

**Bringing Visibility and Vitality
to
Rural Hospitals in Texas**

**2010 AAMA Annual Conference
November 18, 2010**

**Hilton Clearwater Beach Resort
Clearwater, FL**

Now First Things First...

Howdy From Texas



Drive Friendly - The Texas Way

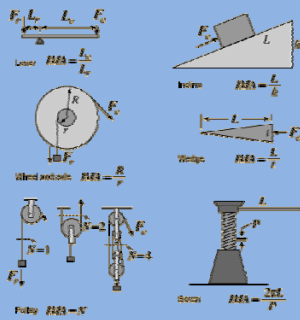
Who is this guy anyway?



Purpose of this presentation

- To encourage you to focus your efforts on working collectively to create a shared approach that improves the chance of success and sustainability.
- To help you seize the opportunities experienced by TORCH and other like-minded organizations.
- To share some stories about TORCH, as well as common characteristics and advice from several successful hospital networks and associations.

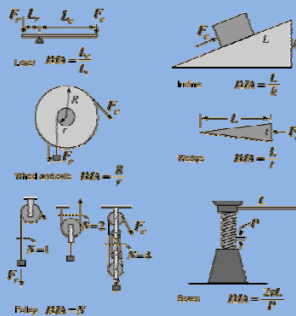
A Quick Lesson in Physics



A Quick Lesson in Physics

There are six types of simple machines:

- Levers
- Pulleys
- Wheels & axles
- Ramps
- Wedges
- Screws



Simple Machines

A simple machine is a device that can provide one of the two following benefits:

1. It can increase the force that is applied, so that the output (resistance) force is bigger than the input (effort) force.

OR

2. It can increase the speed at which a task is performed.

TORCH as a Simple Machine

- It increases the effort that is applied to issues affecting our members, so that the benefits are larger than what individual members could reasonably accomplish on their own.
- It increases the speed at which these benefits can be accrued.
- Best of all, you too can achieve both of these things and so much more.

Rural Hospital Network Summit

- Minneapolis, Minnesota
- December 15-16, 2009
- Sponsored by the National Rural Health Resource Center and the National Cooperative of Health Networks
- Funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration, Office of Rural Health Policy

One Word. Brrrrrrrrrr!



Who attended?

- Montana Rural Health Care Performance Improvement Network
- Western Healthcare Alliance
- The Hospital Cooperative
- National Cooperative of Health Networks
- Oregon Rural Healthcare Quality Network
- Montana AHEC and Office of Rural Health
- Rural Healthcare Quality Network
- University of Minnesota, Rural Health Research Center
- Upper Peninsula Michigan Network
- Federal Office of Rural Health and Policy
- Texas Organization of Rural & Community Hospitals
- Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network
- Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative

Goal of the summit

To tap into the collective wisdom of some experienced hospital network leaders.

- Most productive activities
- Critical success factors
- Lessons learned
- National knowledge center

Topics: Quality, HIT, finances, work force, governance & leadership



Quality Improvement

Challenges included:

- Participation by all network members
- Too much reporting, not enough information
- Statistical relevance due to small numbers
- Qualified staff is difficult to find

Lessons learned:

- Networks can encourage meaningful participation through peer support and collaboration
- Data must be used for decision support or it won't impact quality
- Networks can provide neutral ground to discuss quality issues
- Sharing successes and best practices improves outcomes
- Quality can be inexpensive and builds member loyalty and trust



Health Information Technology

Challenges included:

- Agreeing on a common system/ownership of data
- Achieving interoperability/exchange
- Shortage of skilled professionals
- Lack of capital funding to purchase EMR systems

Lessons learned:

- Networks must be involved in state/regional HIT policy and activities
- They should help formulate a vision for how HIT improves quality, safety, efficiency and productivity
- Recruit, train and share qualified HIT staff and consultants
- Seek capital funding, discount pricing and shared services



Finances

Challenges included:

- Constantly challenged to create a fair, but adequate dues structure
- Diversification of revenue, lack of investment capital
- Participation in newly developed products and services
- Uncertainty created by economics, reimbursement and reform

Lessons learned:

- Grants are a lucrative source of start up capital
- Finding stable sources of non-dues revenue is a must, focus on needs
- Always sell the value of the network to your members
- Get your members to commit to paying reasonable dues and to actively participate in the creation on new services
- Run like a business: strategic planning, business plans, ROI, et cetera

Work Force

Challenges included:

- Establishing a viable means for cooperative staffing activities
- Providing ongoing, high quality distance education and job training
- Getting an accurate picture of members' work force needs
- Address both short and long-term needs in light of shortages

Lessons learned:

- Develop relationships with qualified training institutions
- Look for new workforce models: pooling, training, recruiting
- Make training and recruiting an ongoing effort, but don't neglect retention.

Governance & Leadership

Challenges included:

- Providing quality education on governance, leadership and management
- Managing instability due to frequent turnover and resource limitations
- Ineffective board selection, governance training and practices
- Limited opportunities for network leaders to get together, share best practices, and learn from each other.

Lessons learned:

- Review the mission, vision and strategic goals regularly
- Network religiously and provide ongoing training
- Complete self-assessments and have a succession plan in place
- Employ consultants, mentors, meaningful objectives and accountability

Time for a quick break

- Texas is the only state to have the flags of 6 different nations fly over it.
- The state was an independent nation from 1836 to 1845 and is the only state to enter the US by treaty.
- El Paso is closer to Needles, California than it is to Dallas.
- More land is farmed in Texas than in any other state.
- Texas has the largest rural population in the nation. Greater than the total population of 21 states and is larger than the combined populations of Alaska, North Dakota, Vermont, Wyoming and the District of Columbia.
- Birthplace of Rodeo, Dr. Pepper, Dell Computers, Jalepeno Jelly and Indoor Football.

Why do organizations like TORCH form?

- Economies of scale
- Greater access to funding
- Advocacy at the regional, state and national level
- Develop new products and services
- Increased manpower and technical expertise
- Address common needs

Why do organizations like TORCH form?

- Share education, information and other resources
- Networking and peer support
- Enable benchmarking and improvement
- Meet future challenges and create opportunities
- Et Cetera, Et Cetera, Et Cetera

Where We've Found Our Success

- Upper Payment Limit Program
- Medicaid DSH Carve Out
- Physician Employment Initiative
- Broadband Coverage
- Education Programming
- Hospital Management and Consulting
- Other Member-Driven Initiatives

7 Measures of Success for Associations

- Building a customer service culture
- Align products and services with mission
- Being data-driven
- Foster dialogue and engagement
- Being a broker of ideas
- Organizational adaptability
- Building alliances

A question I have often asked myself

- Are we a network?
 - A somewhat informal, interconnected or interrelated chain, group, or system
- Or an association?
 - An organization of persons having a common interest
- Does it even matter?
 - Just do whatever works. Odds are it will change.

Conclusion

Think about this during the rest of the meeting:

- Who are you working with already and why?
 - Stay true to your roots and true to your mission
- What is it that keeps you up at night?
 - These are the areas that you should focus on
- How quickly can we start, now that health reform is here?
 - Even in the midst of chaos, there lies an opportunity





Thank You For Allowing Us This
Opportunity!
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