

Step 5.1 – Identify Root Cause

Root Cause and Contributing Factors Worksheet

Introduction

The use of tools such as flowcharts, fishbone diagrams, five whys, brainstorming, affinity grouping, and multi-voting help the team identify the root cause and contributing factors for an event. This worksheet helps record the findings from this investigation and analysis.

How to Use

1. Use this worksheet to document the root cause and contributing factors of an event.
2. Review the results of your team's analysis of the event.
3. Examine each contributing factor to find the root cause. The root cause is the occurrence or condition that directly produced the event. Root causes are underlying faulty processes or system issues that lead to the event or negative finding.
4. To determine if the team truly has found the root cause, ask these questions:
 - a. **Would the event have occurred if this cause had not been present?**
 - b. **Will the problem recur if this cause is corrected or eliminated?**

If “No” is the answer to both questions, then the team has identified the root cause.

If the answer is “Yes” to either question, the team needs to do some further analysis to get to the root cause.

5. Describe the problem on the worksheet, list the team members that participated in identifying the root cause and contributing factors, and document the date the worksheet is completed.
6. Record the root cause and contributing factors. Action plans will be based on addressing this root cause. Contributing factors can be addressed with the root cause or at a later time.

Root Cause and Contributing Factors

Problem Statement

| Root Cause | Contributing Factors |
|------------|----------------------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

To determine if the team truly has found the root cause, ask these questions:

- Would the event have occurred if this cause had not been present?
- Will the problem recur if this cause is corrected or eliminated?

If “No” is the answer to both questions, then the team has identified the root cause. If the answer is “Yes” to either question, the team needs to do some further analysis.

Copyright © 2014 Stratis Health

Produced under contract with the Minnesota Department of Health

Produced with the use of Federal Nursing Home Civil Money Penalty Funds

