

Reframing Hospital Accreditation as a Catalyst for Improving Reliability and Engagement

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BACKGROUND

Trillium Health Partners (THP) is one of Canada's largest and busiest hospitals with over 1,300 beds, 3 campuses, serving a population of more than 1.5 million residents in the western Greater Toronto Area. Accreditation Canada conducts independent, third-party assessments of health care organizations on a four year cycle based on standards and best practices to identify achievements and opportunities for improvement. Accreditation Canada defines quality in health care using dimensions that represent key service elements, assessed through auditor-led tracers and surveys.

In 2013, THP received a pass during its Accreditation Survey. To address the unmet standards, the hospital conducted an internal survey in 2016 and found that 145 of the 2,563 accreditation standards remained unmet. In response, the organization decided to reframe the requirements for the next hospital Accreditation in 2017, and use the Accreditation preparation process as a catalyst for improving reliability and engagement. Mobilizing to action to address these unmet standards – and more – the hospital used a strategic quality and practice improvement approach, innovative engagement tactics, and strong project management. This effort was rewarded in its recent November 2017 Accreditation. THP received an exemplary standing of 99.84%, the highest score ever awarded to a large hospital in Canada.

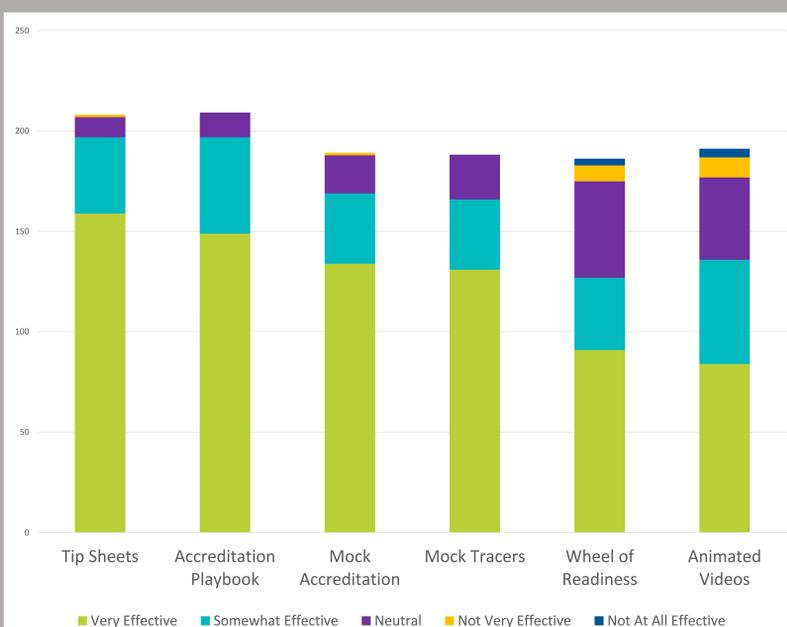
AIM

- 1) Integrate Accreditation into clinical and corporate operations to improve the quality and safety of all programs and services, going beyond the requirements of the Accreditation Program, to demonstrate excellence in quality and practice.
- 2) Meet 100% of required Accreditation standards by Nov 2017.
- 3) Engage physicians, staff, volunteers, learners and patients and families, in Accreditation preparedness, as a celebration of safety culture and dedication to excellence.

DESIGN/STRATEGY

- 1) Accreditation objectives embedded in almost every hospital project, event, and quality-practice improvement initiative, to make Accreditation less a 'survey', and more an 'opportunity to increase reliability and engagement'.
- 2) Managed as a portfolio of projects, through strong project management and robust governance, enabling quick decision making and issue intervention.
- 3) Completed 25 Accreditation projects required to meet required organizational practices and standards, utilizing quality improvement (QI) and project management (PM) methodologies, taking the opportunity to build front-line staff and leader QI capacity in the process.
- 4) Leveraged the Chief of Quality role to support Program Chiefs in engaging Physicians in standards achievement.
- 5) Staff engaged through unique education-gamification approaches such as: Patient Safety Escape Rooms; the Wheel of Accreditation game, hospital-wide Clean-Up Blitzes; and, other interactive, prize-or-recognition-winning activities.
- 6) Staff, as well as patients and families, engaged through animated videos featuring hospital executives, tip sheets, and, Accreditation standards education.
- 7) Quality Consultants supported program leaders in leader-led Accreditation events, rounds, unit walkabouts and Accreditation simulations.
- 8) Conducted Quality-facilitated mock Accreditation exercises on a semi-annual basis for the two and a half years preceding Accreditation, rather than 'cramming' all standards education into the final year before the survey.
- 9) Conducted Pre- and Post-Accreditation surveys to collect feedback to gauge the effectiveness of the Accreditation-related preparation activities (see below).

Engagement and preparation approaches that heavily involved leaders were identified as being the most effective in preparing staff for Accreditation.



RESULTS & CONCLUSIONS

In November 2017, THP achieved *Accreditation with Exemplary Standing* with an 'unprecedented' score of **99.84%** (2,559/2,563 standards met), the **highest** Accreditation score received by any large hospital in Canada.

Highlights from THP's Accreditation Report:

"Staff and volunteers embrace the goal of "one culture" and express pride and satisfaction in working at THP."

"Physician engagement and the number of physicians who are actively engaged as members of the care team are impressive."

"It is rare to see the high degree of alignment among board directors, leadership, and the front line that is evident at THP."



THP's Strategic Quality Framework:

- Reliability
- Experience
- Improvement

By incorporating Accreditation standards and required organization practices into as many existing strategic and operational initiatives as possible, the hospital took a mandatory survey and made it its own vehicle for improvement. In doing so, THP raised the floor on its own reliability goals – from its Strategic Quality Framework - while meeting Accreditation Canada's standards.

The result has not only been an Exemplary survey score, but also, a lift to the organization's engagement and sense of efficacy and pride. The personalized manner in which the hospital prepared for Accreditation has been – and continues to be – leveraged by other strategic initiatives launched within the hospital since the November 2017 survey.