

## Toward stronger evidence on quality improvement

How can publication guidelines  
help?

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## QI: A three component engine

### Component

- Scientific knowledge
- Performance
- Knowledge about  
acquiring competence

### Learning method

- Scientific discovery
- Experiential learning
- Experiential discovery

## Scientific discovery cycle

Plan -> Do -> Study -> Publish

Tom Nolan

## Experiential learning cycle

### Generic/informal

Experience -> Question -> Conceptualize -> Retry

### Specialized/formal

Plan -> Do -> Study -> Act

NOTE: NO “publish” step!

## Experiential discovery cycle

Plan -> Do -> Study -> Publish

- applied to the process of experiential learning

## Why is publication important in QI?

- Repeatability: role in proof/disproof
- Establishing context: collective memory
- Dissemination of established improvements, prevents repeating mistakes
- Ethical concerns: returns to public, participants
- Scrutiny, accountability
- Authors: clarification of thinking
- Sparks further innovation
- Improves publishing-QI interaction

## Why isn't QI work published more often?

- Done by busy “front line” professionals
- Lack of experience in doing studies, publishing
- Lack of academic incentives
- Writing is hard
- Editors, peer reviewers unfamiliar, skeptical
- Little guidance for reporting

## Draft publication guidelines

### Purposes

- Primary
  - Increase completeness, accuracy, transparency
- Secondary
  - Improve design, execution of studies, funding decisions
  - Facilitate aggregation of results

## Draft publication guidelines

### Users

- Primary
  - Authors
- Secondary
  - Editors
  - Peer reviewers
  - Funders

## Draft publication guidelines

### Applications

- Original reports on specific clinical problems, or on improvement methods
- Formal studies > case reports
- Peer reviewed literature, “gray” literature, media reports
- Not reviews, commentary

## Draft publication guidelines

### Features

- IMRaD format
- Manageable number of items (16)
- Items specific to text sections, but use also appropriate throughout text

## QI Publication Guidelines: next steps

- Feedback, critique, suggestions, especially from users
- Representative invitational meeting
- Evidence-based revision
- Extensions, variants
- Endorsement, adoption, diffusion
- Study of impact
- Research, educational functions