

What Is An RCA?



People make errors, which lead to accidents. Accidents lead to deaths. The standard solution is to blame the people involved. If we find out who made the errors and punish them, we solve the problem, right



WRONG...the problem is seldom the fault of an individual; it is the fault of the system. Change the people without changing the system and the problems will continue.

**Dan Norman – The Design of Everyday Things
The Just Culture Community, National Patient Safety Foundation**



Root Cause Analysis (RCA)

- Process for identifying the basic or causal factors that underlie variation in performance, including the occurrence or possible occurrence of a sentinel event.
- A root cause is the most fundamental reason for the failure or inefficiency of a process.



Root Cause Analysis (RCA)

- Risk Management and other healthcare personnel use this analytical method to investigate (drill down into) serious incidents (including near misses) to identify the underlying causes and to guide solutions to address safety system failure



The Goal Of An RCA

- “What” happened?
- “Why” did it happen?
- “What” are we going to do to prevent it from happening again?
- “How” will we know that our actions improved patient safety?



These Goals Accomplish

- Decreases the chance it will happen again
- Team building and increased understanding of how other areas work
- Improved care and safety for our patients
- Safer hospitals and health care systems
- Better informed health care providers
- Improved patient and family satisfaction (includes increased HCAHPS scores)



Timelines Of An RCA

- The team should be convened as soon as possible
- The Texas Health and Safety Code – Section 241.203(b) has given a 45 day window to complete the RCA process, determine action items, implementation of action items, and to begin monitoring and reporting of action items



RCA Investigation Principles

- Focus on systems and processes, not individual performance
- Be fair, thorough and efficient
- Focus on problem solving
- Progresses from special causes in clinical processes to common causes in organizational processes



Attributes Of A RCA

- Thoroughness – a complete review of all possible causes is required
- Fairness – in terms of involvement of all staff associated with the incident
- Efficiency – time taken to undertake the investigation should be consistent with the significance of the problem being investigated



Steps In The RCA Process

1. Verify the occurrence
2. Prepare a timeline of events
3. Convene the RCA team
4. Identify Root Cause(s) – rarely only one
5. Identify Action Items (includes responsible person and timeframe to complete)
6. Identify Measures of Success for each Action Item



Desired RCA Outcome

- An action plan that identifies strategies the organization intends to implement to reduce the risk of similar events in the future.

Success

The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it is the same problem you had last year

**John Foster Dulles
Secretary of State under Dwight D. Eisenhower**





RCA Participation Expectations for Fellows/Residents

What an opportunity! – this is
your time to make a
difference and impact quality
improvement and patient
safety



Participation Expectations

- You may be asked to participate in an RCA (you may or may not have been involved in the alleged event)
 - When asked say “Yes”
 - Be on time and attend all meetings
- Participate – Participate – Participate
 - Be an active member of the RCA team
 - Have open and honest conversations
 - Actively seek the root cause or causes of the event
 - Suggest action items for improvement and assist as applicable to implement
 - Complete an evaluation of the RCA process (will be turned into the GME office)



Participation Expectations

- Be Considerate
 - Team members who were involved in the patients care are likely to be sensitive – please be considerate and fair
- Don'ts
 - Point fingers
 - An RCA is confidential and privileged information. Do not discuss the RCA outside of the meeting or with persons not on the RCA team



Meeting Rules To Live By...

- Be a team player. Respect each other's ideas
- Information discussed will remain confidential (as necessary)
- Accept personal responsibility for team outcomes
- Attendance
- Everyone is expected to participate and to respect and support the right to be heard



Meeting Rules To Live By...

- Will be supportive and not judgmental
- Different opinions are welcome
- Limit side conversations – if you have a question ask the leader
- Job titles are left at the door
- No finger pointing – address the process not the individual
- Expect to change your own mind, but don't expect to change another's mind



**Commitment is
demonstrated when
members understand
and accept
responsibilities and
tasks are achieved**



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