

In this issue...

A successful change process involves thorough evaluation, planning, implementation and measurement. We'll review this process and demonstrate how it can positively impact your powder-free glove conversion.

Going powder-free: managing change in a clinical environment

Your hospital or clinic has decided to use only powder-free gloves, and that can mean big changes for your organization. This issue of Choices focuses on some of the key considerations for making a successful conversion to powder-free surgical gloves.

The change process

Planning for any successful change – especially a personal change, such as with surgical gloves – should involve a dynamic scientific process. This process involves evaluating the current situation, planning actions to make a change, implementing those actions, checking whether the actions were successful and, if so, standardizing the new process and methods. This is known as the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) Cycle.

Plan. Begin by assessing the department's or hospital's current situation. Look at the organization's reasons for deciding to go powder-free, such as a patient population with special needs, medical staff needs and budget concerns. Study the facts that drive the need for this change. Next, gather data to identify and define the situation to help formulate a complete diagnosis and a plan. Formulate answers to questions such as these:

- What drove the decision to convert to powder-free gloves?
- What are the features and benefits of the powder-free options that are available?
- How much will it cost to convert?
- What is the required time frame?
- What are the benefits for everyone involved?

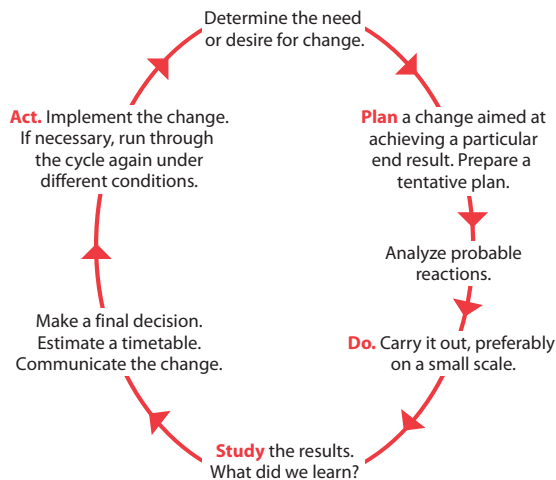
You then can plan a timeline for actions leading to the desired results and for how you will systematically measure the effects of those actions.

Do. Implement the plan. If possible, try it out on a small scale first (one or two departments or specific ORs). Ensure that data is collected systematically in a way that facilitates measurement and evaluation (i.e., checksheets or surveys).

Study. Evaluate the data collected during the evaluation and implementation. Check the results to see if there is a good fit between the original goals and what was actually achieved.

Act. Depending on the results of the previous evaluation, take further actions. If successful, adopt the change and replicate the process in other departments or other areas. If unsuccessful, abandon the changes or run through the cycle again under revised conditions, such as offering additional choices or investigating other options.

The manager's model for change: The Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle



Motivating change

The following are some tips on motivating change and on applying these tips during your conversion to powder-free surgical gloves:

- Provide opportunities to talk about the impending change. This gives people the chance to express their feelings towards it. Most successful organizations spend significant amounts of time educating employees about the need for change and what it entails before setting a specific time frame for the conversion process.
- Identify the exact steps needed to cause the change (see "Key Steps to Going Powder-Free with Surgical Gloves"). Have a concise plan with small steps that can be communicated clearly. Take one step at a time, and be sure there is buy in at each step before proceeding. For example, one acute care facility emphasized educating physicians from the perspective of clinician and patient needs, focusing on the features and benefits of the powder-free gloves that were being considered. They spent significant time with physicians to understand their concerns and

make them aware of the organization's reasons for converting to powder-free gloves.

- Change is more acceptable when there still can be some personal decision, such as offering a choice of textured, orthopedic, synthetic or coated powder-free alternatives. Change also is more readily accepted when those involved are treated as individuals with respect to how the change will affect them personally. One-on-one meetings are very important. A 200-bed facility specializing in cardiac and neonatal care gave careful consideration to who should talk to whom in order to best convey the information each individual needed. The facility asked a physician "champion" to talk to other physicians about using powder-free gloves and about why the change was important from a clinical perspective.

