**TWH K**rembil **N**ursing **A**wards

**Differences between Quality Improvement & Research Projects**

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|  | **QUALITY IMPROVEMENT** | **RESEARCH** |
| **PROCESS** | • Rapid cycle process:   * Plan * Do * Study * Act | * Form hypothesis or research question * Develop protocol/IRB approval/collect data * Analyze and interpret data * Implement into practice change as appropriate |
| **PURPOSE** | • a systematic, data-guided approach to improve processes or outcomes immediately | • systematic inquiry that uses disciplined methods to answer questions or problems with a goal of developing, refining, and expanding a body of knowledge |
| **RELEVANCE** | • systematic inquiry that uses disciplined methods to answer questions or problems with a goal of developing, refining, and expanding a body of knowledge | * broadly generalizable * publication of study results with a description of how they contribute to the body of knowledge |
| **FUNDING** | • often unfunded | * usually requires a source * some research is unfunded |
| **PARTICIPANTS** | * usually restricted to internal participants * sometimes external stakeholders or experts may be consulted * sample size depends on number of intervention/program recipients but are typically small convenience samples | * may include individuals outside your setting * sample size depends on design stage of research (i.e.. pilot testing or exploratory study versus testing), and research question |
| **KEY** | • clearly define the outcome that needs to be improved, identify how the outcome will be measured, and develop a plan for implementing an intervention and collecting data before and after the intervention | • scientific inquiry to answer specific research questions or test hypotheses using disciplined, rigorous methods |
| **LITERATURE REVIEW** | • typically doesn’t require an extensive one | * systematic, comprehensive review to answer questions about a burning/compelling phenomenon * gaps typically provide the impetus for developing a specific research question(s) a hypothesis(es),or both |
| **STUDY METHODS** | * mixed methods may apply * protocol may be flexible and confounding variables are acknowledged but not controlled * typically rapid process limited by the availability of local resources | * quantitative (numeric, QN), qualitative (verbal, QL), & mixed methods using both * QN studies tend to explore relationships among a set of variables related to the phenomenon QL studies seek to understand the deeper meaning of the involved variables * protocol typically remains unchanged through the course of the study to limit confounding * may take considerable time |
| **SHARING OF FINDINGS** | • communicated within the organization | * broad dissemination * publications, presentations, etc. |
| **APPLICATION OF FINDINGS** | * change local practice * improve local program design | * contribute to body of knowledge that collectively informs practice and/or policy * may also be relevant locally |
| **REB REVIEW** | • sometimes due to ethical issues | • all human subject research |
| **EXAMPLES** | 1. implementing a process to remove urinary catheters within a certain time frame 2. developing a process to improve wound-care documentation 3. improving the process for patient education for a specific chronic disease | 1. conducting a systematic review of studies on preventing catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI) 2. randomized controlled trial exploring new wound care methods 3. QL study to investigate the lived experiences of patients with a specific chronic disease |