# Transitions of Care:
PROCESS MAPPING

Why Create a Process Map?

According to the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), the rate of avoidable rehospitalizations can be reduced by improving core discharge planning and transition processes out of the hospital; improving transitions and care coordination at the interfaces between care settings; and enhancing coaching, education, and support for patient self-management.

The first step to improving transitions is creating a visual illustration of the current process or patient journey on a flowchart or process map.

Here are tips for creating a robust process map or flowchart of the current system or patient journey:

1. Establish your team. Determine if you want to develop your process map with your internal team or include cross-setting partners.
2. Provide your team with examples or training in creating a process map. Brief videos, such as the 9:47 minute University of North Carolina (UNC) Institute for Healthcare Quality Improvement step-by-step video, demonstrate the creation of a process map in a health care setting.
3. Identify the start and end points of the process you are mapping.
4. Fill in each identifiable step in the current process based on input from your team to capture what is actually happening.
5. Assign team members to research and fill in gaps.
6. Review your initial draft with frontline staff engaged in each step of the process or journey touchpoints to identify potential gaps between policy and practice. Note any workarounds staff currently do to manage gaps.
7. Interview patients and care partners with recent care transitions experience and compare their process description with your identified workflow.
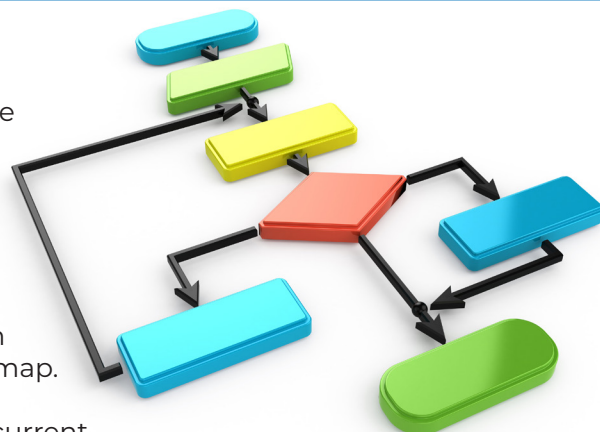
Benefits of using a flow chart to assess your process:

- Clarifies complex processes.
- Identifies steps that do not add value (delays, unnecessary work, duplication, and breakdowns in communication).
- Helps team members gain a shared understanding of the process (identify problems, focus discussions, and identify resources).
- Serves as a basis for designing new processes.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES	
AHS Care Transitions Workflow Example of a mapped workflow	IHI QI flowchart IHI Flow Chart Video Training resources for creating flowcharts
CMS Beneficiary Care Activities & Transitions (cms.gov) Common Challenges for Beneficiary Care Transitions (cms.gov) Two patient care transitions journey maps based on recounted experiences of 46 Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers.	

For coaching support to create your care transition process or journey map, contact Melody.Brown@allianthealth.org.

Reduce avoidable readmissions: IHI. Institute for Healthcare Improvement. Retrieved January 24, 2023, from https://www.ihi.org/Topics/Readmissions/Pages/default.aspx

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