

Comprehensive mortality review leads to care improvement

A comprehensive mortality review offered teams a way to identify improvement opportunities for reducing unexpected or preventable inpatient deaths. The collaborative's focus was to help members perform systematic mortality reviews to identify patient safety issues that resulted in or contributed to patient deaths and improve care processes.¹

Opportunity

Using the Vizient® Mortality Review Guideline,² participants in the Enhanced Mortality Review Process Collaborative reviewed all deaths rather than a sample, created useful mortality review forms and convened interdisciplinary mortality review committees.

Key recommendations from the collaborative

- **Enlist champions** who are passionate about learning from deaths.
- **Use stories of patient deaths** to spur action. Reviews should center on creating meaningful data that can be used to track and identify trends among mortality cases, as well as create solid action plans to prevent recurrence.
- **Look for opportunities to improve at the system level**, with the intent that all patients—those expected to live as well as those expected to die—should benefit from the reviews.
- **Ensure patients receive compassionate and effective end-of-life care.** Engage with patients and families to ensure that their goals of care are met; if a tertiary or quaternary medical center's intensive care unit is not the most appropriate place to meet the patient's goals or care needs, work with palliative and hospice care providers to provide comfort care.

Overall collaborative results

Participating teams increased use of palliative care for patients at the end of life. For patients who died in the hospital, participants increased the proportion of patients who had a palliative care diagnosis code by 2.0 percent. Among nonparticipants, the rate decreased by 0.8 percent.

For patients who were discharged to hospice, participants increased the proportion of patients who had a palliative care code by 5.9 percent; among nonparticipants the increase was only 1.1 percent.



For more information about engaging in the PI Collaboratives program, contact your network director or picollaboratives@vizientinc.com.

If you are a member of the Vizient Performance Improvement Collaboratives program, you can find the final report on this collaborative on the project page at www.vizientinc.com.

1 Huddleston JM, Diedrich DA, Kinsey GC, Enzler MJ, Manning DM. Learning from every death. *J Patient Saf.* 2014;10(1):6-12.
 2 Mortality review guideline. Vizient website. <https://www.vizientinc.com/-/media/Documents/SitecorePublishingDocuments/Secured/Collaboratives/VizientMortalityReviewGuideline.pdf>. Accessed January 23, 2018.

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