

## How data-driven standardization can improve financial and clinical operations in your facility

### IDEAS THAT MATTER

- Standardization is an essential practice to reduce costs while providing consistent care.
- You can't manage what you can't measure. Decisions regarding standardization should be driven by data.
- How standardization change is communicated to clinicians and the organization is important. Ensuring you communicate the organization's goals clearly and often and bringing clinicians into the decision-making process are vital.

### FEATURED SPEAKERS



**Ben Roewer**  
Senior Manager of Data and Analytics supporting Cardinal Health Spend Essentials™



**Suzanne Champion**  
RN, BSN, MBA, CNOR and Director of Clinical Operations at Cardinal Health

### Overview

"Everyone can benefit from standardization, whether you're a large facility or even a small surgery center," said Ben Roewer, senior manager of data and analytics supporting Cardinal Health Spend Essentials. He and Suzanne Champion, RN, director of clinical operations at Cardinal Health, explained the benefits of standardization and offered advice to health system leaders considering standardization initiatives during a May 28 webinar sponsored by Cardinal Health and hosted by Becker's Hospital Review.

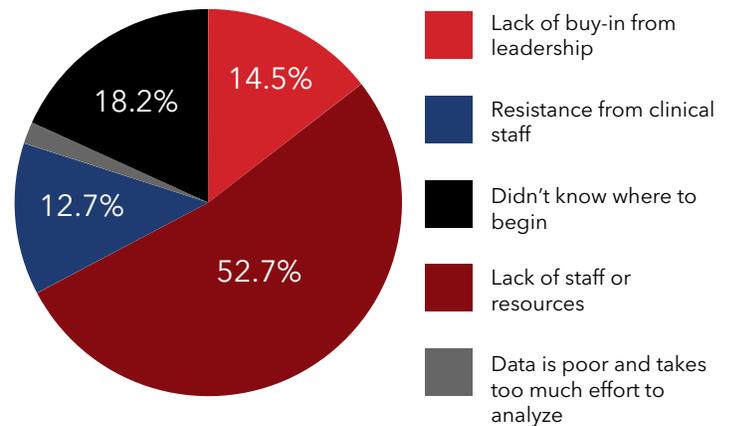
### 5 Key Takeaways

**1. Standardization means taking an evidence-based approach to decision making.** It helps hospitals and health systems make rational decisions about what products to purchase and where to purchase them, Mr. Roewer said.

Standardization can mean something different based on each organization's needs. It can mean standardizing processes, like clinicians do in operating rooms to maximize safety and efficiency. It can also mean standardizing products, such as using the same brand of surgical gloves across an entire health system.

Standardization allows organizations to reduce costs while providing consistent care and to maximize contracts and vendor relations, said Mr. Roewer.

### What reasons have you failed to implement standardization initiatives in the past?



**2. Communicating the reasons your organization is pursuing standardization to the entire staff is crucial for success.** Clinicians and other staff members may see standardization in a negative light if they don't understand the reasoning behind it. They may think of it as an unnecessary change and not realize that standardization saves the organization money, enables more consistency in patient care and can prevent reductions in headcount. Before creating a standardization plan, ask yourself: What do I want to accomplish by standardizing?



Sometimes, the benefits of standardization take several months to come to fruition. Communicating a clear goal for standardization efforts will incentivize staff to work toward that goal. Following up by communicating the successes that come out of the staff's efforts is important to justify the time it may take.

**3. Standardization decisions should be driven by data.**

The type of data to focus on will differ based on your standardization goal.

When it comes to data, there's plenty of it out there. The problem is, it typically comes from many different systems and can be hard to reconcile. Collecting and analyzing data likely takes more time and effort than you anticipate, Mr. Roewer said. So, assembling a team responsible for acquiring and analyzing the data is vital to having reliable and consistent information with which to make decisions.

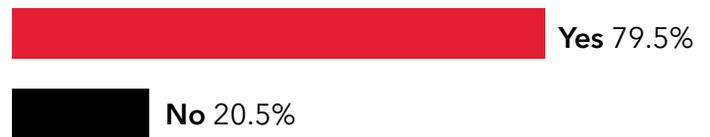
"You can't manage what you can't measure," Ms. Champion said. "If you don't understand where you are, how do you know where you want to go?"

**4. Bring clinicians to the decision-making table.** It's vital to consider how a standardization initiative may affect clinical performance, Ms. Champion said. Compare the financial benefits of the initiative to potential clinical outcomes and ask, is it worth the change? Will it improve the quality of care for our patients?

For larger health systems, it's important to consider how standards of practice may vary across facilities. What would the impact of the standardization initiative be to each facility? Would it make sense for every facility to participate in the initiative?

Outlining potential clinical outcomes may be more difficult than looking at the financial benefits of an initiative, so it's important to bring clinicians to the table to aid the discussion.

**Is change management an obstacle when trying to implement standardization opportunities within your facility?**



**5. Change management is key to making standardization a permanent part of your processes.** This means guiding your staff through changes and communicating clearly about the reasons behind the change, as well as communicating the successes that come from the initiative.

"You have to be able to process the change management, support the change management and manage the change management, or you will not have an initiative that becomes a permanent part of your processes moving forward," Ms. Champion said. ■

