

Special Needs Dental Patients: Enhancing Care in the Perioperative Setting

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Purpose/Rationale

To enhance perioperative care for the special needs dental population by tackling delays and staff dissatisfaction caused by insufficient knowledge and preparedness.

Synthesis of Evidence

- An adaptive care screening tool completed before patient arrival creates a more individualized care plan.¹
- Early identification of patients with special needs via an alert in the electronic health record (EHR) is recommended to alert the multidisciplinary team.²
- Telephone screening involving parents and primary care takers has been used to identify triggers and soothing techniques that are specific to the patient.³

Methods

This project was guided by The Iowa Model⁴ (Figure 1) and Iowa Implementation For Sustainability Framework⁵.

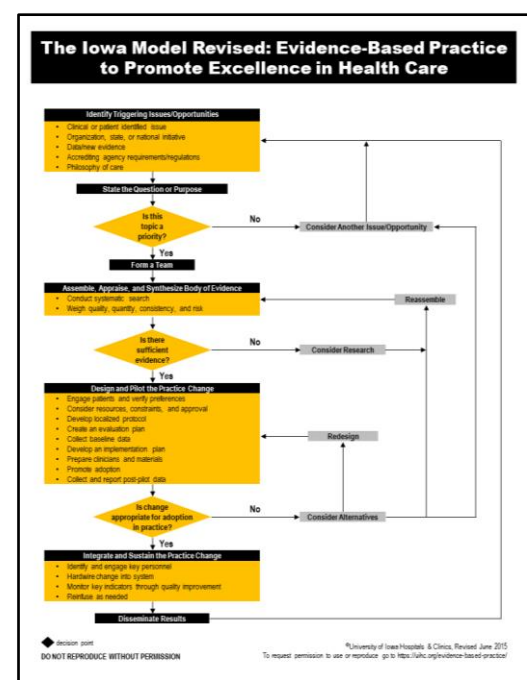


Figure 1. Iowa Model

Practice Change

The EBP change implemented in Fall of 2024 included:

- An individualized procedural plan template in the EHR
- Early identification of patients with special needs
- An FYI flag in the EHR to alert multidisciplinary teams about the individualized procedure plan
- Telephone screening and a “Get to Know Me” tip sheet (Figure 2)

Figure 2. Tip sheet

Implementation Strategies

Multiple strategies used to increase adoption and sustain change (Figure 3).

