

September 25, 2015

Provincial reps improving product issue resolution process

Medical products must never pose a patient safety concern. Once an issue is found, it needs to be addressed in a timely and effective manner. Clinicians work hard every day to identify and report potential product issues, including defects (which are rare).

Since 2012, healthcare system partners including the regional health authorities, the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and 3sHealth have been working with clinicians to better enable them in this work. These organizations all share a commitment to improve how product issues are identified and resolved at the provincial rather than local level. This is significant as many of the same products are used by clinicians across the province. It's all about minimizing the potential for harm.

On September 9 and 10, a cross-functional team came together to develop and implement standard work for product issue identification, prioritization and planning, and communication as part of ongoing work to create a consistent provincial process for product issue resolutions. The team was composed of supply chain, clinical and provincial contracting staff from the health regions, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and 3sHealth.



“We had the right people in the room and together we got the results we needed in a short amount of time,” said Val Klassen, director of supply chain at 3sHealth. “I couldn’t be happier with how things went and the direction we’re heading.”

When asked about the most valuable part of the event, one participant said there was “power in numbers and good collaboration between regions and 3sHealth.”

Pictured (L-R): Angela Frey (from Sun Country), Bruce Hardy (from RQHR), Linda McCann (from RQHR), and Jennifer Diemert (from Sun Country)

Another participant said the best part was “outlining specific processes for product issues and backorders.”

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By the end of the event, the team had successfully created a provincial product issue log, a backorder and product substitution log, and various work standards to communicate and educate other users on how to use the logs the team established. Training on the new logs and the use of standard work will occur on October 21 and 22 at a joint meeting of the provincial materials management committee and the provincial clinical advisory committee.

RQHR will now begin trialing a product issue form developed during a previous kaizen event; that form will then be rolled out to the Sun Country Health Region for further testing and replication.