Change Management

Foundational Curricula:
Cluster 10: Leadership & Management
Module 20: Issue and Communication Management
Unit 3: Change Management
FC-C10M20U3

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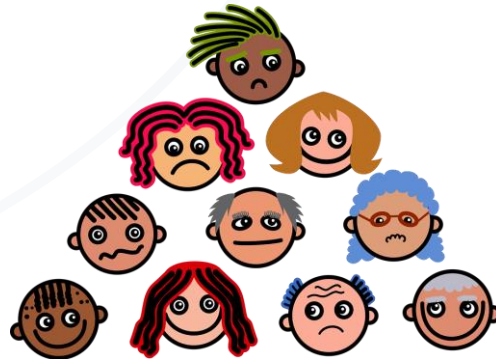
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Unit Objectives

- Describe the change management process in evaluating, recommending and implementing health IT/eHealth and related information systems

- Incorporate methods of project management and change management into HIT/eHealth/health informatics functions for clinical data

- Identify the barriers to successful informatics-enabled change and analyze how each barrier might be tackled or prevented through the use of effective change management techniques and good practice
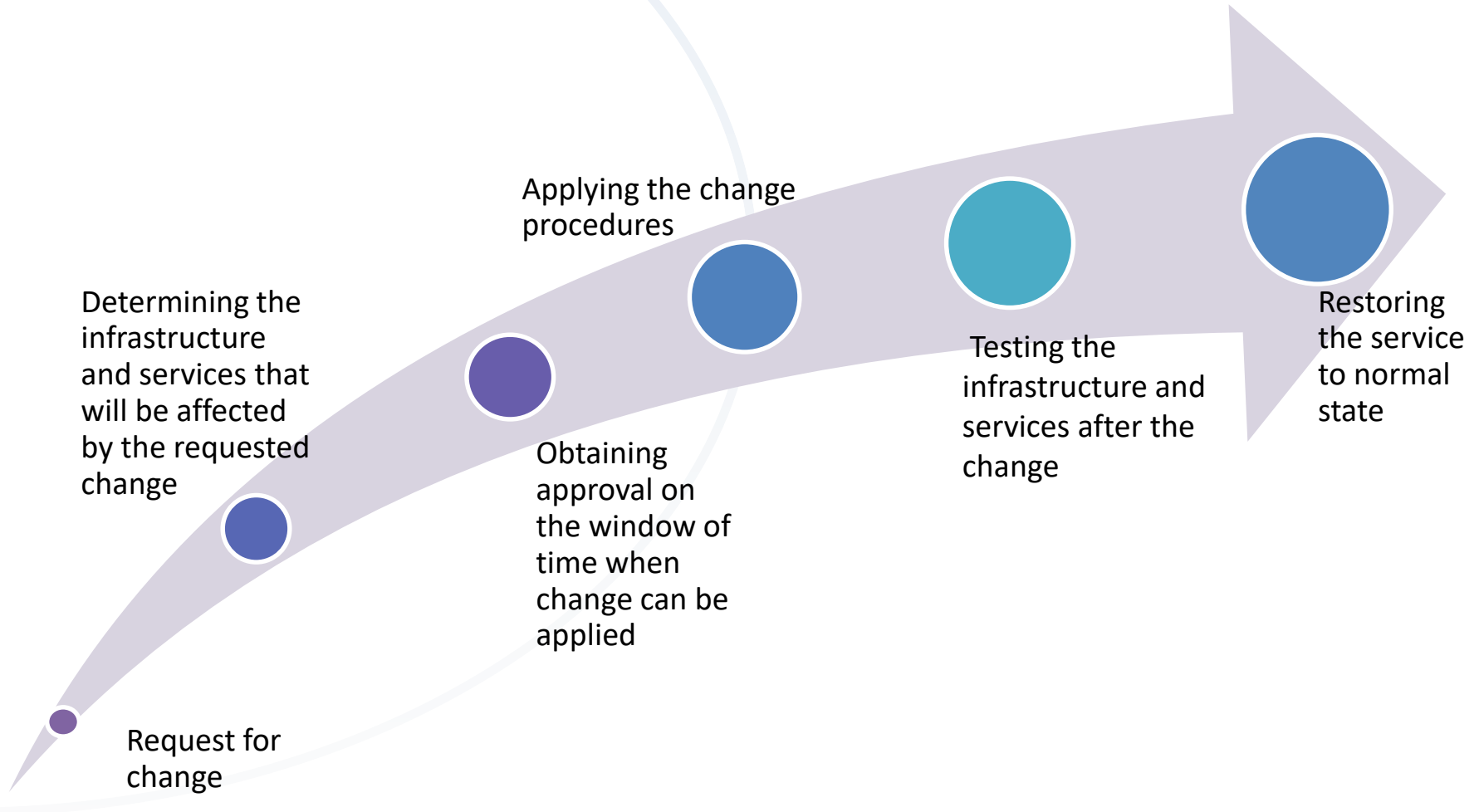
Change management in eHealth

