

3sHealth IT Processes Improved

For new employees, the first day on the job is exciting and a little nerve-wracking too. But having the right hardware and software in place can help take away some of that stress. Ensuring employees are able to start using that technology right away is also important. That's one of the reasons why a number of representatives from 3sHealth, the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and John Black and Associates came together the week of October 28 to November 1 to conduct a rapid process improvement workshop (RPIW). The goal of the workshop was to identify ways of decreasing the lead time in the deployment of new personal computers (PCs) at 3sHealth. Deployment is about getting PCs configured with the right software to meet the needs of users and the timely installation of those PCs at workstations.



The RPIW also focused on the deployment of new PCs to replace existing technology in a process known as “evergreening.” At 3sHealth, computers are replaced every three years due to the expiry of existing warranties and the emergence of newer technologies. Currently, we have a 17-month backlog on the schedule to refresh existing computers and one-third of our computers will come due for evergreening by the end of the current calendar year.

So what did RPIW participants achieve?

Throughout the week-long session, participants considered the current state of PC deployments and generated many new ideas on how to improve processes in the near-term (through the establishment of standard work and other changes) all with the needs of end users in mind.

Outcomes of the session include the creation of:

- Division-specific profiles to facilitate deployment, thereby eliminating two of the five steps from the current state value stream map;
- A PC orientation sheet for new deployments; Petra Onaiyaken, a new employee at 3sHealth told participants, “If this form had been in place when I started, it would have made my day much simpler!”
- A new RFP process for the purchase of CPU hardware to eliminate batching and inventory on-hand by 80 per cent;
- A new schedule to successfully address the current backlog of evergreen deployments;
- A kanban system to better manage IT resources; and
- Lots of standard work, like a new computer deployment request form for hiring managers that will greatly reduce set up time going forward (from 13 hours currently to a little more than four minutes).

“These outcomes have completely exceeded my expectations,” said Kendell Arndt, Vice-President, Strategic Information and Corporate Services and one of the co-sponsors of the event.

President and CEO Andrew Will added, “These kinds of exercises are all about how we can continually improve our processes and that’s exactly what was done this week. These are great results. Thank you to everyone who was involved for all your hard work.”

Next steps

The solutions that were generated will now be trialed within the organization. Later, at the 30-day, 60-day and 180-day mark, these solutions will be audited to determine their efficacy.