

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Transforming Outreach Clinical Laboratory Services - An ADKAR based Change Management Approach

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Medical laboratories are a field that requires continuous innovation and development to meet the rising demands of modern healthcare. With an increasing focus on precision medicine, reducing diagnostic errors, and improving turnaround times, ongoing advancement is essential to stay aligned with the latest lab developments. However, implementing change, especially in complex lab systems, can be challenging. It often involves overcoming technical, organizational, and human barriers to ensure successful and sustainable transformation. It is for this reason that effective models of change are developed for high efficiency settings, such as clinical laboratories. One such model is the Prosci ADKAR model, that aims to create a 5-step process (each letter in the acronym ADKAR represents one step) to effectively implement changes [1].

The usage of the AKDAR model has been previously studied within the healthcare setting. The model was successfully utilized by healthcare professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic to guide staffing adjustments in response to the surge in patient volume [2]. In Australia, the AKDAR model was used to implement automation of laboratory pap smear sample testing [3]. Similarly, Nottingham Children's Hospital used the AKDAR model to help achieve the American Nursing Credentialing Centre's Pathway to Excellence accreditation, making it the first institution in Europe to receive this accreditation [4].

Given that the AKDAR model has been shown to be an

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Table 1. ADKAR Change Management Model.

Step	Description	Key Questions
A - Awareness	Understanding the need for change	<i>Why is this change necessary?</i>
D - Desire	Motivation to participate in the change	<i>Do I want to be part of this change?</i>
K - Knowledge	Learning how to change	<i>How will I make this change happen?</i>
A - Ability	Effectively applying skills to implement change	<i>Can I perform as expected with the new systems?</i>
R - Reinforcement	Sustaining the change	<i>How will this change be maintained?</i>

A: Awareness of the need for change. It is important that members of a particular team understand the need for change. Without this understanding, teams may face resistance when implementing modern technologies, particularly ones that members are not used to or familiar with. It is important that leaders communicate how these newer systems are benefiting the eventual outcome and how they modify the process.

D: Desire. Even though there is an adequate understanding of the need for change, some members of teams may still resist due to apprehensions with regards to workload, quality, and disruption of an understood system. It is important that leaders address individual concerns and emphasize the importance of the quality of care provided. Data supporting the newer method may be shared to help address any concerns laboratory workers may have.

K: Knowledge. Before any system can be successfully implemented, it is necessary that there is adequate knowledge of it. Limited knowledge can affect the reliability and efficiency of the system and cause it to cause harm rather than benefit. As such, it is the responsibility of the leadership to ensure that there is adequate knowledge of the system, and to create a process to teach new systems to members of the team. Furthermore, as different members of a laboratory have different roles, it is important to ensure that there is adequate knowledge for each step in a process.

A: Ability. Before any new system can be implemented successfully, it is important that members of a team can implement their knowledge in a real lab setting. For this, it is important that they have the means to practice their knowledge in practice or trial settings before it is implemented. This ensures that any errors can be ironed out, and the process can be perfected. It is the duty of the team leader to ensure each member of a team has adequate ability to perform the task they are assigned.

R: Reinforcement. It is important that any change be reinforced to prevent relapses to the older methods. As such, metrics and data should be analyzed to help reinforce the effectiveness of the newer method as compared to the old. Furthermore, guidelines supporting the newer methods should also be established.

effective tool in change management in the healthcare setting, as well as its useful specifically in the setting of clinical laboratories, we believe it may serve as an effective tool for change implementation in the setting of clinical laboratories in Pakistan.

Declaration of Interest:

None declared.

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