

Creating a better information return process for our customers

Oh, what a difference a week can make.

Just ask representatives from 3sHealth and the Regina Work Preparation Centre who took part in a rapid process improvement workshop March 23 to 27. Their goal was to make an annual information exchange process simpler, defect-free, and more efficient. The results were dramatic and better than anyone had expected.

What was the process like?

Each year, 3sHealth's Employee Benefits department prepares and distributes a member's annual statement to 42,000 health region and cancer agency employees to provide them with information on their eligible benefits.



3sHealth also distributes annual statements to 2,400 employees at 52 separate organizations that do not receive payroll services from us. Since these organizations are not part of our payroll system, they need to supply us with information about their employees in a yearly process called the Annual Information Return (AIR).

This process was labour-intensive and time-consuming for both 3sHealth and our customers.

What improvements were made?

The team:

- Developed a program to replace 82 per cent of manual data entry (nine hours prior to the improvement down to two hours post-improvement);
- Developed an Excel macro to eliminate cutting and pasting;
- Made changes to a template to simplify data collection; and
- Created standard work for the entire process.

“The workshop was very productive,” said Amanda Reimer, senior benefits officer at 3sHealth. “It’s going to eliminate many hours of work from our process. It will streamline the process for our customers. It will also contribute to a more accurate and timely calculation of insurance volumes and premium remittances. This will realize a cost saving for both 3sHealth, and our customers and ultimately our plan members.”

“I’m really impressed with the workshop and I plan on taking the process back to my work at Regina Work Preparation Centre,” said workshop participant Debbie Deausy. “I think it’s



invaluable to a business to have things streamlined and cost effective.

“The way it will be done now, I can see how it’s going to be beneficial for everybody.”

Overall, the team reduced the amount of time spent on the process by 63 per cent and increased productivity from 68 to 165 per cent.

The team also used the event to do the actual data collection work for 2015. Going forward, the data collection process will now be done quarterly to keep information current throughout the year.