Implementing Diagnostic Excellence Across Systems: What You Need to Know

April 2, 2025

Objectives

- Provide an overview of the tools involved in the Implementing Diagnostic Excellence Across Systems (IDEAS) Initiative;

- Review how your organization can participate; and

- Highlight the benefits of participating in this initiative.

Today's Presenters

Kim Werkmeister, MS, RN, CPHQ, CPPS
Convergence Health
Senior Vice President Improvement and Implementation

A nurse leader with over 25 years of experience, Ms. Werkmeister is a national expert in the reliable implementation of patient safety and process improvement strategies. She has worked as an improvement leader and clinical educator for Cynosure Health and the Hospital Quality Institute and various Hospital Improvement Innovation Networks. Her areas of expertise include the reduction of venous thromboembolism, adverse drug events, readmissions, hospital-associated infection prevention, sepsis mortality reduction, failure to rescue, patient and family engagement, and maternal/child safety. Werkmeister has developed numerous patient safety and quality improvement toolkits, certification courses, and virtual educational program. She is chair of the Patient and Family Advisory Council at Mission Hospital in California. Previously, Werkmeister directed quality and patient safety at two California hospitals.


Alex Stack, MPH, CSSBB
Convergence Health
Improvement Advisor and Director, Programs and Strategic Initiatives

Ms. Stack is an Improvement Advisor with Cynosure Health and a talented leader and change agent with a passion for transforming systems in ways that improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. She has more than a decade of quality improvement experience in primary care and hospital systems specializing in practical adult learning systems. Alex's strengths include multi-stakeholder collaborations, continuous quality improvement, curriculum design and delivery, innovation, strategic planning, project and program management. Alex has over 8 years of experience driving change in academic, non-profit acute care and community clinic settings.

# Implementing Diagnostic Excellence Across Systems (IDEAS) Project

About the IDEAS Project:

- The goal is to implement and test three AHRQ-developed diagnostic safety resources across 150 sites.
  - Toolkit for Patients to Improve Diagnostic Safety
  - Measure Dx
  - Calibrate Dx
- This project is designed to support and enhance the work that you are already doing!
- Sites get to choose "how" they want to test and implement one or more of the tools.
- Aligns with:
  - Diagnostic Excellence – Age-Friendly Health Systems Seed Grant Program
  - Diagnostic Excellent in U.S. Rural Healthcare: A Call to Action
  - State of the Science and Future Directions To Improve Diagnostic Safety in Older Adults
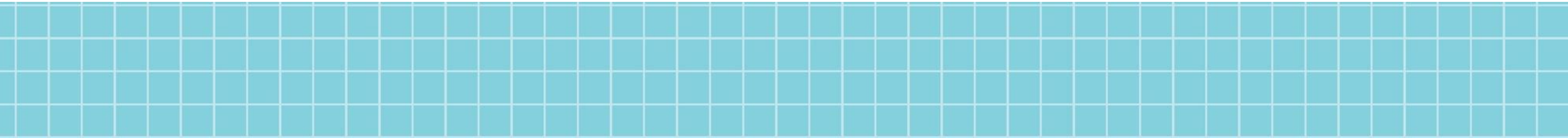
Benefits:

- Flexible training for all sites including resource-specific materials and tip sheets

- CE credits and ABMS-approved MOC credits

- Eligible for MIPS credits

- Meets new requirement in the CMS Patient Safety Structural Measure

- Hands-on assistance including dedicated email for questions and "office hours" with content experts

- Learning Collaboratives with other participants

- Feedback on the impact of the intervention (available to participants at end of study)

