

## University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Shadyside School of Nursing Student Innovator Award

### Strategy type

Classroom instruction  
Clinical setting applications  
Student project presentations

### Learning objectives

Students will:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of rapid-cycle improvement concepts
- Identify clinical implications for improving safety and quality of patient care
- Implement work redesign initiatives for improving patient safety in the practice environment
- Function as a change agent while working within an active quality collaborative
- Practice leadership behaviors that strengthen teamwork and promote patient safety

### QSEN Quality Improvement KSA's:

K = Describe approaches for changing process of care.

S = Design a small test of change in daily work (using an experiential learning method such as Plan-Do-Check-Act)

S = Use measures to evaluate the effect of change

A = Appreciate the value of what individuals and team can do to improve care

### Strategy overview

A student innovator award was developed to recognize the professional role transition student who demonstrated a commitment to improving the quality and safety of patient care by showing outstanding initiative and leadership qualities in the development and evaluation of a test of change project. The award was modeled after the nationally recognized Josie King Patient Safety Award and provides a foundation for professional development. TCAB rapid-cycle quality improvement concepts have been integrated into classroom and clinical educational methods during this senior-level course. Classroom instruction consists of a brainstorming session designed to help the students identify clinical implications for improving safety and quality of patient care. Students are then instructed on the PDSA rapid-cycle improvement concepts to create work redesign initiatives for improving patient safety in the practice environment. During clinical application, students function as change agents as they collaborate with nursing and inter-professional teams to implement and evaluate their identified test of change project. The students perform a poster presentation of their test of change projects to the class as a course requirement. At the completion of the class presentations, faculty nominate students for the student innovator award based on specific process improvement criteria. The student nominees are then required to present their test of change projects to a selection committee consisting of two nurse managers from TCAB designated units, one improvement specialist, and two professional role transitions course coordinators. The winner is chosen based on specific process improvement criteria,

collaboration and sustainability of test of change and is presented with an award during the graduation ceremony.

#### Additional materials

The brainstorming session includes the use of the TCAB test of change flowchart, test of change record, and a remarkable experience tool. In addition to the PDSA rapid-cycle improvement concepts students are instructed on the use of an observation and surveillance tool and taught how to measure project effectiveness using quantifiable data collection.

#### Evaluation description

Since January 2007, there have been 221 graduate nurses exposed to the TCAB process improvement methodologies, completing 91 improvement projects on 35 nursing units in 7 different system hospitals. With the introduction of a student innovator award in June 2008 faculty have documented a significant improvement in the quality of improvement projects, level of student commitment and a greater impact on improving patient care. Students have demonstrated a more comprehensive understanding of process improvement principles with the ability to carry these concepts into their professional practice. The nurse managers and improvement specialist who participated on the selection committee were impressed by the students' passion for creating a safer environment for patients and plan to implement the student project ideas on their own units.