- Point out the difference between the real effects of the change and the feelings about the change. Give those involved chances to try on and feel the proposed new gloves. Actually experiencing the fit, feel and function of the new gloves helps to allay concerns about using them. A Cardinal Health representative can explain the features and benefits of the new products as well as the choices being offered.
- Present a change in the most positive light, but don't hesitate to communicate potential negatives. Most people prefer to know both sides in advance so that they are not surprised later in the process. For example, powder-free gloves are donned differently and may feel different to the wearer. There may be differences in tactile sensitivity as well as perspiration absorption. If everyone is aware of these points ahead of time, it may help with acceptance and adoption of the change.
- Once a change is made, encourage people to stick to it and avoid the temptation to revert to older, more comfortable ways. As the end of the trial period

Glove trial and conversion responsibility assignments

| | Cardinal Health Rep | Champion | Together |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|
| | Name: _____ Phone: _____ | Name: _____ Phone: _____ | |
| Pre-evaluation | Understand organization's evaluation protocol. | Investigate powder-free options. | Identify potential concerns and issues. |
| | Prepare product cross-reference. Discuss product features and benefits with physicians and staff. | Approve evaluation forms. | Determine length of time for evaluation (two weeks minimum). |
| | Provide data on costs, savings and standardization opportunities. | Create an implementation timeline and share with department heads. | Define positive outcome acceptance rate (e.g., 60% clinically acceptable). |
| | Inform materials management of when to order product so it will arrive one week prior to evaluation period. | Schedule departments/ORs to begin evaluations on different days. | |
| | Conduct sizing with surgeons and staff. | Prepare communications to inform staff and physicians of upcoming evaluation; explain why organization is going powder-free. | |
| | Post evaluation notification in locker rooms, by scrub sinks and in the OR suites. | | |
| | Place physician letters in each physician's mailbox. | | |
| The day before | Ensure product has arrived. | | |
| | Stock product on floors, OR suites and case carts. | | |
| | Make copies of evaluation sheets for front desk and each OR suite. | | |
| During evaluation | Conduct a morning in-service and address morning report. | After first week of evaluation, provide an update to department heads. | Ask everyone to fill out evaluations. |
| | Discuss product features and benefits with physicians and staff. | | Follow up with every person who filled out a negative evaluation. |
| Post-evaluation | Attach original evaluation forms to summary spreadsheets. | Put next steps in writing and share with department heads/others. | Compile and summarize evaluations. |
| | Separate feedback from current powdered glove users and powder-free glove users. | Communicate success stories. | Prepare positive executive summary of evaluations. |
| | Follow up to ensure questions/issues/concerns are addressed. | | |

Association positions and recommendations

A number of professional associations and governmental agencies have addressed natural rubber latex allergy in recent years.

Association of PeriOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) Recommended Practices and Guidelines, 1999 Edition

- Use latex-free products with individuals who are likely to develop an allergic response.
- Use low-allergen, powder-free gloves throughout the health-care facility.

Web site: www.aorn.org

American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI)

- "Utilization of low-allergen powder-free gloves may prevent measurable airborne latex exposure thus reducing symptoms among allergic employees..."

Web site: www.allergy.mcg.edu

American College of Surgeons (ACS) Comment to the FDA

- "The College believes there is no reason to continue the use of powdered gloves. Indeed, the elimination of powdered gloves will significantly lower the risk of allergic reactions."

Web site: www.facs.org

American Academy of Dermatology (AAD)

- "At a minimum, non-latex glove alternatives should be provided to health-care workers who have Type I reactions to NRL and low-allergen, powder-free gloves, if tolerated, should be worn by other health-care workers at that work site."

Web site: www.aad.org

American Nurses Association (ANA)

- "Eliminate unnecessary use of latex gloves and implement the use of low-allergen, powder-free gloves in all other settings."

Web site: www.ana.org

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

- Wear non-latex gloves when there is little potential for contact with infectious materials.
- If you choose latex gloves, use powder-free gloves with reduced protein content.
- Use good housekeeping practices to remove latex-containing dust from the workplace.

Web site: www.cdc.gov/niosh

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

- If selecting NRL gloves for worker use, designate NRL as a choice only in those situations requiring protection from infectious agents.
- When selecting NRL gloves, choose those that have a lower protein content.
- Provide alternative suitable non-NRL gloves as choices for worker use (and as required by OSHA's bloodborne pathogen standard [29 CFR 1910.1030, paragraph (d) (3) (iii)] for workers who are allergic to NRL gloves).

