AHRQ Safety Program for Improving

Surgical Care and Recovery

Developing an Elevator Pitch: A Tool for Building and Communicating a Vision for the Program

What Is This Tool?

Once your team has identified stakeholders for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Safety Program for Improving Surgical Care and Recovery (ISCR), it is time to engage those stakeholders and ask for their input and support. Before approaching and engaging the stakeholders, though, your team should have a shared sense of purpose and a common vision for your program. This tool will help your team develop and communicate that vision in a way that is concise, clear, and compelling.

Why Should I Use This Tool?

Not everyone you speak with will have time to talk with you at length about your program, so developing a 30-60 seconds elevator pitch is a great way to quickly but effectively communicate your vision and ask for support. Your pitch can be used in any setting when time with your stakeholder is limited and you want to capitalize on having their undivided attention.

Keep in mind that one pitch may not fit all. Consider developing one pitch, and then think about how to tailor the pitch to your different stakeholders’ expertise and perspectives.

How Do I Use This Tool?

Within your core team, refine a vision for your ISCR program and use the attached worksheet to develop an effective way to communicate that vision with stakeholders. Specifically, you need to discuss and answer the following questions:

* **Who are you?** Describe what makes your team credible and capable.
* **Who are you speaking with?** Define the audience (or multiple audiences) for your team’s vision.
* **What problem do you want to solve?** Clarify how your team is making care better for perioperative patients.
* **Why is your program the solution?** Describe how clinical and cultural aspects of your ISCR program may help to accomplish your hospital’s quality improvement goals.
* **What is the timeline?** Describe when changes will be coming.
* **What help do you need?** Invite others to join your vision for better perioperative care.

Your Elevator Pitch

Instructions

You have a rare opportunity! You’ve raced to an elevator and discovered, as the doors close, that you and a respected colleague are sharing a ride up to the 10th floor. You want to get this person excited about implementing ISCR.

Develop an elevator pitch that captures why the potential stakeholder or ally should engage with the work your team will be doing. A persuasive elevator pitch includes a hook and an explanation, addresses the needs and/or motivation of your audience, provides credentials, and makes a request.

***Remember:*** The elevator moves quickly — keep your pitch to 60 seconds or less.

| Question | Fill in the following to get you started |
| --- | --- |
| Who are you?  Highlight what makes you a credible source | *- Enter here* |
| Who are you speaking with?  Keep your audience in mind — what factors will motivate this specific person/group? | *- Enter here* |
| What problem do you want to solve? | *- Enter here* |
| Why is ISCR the solution?  Highlight what success could look like | *- Enter here* |
| What is the timeline? | *- Enter here* |
| What do you need from your colleague and what would your colleague’s time commitment be in that timeframe? | *- Enter here* |

What Other Resources Can I Use?

The Elevator Pitch Tool is designed to support your ISCR implementation. But other resources can help, too. The following tools can help with building a vision based on input from your multidisciplinary team.

* [**Engaging Senior Executives Presentation Template**](https://www.ahrq.gov/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/hai/tools/surgery/9-senior-executives.docx) **and** [**Frontline Provider Education Presentation Template**](https://www.ahrq.gov/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/hai/tools/surgery/10-frontline-provider.pptx)
  + Both of these resources have language that your team can adapt to your elevator pitch, including purpose and goals for the ISCR program and examples of what data providers and senior executives consider important.
* **Understand the Science of Safety module**
  + The AHRQ Safety Program for Improving Surgical Care and Recovery applied and adapted The Comprehensive Unit-based Safety Program (CUSP) for its framework and approach. [CUSP](https://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/education/curriculum-tools/cusptoolkit/index.html) is a patient safety model that involves improvement in safety culture, teamwork, and communication to promote consistent use of evidence-based practices. The [Understand the Science of Safety module](https://www.ahrq.gov/hai/cusp/modules/understand/index.html) (e.g., presentation slides, video) may be helpful in developing your team’s vision of safer care, and in talking with some stakeholders.
* **Evidence reviews conducted on ISCR programs**
  + For some stakeholders, referencing evidence that supports the benefits of ISCR processes in your elevator pitch may be helpful to engage them in this work.

AHRQ Pub. No. 23-0052

June 2023