

5 Whys – Asking Why Five Times

This simple technique of Asking Why is used to analyze the causes of problems.

How to use it

Asking Why involves repeatedly asking “why?” until the answer is ‘because that’s the way it is’. At this point, it is likely that you have identified a root cause of the problem. If tackled and removed or fixed, the observed symptoms (low AV Fistula rates) should also disappear.

For Example:

1. **Why** are our AV Fistula rates low? Because all of our new patients start with catheters only.
2. **Why** do all of our new patients start with catheters? Because they did not receive early referral to Nephrologists.
3. **Why** did they not receive early referral? Because PCP lacks knowledge of CKD care.
4. **Why** does PCP lack this knowledge? Because ESRD professionals have not provided the education necessary.
5. **Why** has the necessary education not been provided? No one has taken the initiative to provide the resources/education to the PCP.

Plan: IDT will obtain list of referring PCPs and provide them an educational packet along with a letter letting them know that the Nephrologist does not want to take their patient but wants to collaborate with them. See action Plan

Although called ‘Asking Why Five Times’, five is a rule of thumb. There may be more or less questions depending on the particular situation. It is important to beware of channeling your analysis down one avenue and completely ignoring other root causes of the same problem.



5 Whys- Root Cause Analysis Form

Facility Name & CMS Provider Number _____

Date: _____

Project Contact Name: _____

Email Address _____

1. **Why** is the facility AV Fistula rate low? Because
2. **Why**
3. **Why**
4. **Why**
5. **Why**

Action to be taken - See Attached Action Plan



QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Facility Name & CMS Provider Number _____

Date: _____

Project Contact Name: _____

Email Address _____

TARGET OUTCOME/GOAL: _____

Opportunity for Improvement :(problem statement linked to specific indicators): Achieve, maintain or exceed performance target as listed above.

Current Situation: What is your facility’s percent of patients using an AV Fistula for dialysis?
_____ %

Problem Identification: List at least one problem that your IDT identified, using the 5 Whys, that you plan to work on to improve AV Fistula rates.

Activities Underway/Process(es) Involved: What project does your facility have underway to achieve, maintain or improve AV Fistula Rates?

If using a protocol for management, does your facility perform chart audits?
Yes _____ No _____

If audits are performed, how often? _____

If not, how does your facility document that protocols are being followed?

Improvement Actions: Implement QIP. Inform all personnel about the QIP and what is expected.