Web site: www.osha.gov

For more information, visit our Health-Care Information Center at www.cardinal.com.

approaches, and prior to the final decision, be sure

you are prepared to continue using the new gloves rather than going back to the previous brand. The glove trial period should last at least two weeks to allow for a thorough evaluation. Also, be sure that only the products being evaluated are available during the trial period in order to get a thorough assessment.

- Point out negative consequences of not changing, such as increased costs to maintain additional inventory.
- Position the change in terms of benefits to the users. The acceptance of change is not based on the magnitude of the change but on the sensitivity of the presentation. For example, emphasize the features and benefits of the proposed new gloves and how and why they are better than the ones currently being used.
- Change is best accepted when those affected by it are involved in the implementation. At one acute care facility, the medical directors contributed by authoring and signing a letter announcing the details of the upcoming powder-free glove evaluation.
- Outline some sample scenarios of the potential results of the change. Point to other medical facilities in the area that have changed to powder-free surgical gloves and the benefits that were realized.
- People change only when they are ready to do so. At one organization, it took almost 2 years to get the surgical staff ready to evaluate powder-free surgical gloves, but this preparation time was necessary for its successful conversion.

Communication

The way in which a pending change is communicated is shown to be more important than the magnitude of the change itself. People generally want to be aware of and involved in a change that affects them personally, and they may resist if they feel they don't have all the

facts. The format of your communications can vary from

one-on-one conversations to personal letters to posters or flyers. Your Cardinal Health representative can provide additional examples and sample formats of letters and memos. At one full-service acute care facility, the members of the Latex Committee first went to the Operations Council, which consisted of vice presidents and other top managers, and obtained its support. They then approached the Medical Executive Committee and Surgery Committee to discuss reasons for the change. They held breakfast meetings to educate surgeons about powder-free surgical gloves and to present the reasons why the organization was considering changing to them. Product options, features and benefits and technical advantages were also discussed, and the surgeons were given an opportunity to touch samples of the gloves and try them on.

Communicating the reasons for this change and the benefits for everyone involved will encourage acceptance. Use data to raise visibility, to identify the scope of the issues and to provide focus, such as the number of complaints of irritant dermatitis. Your employees may also be interested in positions taken by a number of professional associations and governmental agencies.

Working with your Cardinal Health representative

Your Cardinal Health representative can help set the stage for a successful glove trial and conversion. He or she will do much of the legwork to get the facility or department set up for the glove evaluation and conversion. Additionally, your rep will make certain that all staff and physicians are properly sized and that the appropriate types and sizes of gloves are available throughout the evaluation. He or she will be available to answer questions and resolve any issues that may arise.

Your rep will help collect and summarize the evaluation feedback forms. They also can help appropriately position the data for you to present to department

Key steps to going powder-free with surgical gloves

- Determine the necessity for converting to powder-free surgical gloves, such as concerns and needs of employees and patients.
- Determine the costs of converting.
- Discuss ideas and plans with administration and obtain its support.
- Identify key decision makers, such as surgeons, nurses and department heads, and meet with them to discuss converting to powder-free surgical gloves.
- Identify the concerns of those involved about converting to powder-free gloves
 - What would prevent them from converting to powder-free?
 - What are their most important considerations for glove selection?
- Bring in your Cardinal Health representative to explain and review powder-free glove options, features and benefits.
- Follow up with key individuals
 - Are they comfortable with the attributes/features/benefits of these gloves?
 - Are they willing to give the gloves a formal evaluation?
- Set a date for the evaluation and establish an acceptability rate (e.g., if 60% of the users rate the gloves clinically acceptable, the conversion will take place). Have the Cardinal Health rep size everyone and address questions and concerns.
- On the first morning of the evaluation, be sure all clinicians are aware of the evaluation.
- Conduct the evaluation for at least two weeks.
- Summarize the results and review them with your Cardinal Health rep. Communicate the results with department heads and other key individuals.
- Follow up with everyone who found the gloves unacceptable and determine acceptable alternatives.
- Put next steps in writing and communicate with department heads and other key individuals.
- Determine what to do with old product. Unopened boxes of product can be returned. Opened boxes of product can be donated to free clinics or other charitable organizations for tax credit.

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