

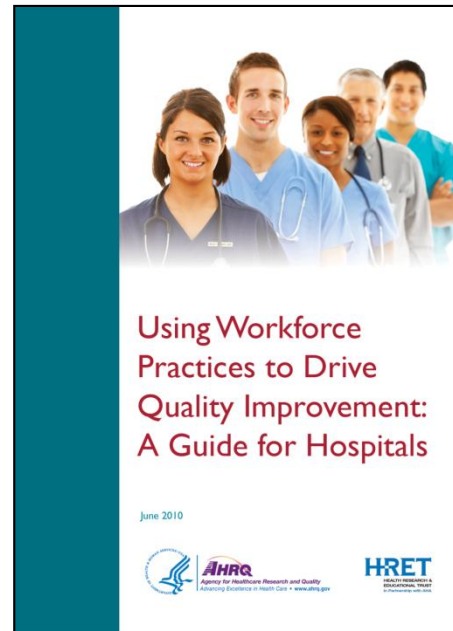
# Using Work-Force Practices to Drive Quality Improvement: A Guide for Hospitals

June 2010



TRANSFORMING HEALTH CARE THROUGH RESEARCH AND EDUCATION





McHugh M, Garman A, McAlearney A, Song P, and Harrison M. *Using Workforce Practices to Drive Quality Improvement: A Guide for Hospitals*. Chicago, IL: Health Research & Educational Trust, March 2010. Accessed at [www.hret.org/workforce/resources/workforce-guide.pdf](http://www.hret.org/workforce/resources/workforce-guide.pdf).

# Guiding Questions

1. What workforce practices hold the potential to improve quality in health care organizations?
2. How can these practices be implemented?

# Methods

- Literature review
  - Peer-reviewed and grey literature
  - Health care and other industries
- Case studies
  - Visits to five organizations recognized for successful workforce practices

# High-Performance Workforce Practices - Categories

- Organizational Engagement Practices
- Staff Acquisition and Development Practices
- Frontline Empowerment Practices
- Leadership Alignment and Development Practices

# Organizational Engagement Practices

- Communicate mission, vision, and values
  - *Incorporate the organization's values into orientation and performance reviews*
  - *Discuss mission/values at all meetings*
- Share performance information
  - *Hold town hall meetings, share performance report cards*
- Involve employees in key decisions
  - *Create and empower employee councils*
- Track and reward performance
  - *Provide recognition to employees who go "above and beyond"*

# Staff Acquisition and Development Practices

- Recruit rigorously
  - *Develop targeted strategies to recruit hard-to-fill positions, form partnerships*
- Hire selectively
  - *Adopt validated selection tools to assess knowledge, skills, and attitudes*
- Train extensively
  - *Offer conferences and workshops, have attendees share what they learned*
- Focus on career development
  - *Provide educational support to pursue career paths within your organization*

# Frontline Empowerment Practices

- Focus on employment security
  - *Make a commitment to prevent layoffs*
  - *Protect employees who “speak up”*
- Reduce status distinctions
  - *Discourage the use of formal titles*
- Promote teamwork/decentralized decision-making
  - *Implement shared governance and staff practice councils*
  - *Hold regular team huddles*
  - *Consider teamwork in performance reviews*



# Leadership Alignment and Development

- Link management training to organizational needs
  - *Use corporate goals to prioritize training programs for managers*
- Focus on succession planning
  - *Require managers to create career development plans for employees*
- Adopt performance-contingent compensation
  - *Recognize leaders who have modeled support of the organization's mission through their own actions*

# Facilitating Adoption of High-Performance Work Practices

- Commit to fostering a culture focused on quality
- Engage senior leadership support
- Involve the HR department in planning
- Hire HR professionals with training and experience in high-performance work practices (HPWPs)
- Identify opportunities for shared learning
- Involve employee representatives
- Monitor progress

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