Quality and Safety Series

Action Hierarchy
OBJECTIVES

• Describe an action hierarchy.
• Discuss the use of an action hierarchy.
• Explore how to complete an action hierarchy.
Where to Begin—Identify the Problem

• Start with other tools to identify the problem.
  – Root cause analysis
  – Fishbone diagram
  – Five whys

• Use correlative data and information as the foundation to build your problem statement.

• Identify interventions or corrective actions.

Templates available at: hsag.com/hqic/quality-series
What’s Next?

Quality Improvement = Action

- Goes beyond identifying a problem
- Use tools to identify appropriate actions and interventions
  - Critical to Quality Tree
  - Driver diagrams
  - Future-state mapping

Templates available at: hsag.com/hqic/quality-series
Tools to Prioritize Actions and Interventions

Prioritization Matrix

FMEA*

*Failure Mode and Effects Analysis

h sag.com/hqic/quality-series
New Tool: Action Hierarchy

- Designed by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)
- Part of the RCA² approach
  - Root cause analysis and actions

### Template: Action Hierarchy Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Hierarchy</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Actions</strong></td>
<td><img src="http://www.ihi.org/resources/Pages/Tools/RCA2-Improving-Root-Cause-Analyses-and-Actions-to-Prevent-Harm.aspx" alt="Diagram" /></td>
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### Levels:
- **Level I**: Stronger Actions (Less reliance on humans)
- **Level II**: Intermediate Actions
- **Level III**: Weaker Actions (More reliance on humans)
Action Hierarchy: Level I

Level I: Stronger Actions (Less reliance on humans)

Level II: Intermediate Actions

Level III: Weaker Actions (More reliance on humans)
Level I: Strong Actions

- Each root cause should have **at least 1 strong action**.
- Is **not** human dependent.
- Think physical and engineered changes.
Action Hierarchy: Level II

Level I → Stronger Actions (Less reliance on humans)

Level II → Intermediate Actions

Level III → Weaker Actions (More reliance on humans)
Level II: Intermediate Actions

- Each root cause should have at least 1 intermediate action.
- Is partially human dependent.
- Think electronic health record (EHR) alerts and checklists.
Action Hierarchy: Level III

Level I: Stronger Actions
(Less reliance on humans)

Level II: Intermediate Actions

Level III: Weaker Actions
(More reliance on humans)
Level III: Weaker Actions

- Is **reliant** on humans and human memory.
- Weaker actions may have to precede intermediate and strong actions—education and training.
- Think training, education, policies.

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<tr>
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<td>Double checks</td>
<td>One person calculates dosage, another person reviews their calculation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warnings</td>
<td>Add audible alarms or caution labels.</td>
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<tr>
<td>New procedure/memorandum/policy</td>
<td>Remember to check IV sites every 2 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Demonstrate correct usage of hard-to-use medical equipment.</td>
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Common but Weak Actions

- Education
- E-learning
- Training

- Skills labs
- Policies
- Posters
Problem: Increase in falls
Root Cause: Falls occurred during transfers with one person assisting
Corrective Action: Implement standardized transfer protocol

Strong Actions
- Gait Belt
- Standard falls assessment
- Two-person transfer for high risk

Intermediate Actions
- Standard falls bracelet
- EHR Falls Risk Alerts

Weaker Actions
- New Policy
- Education and Training
- Bed Alarms
Key Take-Aways

- **Quality Improvement = Action**
- Problem Statement → Root Cause → Actions
- The Action Hierarchy is a tool to prioritize actions.
- Part of the IHI RCA² strategy.
- There are 3 action levels:
  - Strong actions (less reliance on humans)
  - Intermediate actions
  - Weaker actions (more reliance on humans)
- Training and education is a weak action.
Thank you!

Questions: hospitalquality@hsag.com