



Huddle Up for Safer Healthcare: 10 years of Huddling...

Bringing fun to the frontline!



The Improvement Academy is celebrating 10 years of its flagship HUSH programme: an evidence-based intervention that has consistently demonstrated significant improvement in staff team-working, job satisfaction and safety culture, and a reduction in patient harm.

"I understand if a patient is at risk, more now than ever before because I don't have to seek out information because any issues are highlighted by the huddle."

Healthcare Assistant

HUSH provides a structured approach for implementing safety huddles in healthcare settings and encourages all team members (clinical and non-clinical) to come together briefly every day with a focus on an area of harm. The shared knowledge at the huddle improves situational awareness and teamwork, thus reducing patient harm as harms are anticipated and prevented and errors are learnt from.

Over the last 10 years we have been studying and supporting the implementation of whole team HUSH safety huddles in a variety of settings and despite challenging times including a pandemic, teams have achieved amazing results and we are proud of them all!

"Over the last 10 years HUSH huddles have developed from an idea developed and tested by frontline 'guinea pig' healthcare teams in Yorkshire to a validated, evidence-based intervention that has been shown to improve teamwork & culture and reduce patient harm across a wide variety of healthcare settings across the UK. I can't wait to see how it develops further over the next 10 years!"

Dr Anna Winfield

Geriatrician and Specialist in Elderly Medicine and Quality Improvement, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

- We've supported 500 teams.
- Worked with 32 organisations across the UK.
- Worked in 9 Healthcare delivery settings including, Mental Health, Community, Primary Care, Care Homes, Prison Health teams, Hospices, and Acute hospital wards.
- Teams have reduced harm in 16 different areas including, falls, pressure ulcers, deterioration, medication errors, restrictive practice, violence and aggression.
- In the last 10 years, Huddles have helped to prevent over 12,000 falls.
- We have issued over 2000 certificates to teams reaching their harm reduction milestones.
- In 2015 we were awarded a £500,000 grant from the Health Foundation to scale up the intervention.



"[Team] members work more co-operatively when caring for patients and are able to help each other more effectively."

Staff Nurse

An **independent evaluation** by the University of Bradford stated that following the implementation of HUSH huddles more than three quarters of frontline team respondents reported¹ improvements in communication (88%), teamwork (79%) and safety culture (75%) on their wards. 83% indicated they would miss the safety huddle if it were stopped tomorrow.

An **independent evaluation** by the University of York Health Economics Consortium showed an overall return on investment of 107%.

The HUSH programme won the HSJ Value Awards 2018 Patient Safety category for enhancing value through increasing patient safety and reducing litigation. Our initiative to introduce Huddles into all Sue Ryder's Hospices was shortlisted in 2023 for QI initiative of the year at the HSJ Patient Safety Awards and in the same awards' ceremony was awarded as 'highly commended' for the Huddles work in an in-patient mental health setting in Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust.

"Huddles are the best thing we've ever done."

Senior Sister, St James's University Hospital

If you are interested in implementing safety huddles in your organisation or learning more, visit our website on www.improvementacademy.org or email academy@yhia.nhs.uk and one of our team will be in touch.

¹ The results listed can be found under the findings on page xi of the Evaluation Report