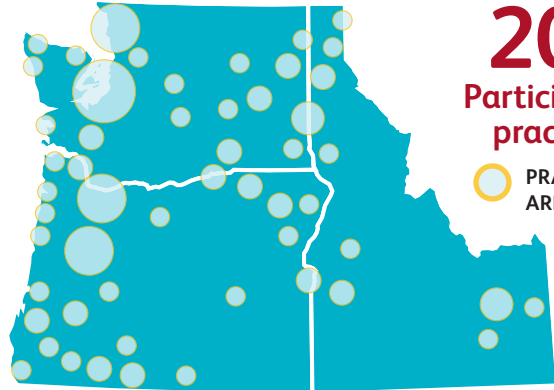


2018 Executive Summary

Healthy Hearts Northwest is wrapping up and our study team is hard at work to disseminate our findings! We look forward to sharing what we have learned with you over the next year.

Healthy Hearts Northwest (H2N)

was a study about improving cardiovascular risk factors by expanding the quality improvement (QI) capacity within small- and medium-sized practices in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Practices worked directly with an H2N coach for 21 months to identify potential improvements and make progress toward their goals. Thank you for being part of this important effort to improve patients' heart health!



209
Participating
practices
 PRACTICE
AREAS

209 small primary care practices representing 1,100 clinicians using 36 different electronic health records participated in H2N.

Cardiovascular risk factors at participating practices are improving!



Appropriate Use of Aspirin has increased from **67.1% to 70.2%**



Control of High Blood Pressure has improved from **60.4% to 62.5%**



Statin Therapy for Cholesterol improved from **65.7% to 66.3%**



Screening and Smoking Cessation Intervention improved from **70.3% to 76.7%**

*Data current as of September 2017

H2N was one of seven regional cooperatives in EvidenceNOW.

EvidenceNOW is an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) initiative dedicated to helping small- and medium-sized primary care practices across the country use the latest evidence to improve the heart health of millions of Americans.

- 1,500 primary care practices representing 5,000 clinicians and 8.1 million patients participated.

- 1 in 3 EvidenceNOW practices operate in medically underserved areas and 71% had five or fewer clinicians.
- Follow EvidenceNOW's progress at www.escalates.org and www.ahrq.gov/EvidenceNOW



**HEALTHY HEARTS
NORTHWEST**

An EvidenceNOW Project



Common challenges and successful strategies we learned about through H2N

Using an electronic health record (EHR) is hard.

If your practice is struggling with your EHR, you are not alone. Many H2N practices struggled with generating data and numerous other aspects of their EHRs.

- Twenty-four H2N practices switched EHRs during the study, and one actually switched systems more than once!
- Practices overcame key challenges by learning more about EHR reports and developing tailored workflows for specific measures. In many cases, practices worked on QI without EHR data.
- Maintaining an open specific dialogue with their EHR vendor was key, and communicating changes or issues to all staff helped to keep everyone on the same page.

Finding and retaining a full staff is challenging.

It is all too common that primary care practices are short on providers, clinical staff, or other positions. This not only puts more strain on day-to-day operations, but also makes it even more difficult to undertake QI efforts.

- Practices found that engaging staff from all areas helped to incorporate different viewpoints, maximize everyone's abilities, and spread out the workload.
- Having open, two-way communication with all staff about QI priorities helped speed up implementation and reduced resistance to change.

Having adequate time, space, and capacity to undertake QI is rare.

Healthcare is an incredibly busy industry, and even the most QI-ready practices sometimes struggle to undertake meaningful, ongoing QI. It is difficult to balance competing efforts and allocate resources.

- Practices improved on this by developing clear priorities and identifying work that their staff were passionate about.
- They also found that many QI initiatives have similar goals, and efforts could be combined to reduce their workload.
- Even though it's difficult to do, walking away from a project or change that isn't working was also crucial to long-term success.

Watch for findings from H2N coming soon!

The H2N study team is busy compiling and analyzing all the information we collected. Over the next year, we will share our findings with you and others in the QI community through a series of reports, presentations, Regional Improvement Collaboratives, and publications in medical journals.

Get the latest H2N findings at www.healthyheartsnw.org and www.escalates.org

Thank you to all participating practices, community partners, and others who supported H2N! Your hard work and dedication made a difference!