Swim Lane Process Mapping: A tool to support partnerships and engagement
Objectives

• Consider use of process mapping as a tool to support partnership and engagement.
• Learn what a swim lane process map is and why we should use them
• Assembling the right team with the right expertise
• Build and review a swim lane process map together
Why do process mapping?

• The power of process mapping lies in the visual representation of your daily work
• Enables a team to translate their ‘mental model’ of what they think happens into a group ‘shared model’ of what actually happens
• There are always “aha moments”
• Captures important ways your work is unique and how the work is done
• Process mapping helps us understand how People, Process and Technology are integrated together
• Multi-stakeholder benefits of diagraming together
• Opportunity to correct broken processes or design a best possible new or future state process.

For more background on Process Mapping: Stratis Health QI Basics - Process Mapping Module
Once you document a process…you can then analyze and improve it!

- Bottlenecks
- Sources of delay
- Rework due to errors
- Role ambiguity
- Unnecessary or duplicate steps
- Long cycle times
- Lack of adherence to standards
- Lack of information
- Lack of quality controls
What is a Swim Lane Process Map and Why We Should Use Them?
Swim lane process mapping

Patient
- Patient comes to clinic for annual exam
- Patient checks in at front desk
- Does Pt meet preDM screening guidelines?
  - Yes: Patient given 1 page PreDM risk test
  - No: Patient fills out risk test and returns it to receptionist
- Patient waits for MD to room them

Front Desk / Reception
- Patient fills out risk test and returns it to receptionist

Medical Assistant
- MA includes preDM risk test in patient chart

Provider (MD or NP)
- MD or NP provides annual exam
- Did Pt fill out PreDM risk test?
  - Yes: MD or NP discusses risk test results with patient
  - No: Patient at risk for preDM?
    - Yes: MD or NP creates referral to health coach or NPP
    - No: Exam complete & patient leaves clinic

Exam complete & patient leaves clinic

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Swim lane process mapping

Food Shelf
- Community member visits food shelf
  - Food shelf recognizes medical assistance needed and refers to clinic

Primary Care Clinic
- Patient checks in at front desk
  - Patient is given SDOH screening
  - Patient encounter for medical needs
  - Did patient screen positive for social needs?
    - Yes: CHW in clinic makes referrals for social needs to Housing and Legal services
    - No: Clinic confirms services delivered
  - Complete, No further needs

Housing Assistance Organization
- Community member interacts with front desk staff
  - Housing advisor discusses concerns with community member
  - Identified services provided to community member

Legal Services Organization
- Community member interacts with front desk staff
  - Legal assistant discusses concerns with community member
  - Identified services provided to community member
  - Process Complete
Framing (Defining) the Process

• Boundaries (framing the process)
  – Major steps in the process from the trigger event to the end result
    (what is in the scope of this process?)
    (where does the work begin and end?)

• Stakeholders / Customers

• Keep thinking “Who/ Does/ What/ When?” as you visually build your process

• Consider intra-organizational handoffs
Assembling the Team and Appreciating Expertise
Who should be on the team?

• Engage stakeholders / process owners based on the scope of the process (it does indeed ‘take a village’)
• Assemble diversity of knowledge and experience about the workflow you are mapping &/or designing
Rule of the road for the team

• Change is hard...changing culture is even harder!
• ‘Take your stripes off at the door’
• Be objective
• Same ‘rules of the road’ as brainstorming sessions...be open to new ideas!
• Be sure to celebrate your successes along the way and at the end
Building a Swim Lane Process Map
Swim Lane process diagraming tools

- Start with physical diagramming tools
  - White board and sticky notes and pens
  - Clear wall and stick notes or paper and masking tape
  - Easels and paper flip charts
- Pause, review and revise
- Draw you connector lines
- Convert to electronic format: Microsoft Visio, Mural.co, or LucidChart.com
- Revise again

- Plan B…start and finish in electronic format
Recall the shapes used:

- Work left to right, top to bottom (generally) as you map your process
- Each step needs to say clearly:
  - Who - Subject
  - Does - Verb
  - What – Object
- ‘When’ represents the sequencing of the steps
- Decision diamonds represent key choices or decisions.
  - Yes or No questions
Frame the process and start building!

- Identify the actors…the organizations that will participate in this cross-cutting process map
- Describe the process narrative…we’ll build a community-healthcare partnership workflow example
- Frame the process by determining the start or ‘trigger’ event and what concludes the process
  - Start: Community member will visit a food shelf
  - End: Services received and delivered
Swim Lane example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Shelf</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Care Clinic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing Assistance Organization</td>
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Swim Lane example

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**Process Complete**
Summary

• The power of process mapping lies in the visual representation of complicated concepts
• Process mapping is a vital step in preparing for implementation / operationalizing the process
• Process mapping has inherent benefits beyond your current use (training, future redesign of the process, etc.)
• Engaging people who do the work is essential to success
• Understanding & communicating “Who Does What When” is the key!
Stratis Health is a nonprofit organization that leads collaboration and innovation in health care quality and safety, and serves as a trusted expert in facilitating improvement for people and communities.

Developed by Stratis Health, in partnership with the Georgia Health Policy Center, for grantees funded by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy.