

ENHANCING QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (QI) SKILLS: **QI TRAINING FOR SURGICAL RESIDENTS**

Continuous quality improvement is an important aspect of the healthcare system. It contributes to improved patient outcomes while driving efficiency and innovation. Quality improvement activities are also a requirement for all physicians in Alberta to maintain their licensure. Recognizing the need to expose surgeons to quality improvement methodologies early in their careers, the Office of Surgical Quality (OSQ) has embarked on an initiative to bring quality improvement (QI) training directly to surgery residents.

Led by our QI consultant, Francisco Aguirre, and supported by the Director of the OSQ, Dr. Andrew Graham, the OSQ has developed a training program to enhance the QI abilities of the next generation of surgeons and equip them with the skills needed to initiate and run quality improvement projects.

Tailored for surgical residents in the Calgary Zone, this training covers the key actions needed to execute a quality improvement project using the AHS Improvement Way (AIW) methodology. The training program combines theoretical knowledge shared in a classroom setting with practical team-based activities that allow residents to practice what they have learned. A surgeon must be present during the training sessions to challenge residents with examples related to their surgical specialty, thus merging the QI concepts and processes with their surgical learning. Additionally, participants have the option to engage in a parallel project during the training sessions, allowing them to apply QI concepts and tools to real-world scenarios. This training approach fosters active learning, engagement, and hands-on experience.

To date, the OSQ has run this customizable training program with two surgical sections, Orthopedics and Ophthalmology, with both resident groups providing overwhelmingly positive feedback. Dr. Peter Lewkonja, an orthopedic surgeon who has been actively involved in the training sessions for orthopedic residents, shared his positive experience, "I have had multiple residents provide spontaneous, positive feedback about the process, which is uncommon to see as an educator. I would definitely recommend this training to other surgical sections."

If you are interested in learning more about QI training for surgery residents and how the sessions can be customized

to work with the residents' busy schedules, please reach out to Francisco Aguirre (Francisco.Aguirre@ahs.ca) or Dr. Andrew Graham (Andrew.Graham@ahs.ca). You can also visit the OSQ SharePoint site for more information at <https://share.albertahealthservices.ca/teams/DOSQuality> and contact Francisco Aguirre if you require site access.

The OSQ was established in 2016 to coordinate and enhance the quality improvement efforts within the Department of Surgery, establishing the Calgary Zone Surgical Quality Council (CZSQC) to address these goals.

Francisco Aguirre is the OSQ's Quality Improvement Consultant. He is a professional engineer licensed and registered with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA). Francisco has an industrial engineering degree, an MBA, and more than 20 years of experience in QI processes and projects in various industries. He has spent the last seven years in the Alberta Health Services (AHS) environment.



Francisco Aguirre