

The A3 approach to improving patient safety problem solving: a pilot study



In this study, we sought to answer the following questions:

Is A3 an applicable approach to increase corrective actions in voluntary patient safety incident reporting systems?

What are the characteristics of incidents in which A3 is effective evaluated by experienced patient safety experts?

How good is the 6-month user experience?

Background

Patient safety incident (PSI) reporting system fundamental for analyzing and investigating patient safety-related information for improving safety & patient care. Incident reports should include corrective actions to improve safety.

A3 is a structured problem solving, continuous improvement approach, used by lean practitioners. The A3 process uses systematic, strict and documented methods on the principles of Plan-Do-Check-Act

The protocol

1. Eliciting possible tools for patient safety improvement purposes from the available literature
2. Selecting a tool for testing purposes
3. Training of experienced patient safety experts to use A3 approach

The protocol

4. Piloting A3 approach in patient safety incidents during 1.8. 2017 to 31.7 2018
 - serious*
 - strategic*
 - recurring*
5. e-mail questionnaire at 6 months:
 - Have you used the A3?*
 - What kind of incidents it was applicable?*
 - What kind of incidents it was not applicable?*

Results

- 17 eligible respondents
- 12 had used the A3 and 3 planning to use it
- A3 was applicable
 - recurrent problems 8
 - strategic problems 3
 - not suitable at all 3
 - not suitable for serious 3

Some found it difficult to use
Some found it easy to use

Patient safety
incident report
+
A3

Conclusions

Apparently the A3 approach is applicable for solving problems arising from patient safety incidents

Especially recurring incidents seem to benefit from A3 approach

Our future research will focus on testing the A3 for a longer user experience and analyze the detailed A3 reports



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