

Value of Process Improvement in Maternal and Child Health

An interview with Dr. Sharon Fleischfresser

I think the whole idea of quality improvement and the concept of the learning collaborative has impacted how we think about our work at the state level. So that I think that what the learning collaboratives that we have participated in for newborn hearing screening or EHDI at the national level and then now WI replication has really given us as a program, the tools so that we can share those tools with others. I don't think you can make change at the practice level without having those very specific strategies and making them practical and easy to implement. While one place may look a little different than the next, some places have electronic medical records some do not, but yet the outcome is the same and the strategies that what we are trying to accomplish, these issues related to communication and care coordination are very similar. And I think that just being able to participate nationally and then to do a replication has really given us as a program the capacity to help others then within our state. So I think that has been critical to our work.

Our work within the Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs Program related to quality improvement really began a number of years ago as we again participated nationally on a Medical Home Learning collaborative and it has really made us as a program see that these small steps of change, you know, really trying to figure out what works so that when we go and talk to hospitals about EHDI or we talk to primary care providers about medical home we can be practical, we can really give them the tools they need to make the rubber hit the road. So that it is not bureaucratic speak any more. It is really about how do we implement quality improvement. It has really changed the way I

think about the Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs Program in general and all of the regional centers have been engaged in Quality Improvement too. So it has impacted the way we think about system improvement and system change globally. And really focus more on to integration. How do we integrate programs so that it seems seamless for families?