

# Improvement Boards

## What are Improvement Boards and how can they help you?

*Improvement Boards* are a tool to visually represent progress on improvement projects. They can be used by staff at all levels, especially front line staff, to continuously identify problems, generate solutions, track progress, and celebrate successes. They help staff organize improvement ideas and take ownership over implementing solutions.

## Improvement Boards:

- Provide a visual tool to organize ideas for quality improvement efforts
- Support staff to identify problems and generate solutions
- Can help facilitate staff ownership and accountability for implementing changes

## How to use this tool: (refer to worksheets on pages 3-4)

### SUPPLIES NEEDED

Flip chart paper



Adhesive sticky notes



Markers



### GENERATE IMPROVEMENT IDEAS

1. Convene staff who play a role in the change initiative or problem area you wish to improve.
2. Ask each staff member to fill out the *Improvement Opportunity Idea Worksheet*.
3. As a team, review and discuss the problems and potential solutions generated by each staff member. Assess ideas for feasibility, ease of implementation, and relevance/impact. Eliminate solutions as needed.

### DEVELOP THE IMPROVEMENT BOARD

4. Create an *Improvement Board* using a flip chart or whiteboard labeled with the headings **Ideas**, **Launched**, **Progress/Benefits**, **Successes**, and **Parking Lot** (see example on page 3). Display the *Improvement Board* on a wall in a convenient location in your work setting.
5. Write the ideas/solutions generated in Step 2 on sticky notes and place these under the **Ideas** section.
6. As a team, discuss the proposed ideas and identify which ones should be implemented first.
7. Move the sticky notes for the ideas your team has committed to implement to the **Launched** section.
8. Consider using the [Prioritization Matrix](#) to determine which ideas to implement if your team has difficulty agreeing on which ideas are most important to launch.
9. Identify the point person (or “owner”) for implementing each solution.
10. Write down next steps on the *Improvement Opportunity Idea Worksheet* and agree on who is responsible and deadlines for when tasks should be completed.
11. Place any ideas that should be temporarily put on hold until you have additional information, or required approval, in the **Parking Lot**. Designate a team member to follow up and obtain additional guidance on these items. The team can then identify additional steps or make modifications to the implementation plan as necessary.

### USE IMPROVEMENT BOARD TO MONITOR PROGRESS

12. Use a [Quality Improvement](#) approach, such as the Model For Improvement or [Plan-Do-Study-Act](#) cycles, to implement improvement change ideas.
13. Meet regularly where the *Improvement Board* is displayed to track **Progress/Benefits** and **Successes** of ideas that have been completed and worked well.
14. Use the *Improvement Opportunity Idea* worksheet and the *Improvement Board* to continuously identify problems and implement solutions generated by the team.

#### References:

- Graban, M., & Swartz, J. E. (2012) *Healthcare Kaizen: Engaging Front-Line Staff in Sustainable Continuous Improvements*. Boca Raton: CRC Press. Retrieved from <https://www.hckaizen.com>
- Toussaint, J., and Berry, L. (2013) *The Promise of Lean in Health Care*. *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, 88(1).
- Lean Enterprise Institute. (2014) *Lean Lexicon 5th Edition*. Lean Enterprise Institute.

# Improvement Idea Opportunity Worksheet



<b>Brief Description of the Problem</b>	
<b>Suggestion/ Solution</b>	
<b>Action Owners/Next Steps</b>	
<b>Who</b>	
<b>What</b>	
<b>By When</b>	

# Improvement Board Example



**Example:** A grantee organization wants to improve its system for implementing and monitoring improvement initiatives at service sites in order to address problems commonly cited in their program reviews.

<b>IDEAS</b>	<b>LAUNCHED</b>	<b>SUCCESSSES</b>	<b>PROGRESS/BENEFITS</b>
<p>Create customized information packet for the service sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for each site.</li><li>• Create a timeline and a schedule for follow up with service sites.</li><li>• Have improvement team meet to triage the most important problems to address.</li></ul>	<p>Acknowledge and celebrate service sites that have implemented CAP items in the past month.</p>	<p>Post data on progress over time.</p>
<b>PARKING LOT</b>			
<p>Figure out what is needed to convene directors of service sites who have problems in common with meeting program requirements.</p>			

# Improvement Board Worksheet



Draw and label on a large flip chart or whiteboard in a convenient location in your work setting, or complete the *Improvement Board* virtually with your team.

IDEAS	LAUNCHED	SUCCESSES	PROGRESS/BENEFITS
<b>PARKING LOT</b>			

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