- $1,500 stipend per site
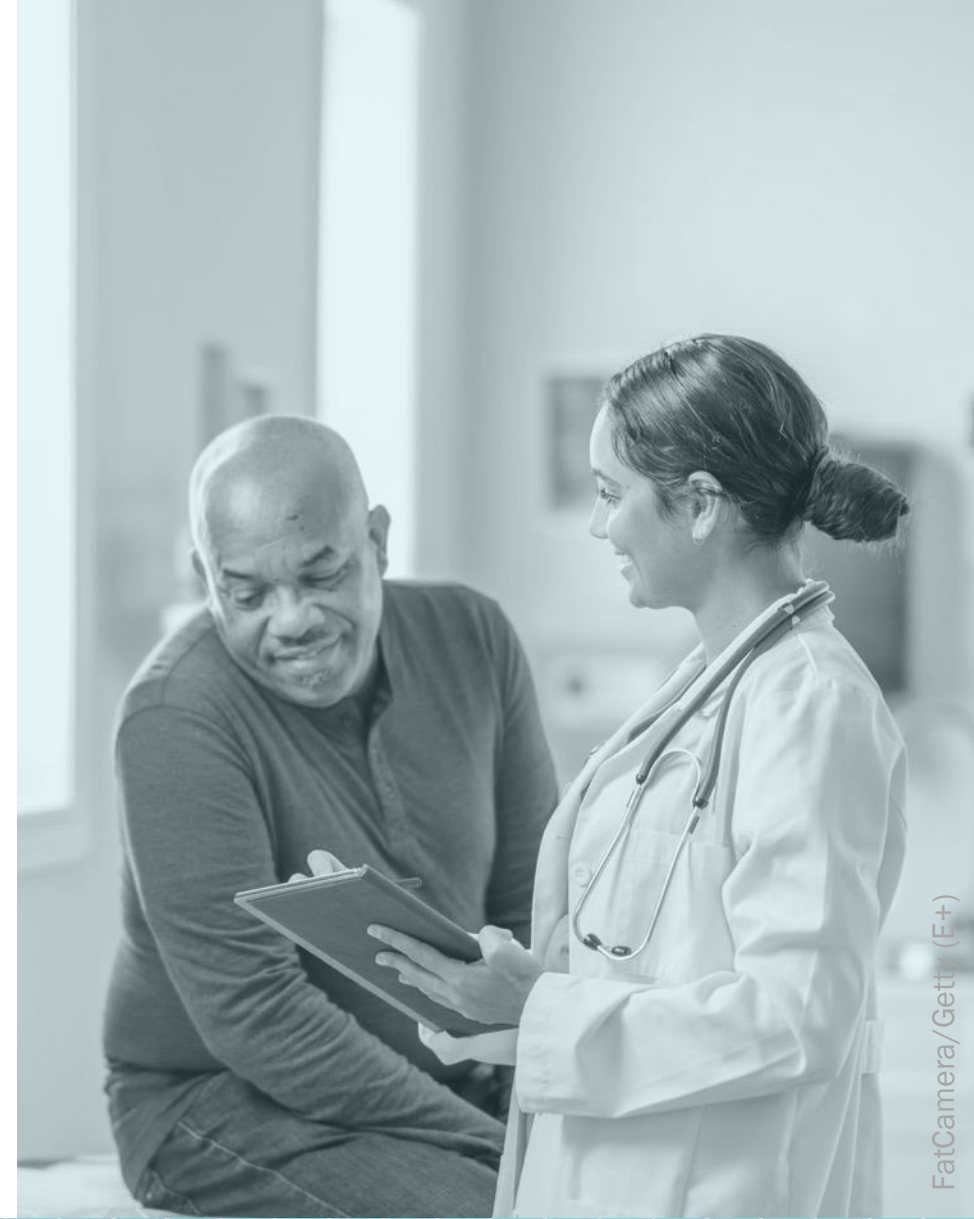
Some stats:

- It is estimated that 33 percent of diagnostic errors result in patient injury, 57 percent of these failures occur in ambulatory care, the predominant mode of care delivery in rural settings.

- Rural residents are also at a greater risk of death from frequently misdiagnosed diseases such as cancer and chronic respiratory disease.

- While urban physicians might experience routinization due to a high volume of repetitive procedures, rural community physicians and teams could display gaps in expertise due to low patient volume.

- Researchers found that increasing age was often associated with lower diagnostic accuracy and resulted in both overdiagnosis and underdiagnosis of these common conditions.

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AHRQ Patient Safety Issue Brief: 22 & 24

Overview of the Tools

Toolkit for Patients To Improve Diagnostic Safety	Measure Dx	Calibrate Dx
SETTING Office-based setting	Any healthcare setting	Any healthcare setting
USERS Clinicians and their patients	QI or patient safety teams	Individual licensed clinicians whose scope of practice includes diagnosis

Resource-specific considerations for participation

March 2025

Toolkit for Patient Engagement

- Two to three clinician participants to use the resource in routine practice
- Participate in data collection activities for the evaluation
- Involvement of administrative office staff to collect brief, anonymous patient surveys

June 2025

Measure Dx

- QI team with (1) a clinical lead with diagnostic expertise and (2) a quality manager with operations expertise
- Participate in data collection activities, many of which could be done during QI meetings or scheduled activities

August 2025

Calibrate Dx

- Four to six clinician participants who perform quarterly reviews of a sample of their own cases
- Complete brief quarterly surveys and provide feedback on the resource
- Clinician access to electronic health record data for case reviews

What this could look for you...

Toolkit for Patients to Improve Diagnostic Safety

- Rural health, primary care, urgent care clinic, or other outpatient service
- Test with the first 5 patients a day for a week, test first 2 scheduled patients, every other day, etc.
- Cohort patients and test by diagnosis type (e.g., behavioral health, asthma, diabetes, SUD, etc.)
- Leverage PFAC and patient volunteers to test tool and give feedback

Measure Dx

- Use this as a platform to look at social drivers of health
- Use funds to support a department specific internal research project (e.g., abnormal test results lacking timely evaluation, unexpected hospitalization after an ED or primary care visit, AUD Care, etc.)
- Leverage interns, students, modified duty, and other staff.