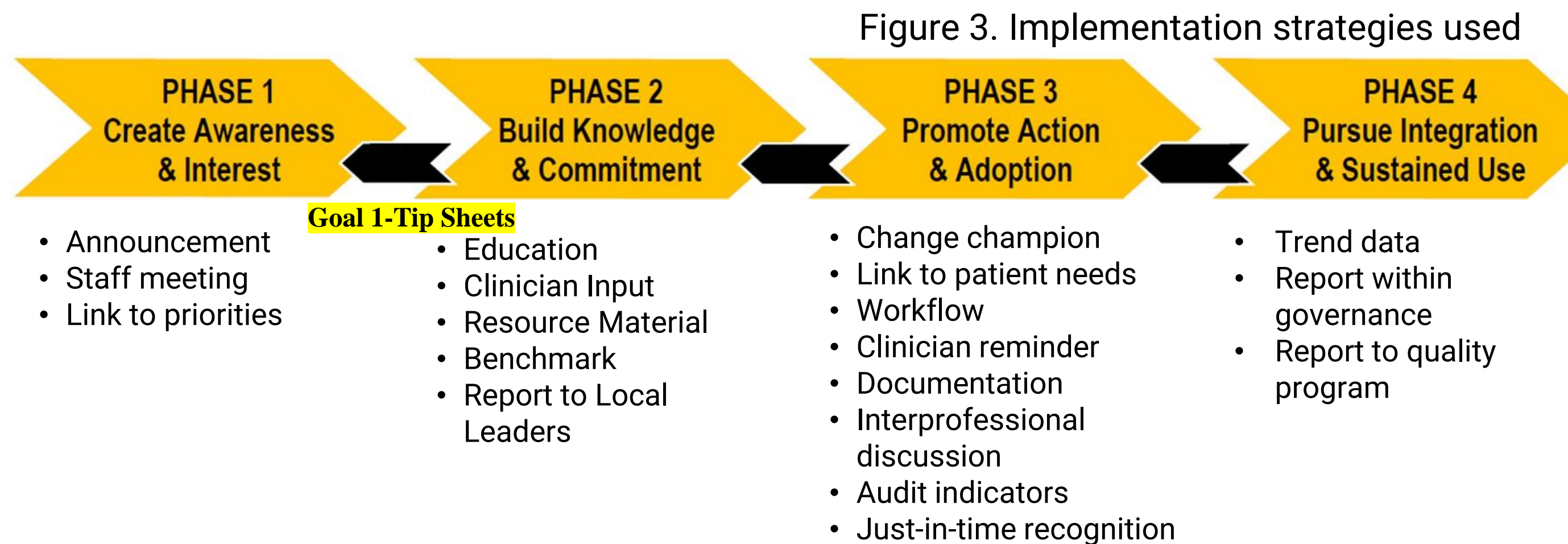


Figure 3. Implementation strategies used

Evidence-based care of special need dental patients including early identification, individualized procedure plans, and notification of the multidisciplinary team using the EHR can reduced OR start delays, improve communication, and reduce perceived barriers to care.

Evaluation

Following the implementation of the ‘Get to Know Me’ and ‘FYI’ documented within the EHR, data indicated an increase in on-time starts for first cases (Figure 4).

Cases

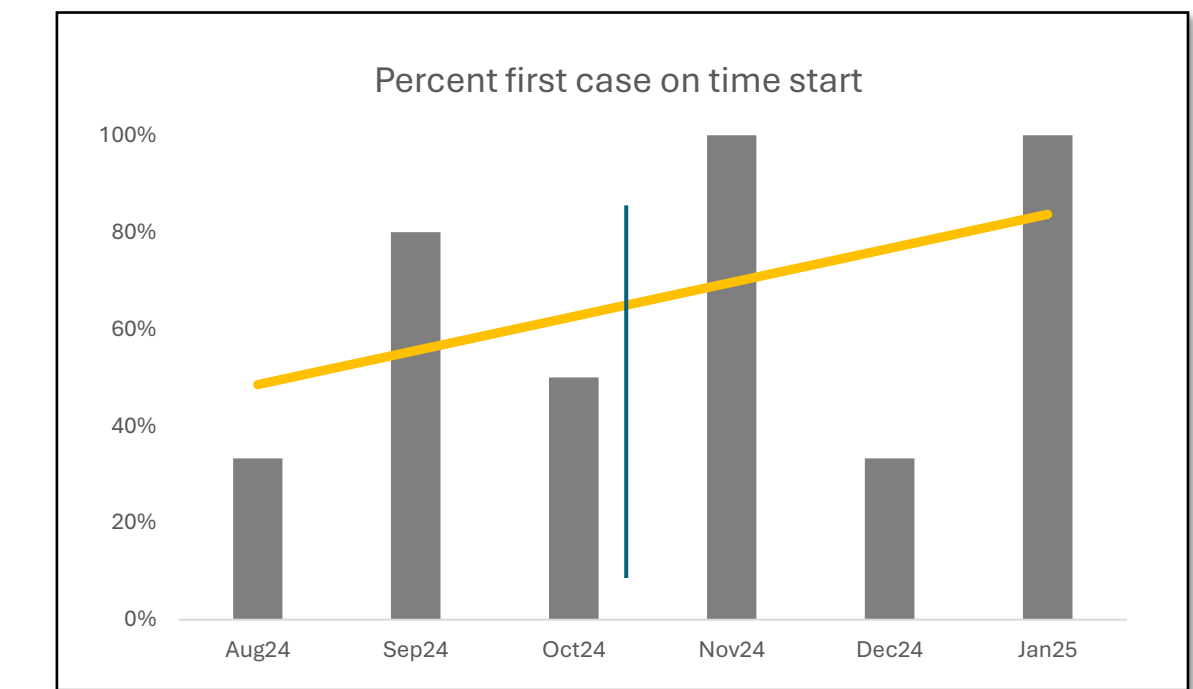


Figure 4. First case start time

Implications

Evidenced-based care for dental patients with special needs increases efficiency and reduces perceived barriers to care

Our goal is to achieve an 80% on-time start and further improving patient care, quality, and safety.

Special Thanks

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Reference

