connect content modules

- Recordings of all sessions are available

- Priority sessions will be shared in our follow-up

Overall, how confident are you in the training you have received in the following topics?

- Infection Prevention and Control — 2.33 (+11%)
- Quality Management and Improvement — 2.29 (+24%)
- Health Equity — 2.24 (+48%)
- Cultural Sensitivity — 2.33 (+39%)

Not at all confident — Extremely confident

■ Preassessment ■ Midpoint

Introduction to Phase 2

Presenter: Dr. Erica Stohs and Jeff Wetherhold

Phase 2 at a Glance

June 2023 - May 2024

- Focus on applying QI tools to improve health equity in alignment with new Joint Commission requirements

- Monthly 60-minute sessions every 3rd Wednesday at 12:00 pm CT

- Opportunity for additional/continued QI coaching and funding

- Open to continuing and new participants in Nebraska

Phase 2 Sessions

- 12 sessions scheduled from June 2023 - May 2024

- Each 60-minute session includes:
  - A didactic focused on applying simple QI tools with input from Phase 1 participants and guest presenters
  - An extended case discussion focused on addressing health inequities and improving cultural sensitivity with these tools

- Recordings will be available for <u>didactics only</u>

How is QI integrated in this ECHO?

We will use case-based, interactive sessions to:

- Define the problem
- Identify areas for improvement
- Explicitly state goals
- Identify measures of progress
- Create improvements
- Build upon successes
- Sustain reliable processes over time

QI Coaching for New Projects

1. **Coaching:** New participants are eligible to receive quality improvement coaching up to 1 session/month to:

    1. Brainstorm ideas for a project

    2. Choose a relevant topic from among multiple ideas

    3. Design a project eligible or approval

    4. Implement an approved QI project

2. **Reimbursement:** All participants eligible for expense reimbursement up to $2,000 related to an approved QI project in phase 2.

QI Coaching for Continued Projects

1. **Coaching:** Continuing participants are eligible to receive quality improvement coaching up to 1 session/month to:

    1. Continue with implementing their phase 1 project by spreading to additional settings or scaling across settings

    2. Refine and implement new topic as an approved QI project

2. **Reimbursement:** All participants eligible for expense reimbursement up to $2,000 related to an approved QI project in phase 2.

Project Certificates

Participants who complete all requirements will receive a 'Health Equity and Quality Improvement Champion' certificate by the end of the project.

Requirements:

- Submit a QI project proposal and receive approval
- Complete attendance surveys for 70% of sessions
- View recordings and let us know if you make up a session

Joint Commission Updates

Presenter: Dr. Nada Fadul

Checking in

Poll #1: Had you heard about the new Joint Commission Requirements related to health equity prior to this call?

Elevation of Health Care Equity Standard to a National Patient Safety Goal

- **Effective July 1, 2023**, Leadership Standard will be elevated to a new National Patient Safety Goal **NPSG.16.10.01** for ambulatory care organizations, behavioral health care and human services organizations, critical access hospitals, and hospitals.

- To increase the focus on improving health care equity versus reducing health care disparities.

- Organizations will still be required to implement the following six elements of performance (EPs) as risk areas :

    1. Identify an individual to lead activities to improve health care equity.
    2. Assess patients' health-related social needs.
    3. Analyze quality and safety data to identify disparities.
    4. Develop an action plan to improve health care equity.
    5. Act when the organization does not meet the goals in its action plan.
    6. Inform key stakeholders about progress to improve health care equity

EP1

- Requirement: Designate individual(s) to lead activities to improve health care equity for the organization's patients.

- Note: Leading activities to reduce health care disparities may be an individual's primary role or part of a broader set of responsibilities.

- Roles:
  - Executives
  - Health Equity Leads
  - Front-line Staff

Checking in

Poll #2: Which of these best describes your role in relation to <u>health equity</u>?

EP2

- Requirement: Assesses patients' health-related social needs and provide information about community resources and support services.

- Note: Determine which health-related social needs to include in the assessment. Examples include:
  - Access to transportation
  - Difficulty paying for prescriptions or medical bills
  - Education and literacy
  - Food insecurity
  - Housing insecurity

- Note: Health-related social needs may be identified for a representative sample of patients or all patients.

EP3

- Requirement: Identify health care disparities by stratifying quality and safety data using the sociodemographic characteristics of the organization's patient population.

- Note: May include focus on areas with known disparities identified in the scientific literature by facility type

- Note: Determine which sociodemographic characteristics to use for stratification analyses. Examples include:
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Preferred language
  - Race and ethnicity

EP4 - EP6

- **EP4 Requirement:** Develop a written action plan that describes how the organization will improve health care equity by addressing at least one of the health care disparities identified in its patient population.

- **EP5 Requirement:** Act when the organization does not achieve or sustain the goal(s) in its action plan to improve health care equity.

- **EP6 Requirement:** Inform key stakeholders, including leaders, licensed practitioners, and staff, about its progress to improve health care equity.

How can this ECHO help you?

- Session content from phases 1 and 2 is directly applicable to meeting the Joint Commission's requirements

- Phase 1 participants with QI projects are already positioned to meet these requirements

- Phase 2 participants can receive coaching support for QI projects to meet these requirements

What does QI mean to us?

"The best possible care"

- Optimizing the likelihood of desired health outcomes
    - Was the care delivered as good as it could be?
    - What improvement(s) would lead to better care?

- Systemic and continuous actions that lead to measurable improvements

Project: Local Health Dept

We are unable to determine the effectiveness and timeliness of COVID-19 information and resources provided to the Hispanic population during the pandemic response.

- **EP1:** Health equity lead engaged in project
- **EP2:** Health-related social needs identified through qualitative interviews
- **EP3:** Data from qualitative interviews and Community Health Needs Assessment used to identify disparities

Project: Ambulatory Facility

Our clinicians and support staff are not consistent in the terms they use in encounters with patients who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community.

- EP1: Health equity lead developed project

- EP2: Health-related social needs identified through engagement with patient councils

- EP3: Feedback from clinicians and staff used to identify disparities in treatment. Pre-survey developed to gather more data.

Project: Professional Society

Professionals and students feel that health equity and cultural sensitivity are important but report low levels of comfort and knowledge of these subjects when treating patients from marginalized and underserved populations.

- EP1: Health equity leads developed project

- EP2: Health-related social needs identified through surveys of professionals and students

- EP3: Additional data on specific disparities and areas of need gathered in broader survey of professionals and students.

What can you do this month?

Determine if you organization has:

- Designated a health equity lead?

- Communicated health equity goals?

- Identified health-related social needs to focus on?

Our Follow-up

You will receive:

- Today's presentation
- A one-pager with key-takeaways
- Relevant supporting resources
- Next session's agenda and information

Session 2: July 19

Getting Leadership Buy-in

1. Summarize strategies for engaging leadership in Quality Improvement projects
2. Demonstrate how the Joint Commission's requirements for health equity can inform conversations with leadership
3. Practice implementing strategies for engaging leadership in case discussion

Thank you!