Calibrate Dx

- Use as a tool to engage hospitalist groups
- Supplement resident or physician extender educational programs
- Use as part of a lunch & learn or M&M program
- Use to enhance peer review process

Implementation is on a staggered basis; timeline may adjust to accommodate recruitment
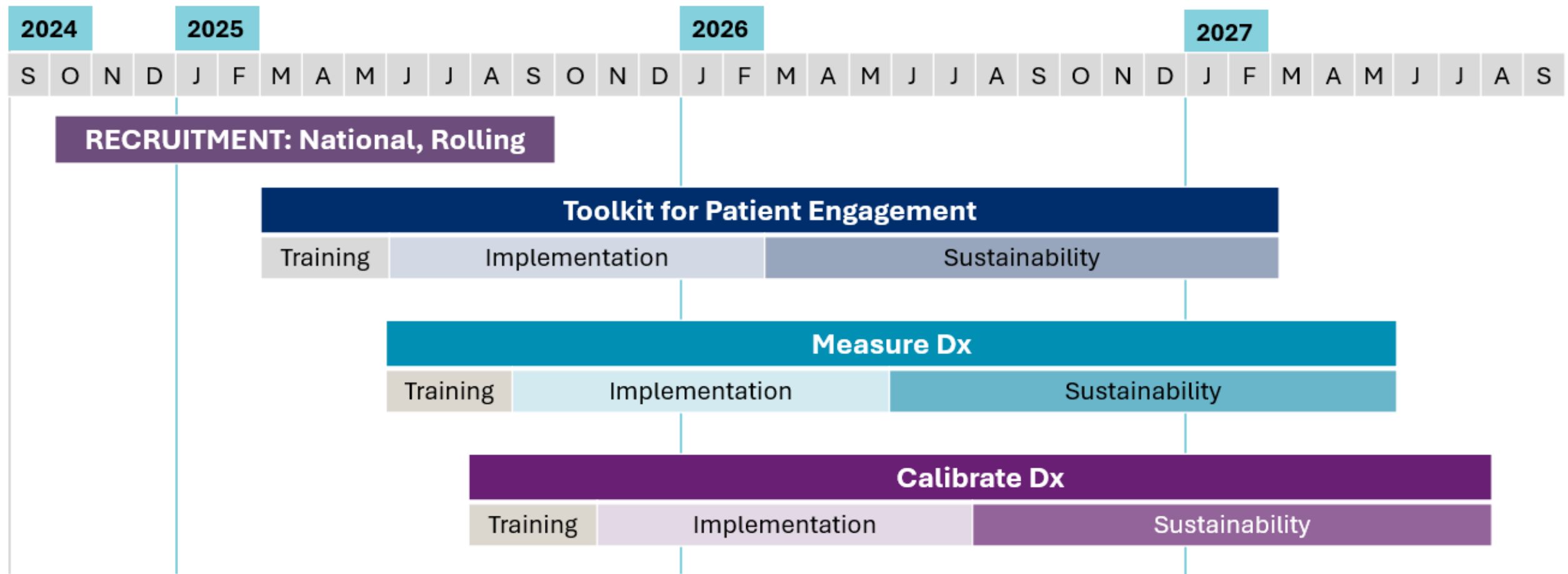
At the outset, we encourage participating sites to:

- Commit to this 2-year effort (1-year implementation and 1-year sustainability/minimal effort)

- Secure executive support

- Identify site participants; engage in minimal project and data collection activities

- Identify a site champion to help coordinate project activities and communicate with the project team

- Identify site-specific contacts who can help troubleshoot privacy, security, or confidentiality barriers

Jacob Wackerhausen/Getty/iStock)

Timeline of Activities for Toolkit Implementation, Sustainment, and Evaluation

Toolkit for Patient Engagement

Phase	Recruitment	Training and Implementation	Sustainability
Years	2024	2025	2026 / 2027
Months	O N D	J F M A M J J A S O N D	J F M A M J J A S O N D J F

Who	What	How Often
Site leads/ Site champions[a]	Safer Dx Checklist	Once
	Patient Safety Culture Survey	Once
	Clinical Sustainability Assessment Survey	Once
	Short implementation progress assessments	Monthly
Participating clinicians	Training on Patient Toolkit use	Once
	4-item Demographics Survey	Once
	45-minute interview	Twice
	Brief 8-item Survey	Five times
	Learning Collaborative meetings (virtual[b])	Monthly
Patients	Brief 7-item Survey	Five times
	30-minute interview	Twice

NOTE: Sites will ideally be signed up two months before training begins. Recruitment is rolling up to February 2025, so the timing of initial training and start of implementation may vary by site. Dots indicate timing of an activity within one month. Dots connected by a line indicate a span of time in which an activity may happen.

[a] Site leads establish and ensure the site's participation through implementation and obtain leadership support. Site champions help coordinate project activities at the site, engage participating clinicians, and serve as liaison between the project team and site-level activities.

[b] Optional.

Next Steps:

- If you and others are interested in learning more, please take a minute to fill out this form. We'll work with you one on one to:
  - Answer any questions you might have
  - Schedule a time to meet with others in your organization
  - Identify which tool might be right for you
  - Help you enroll
  - And more!
- Check out the project website here: https://www.ahrq.gov/ideas-project
  - One pages
  - Tools
  - Link to enroll

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

PATIENT SAFETY