

*December 1, 2014*

## **Creating winning conditions for successful product conversions**

On Friday, November 21 members of the Materials Management Committee, the Clinical Advisory Committee, 3sHealth, and other healthcare system stakeholders gathered in Regina for a one-day kaizen event. The goal of participants was to identify the main issues that stand in the way of successful product conversions. After a lot of great discussions, participants had identified by the end of the day four key areas in need of improvement: enhancing stakeholder engagement, improving product conversions at the region level, establishing provincial criteria and priorities, and building better relationships with vendors. “It was great to see all the regions working together,” said Angela Frey, clinical advisor from Sun Country Health Region. “It’s the first event of its kind that I’ve attended and it was an awesome day!”



*Suzanne Boudreau-Exner, director of materials management at 3sHealth, talks to the group about the current state of the product conversion process.*

As part of the day’s events, the large group broke into four small teams. Each team discussed one of the areas of improvement. At the end of the day, a report-out was held. Each team presented its plan to implement the good ideas they had developed throughout the day. As well, owners were assigned to the various tasks. Participants will have regular touch points over the next 12 months to ensure progress is occurring and that continuous improvement opportunities are being identified and implemented, where possible.

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***Other provincial work also underway***

This event hasn't been the only thing happening as of late to improve the product conversion process.

A rapid process improvement workshop was held in Regina earlier this year. Its aim was to improve quality and reduce lead time in the conversion process by 30 per cent. Participants at that event identified and put in place a number of improvements, including a new visibility wall to help with conversions, and track and manage issues. The Saskatoon Health Region (SHR) has since agreed to be the first test site outside of RQHR to try replicating many of those improvement opportunities. That work will get underway in January 2015 after SHR visits RQHR in December to see Regina's visibility wall and other improvements that have been made.

"SHR is thrilled to be the first test site to continue the great work that RQHR has done," said Kara Côté, manager of materials management in Saskatoon. "When a contract conversion occurs, it has the capacity to affect many departments and possibly the whole region. Any small improvements as well as standardization will lead to increased efficiencies and productivity which can be shared with the entire province."

Rhonda Goodtrack, clinical advisor at 3sHealth, participated in the November 21 event alongside Côté and echoed Côté's comments. "Sharing and creating standard work for the product conversion process results in the continuity we are striving for provincially. The event we just had, as well as the RPIW in Regina Qu'Appelle, not to mention the replication that will soon get underway in Saskatoon, will no doubt help get us to where we want to go."