- "**Change** is the movement of the company away from its present state toward some desired future state to increase its competitive advantage" (Hill and Jones, 2001, 486).

- **Change management** is about evaluating, planning and implementing operations, tactics and strategies and making sure that the change is worthwhile and relevant. Change management always includes both, the technological side and the people side aspects.

Key steps in change management process

Applying the change procedures

Determining the infrastructure and services that will be affected by the requested change

Restoring the service to normal state

Testing the infrastructure and services after the change

Obtaining approval on the window of time when change can be applied

Request for change

Project and change management in health informatics

- Project and change management procedures apply in health informatics similar to other fields. The steps introduced in the previous slide are taken in health informatics related projects as well, but the specifications of IT projects and patient data handling are taken into account.

- When making health IT changes, the harm for patients and downtime of a system need to be minimized, thus changes are made during specific times of the week. For example the busiest (a lot of patients) and the quietest times (not a lot of staff) are avoided, as well as times right before public holidays or weekends

- Project management (and change management) include the normal procedures from IT projects, but patient data is very delicate and should be handled with care. If patient data would be corrupted during an IT project, it might be a big harm for the patient in future care or in insurance policies

Barriers to successful change

- The success of change management process depends not only on thoughtful planning and implementation, but most importantly consultation with and involvement of, the people affected by change. There are many reasons why change so often fails:

- **Lack of communication:** Without a clear communication structure and strategy, those workers who will use the system often can't get their concerns or comments about the project heard.

  - Management should communicate often, throughout the planning and implementation of the changes. Describing the benefits of the change and what employees will get from it is essential. Management should also explain exactly the how and when the changes will affect everyone, and dispel rumors.

Barriers to successful change (cont'd)

- **User resistance**: Uncertainty arises, users often are unclear of the future and see the new system as a potential threat to their job. Some users have the feeling of losing control or recognition as an expert by leveling the playing field. A lack of confidence in the skill set needed for the new system.

  - Management should include those from interested parties, user's opinions must be considered, recruit the 'expert' users of the old system to help in the system change.

- **Technical Problems and Complexity:** Employees who used a system that worked correctly and are suddenly required to use a system with bugs and features that do not work as planned.

  - During the system selection it may be useful to select less complex system. During the implementation effective support and training is required.

Barriers to successful change (cont'd)

- **There is not enough sense of urgency:** The users may not be committed or be able to devote sufficient time to learn to use the new system. This increases the amount of time needed and will lead to an increase in cost.
  - Adding more top-management driving force may be needed.

- **Declaring victory too soon:** Although the information system is implemented, it is not fully used by end users.
  - More traing may be needed, in addition buy-in has to come from senior management. They should make the techonogy part of the routine.

- **There are no short-term wins:** The project waits for the big finish when all results are delivered at once and users are expected to keep the faith until the day of deliverance.
  - Social events, redistribution of work, a team building exercises, reducing the size of deliverables may encourage the team.
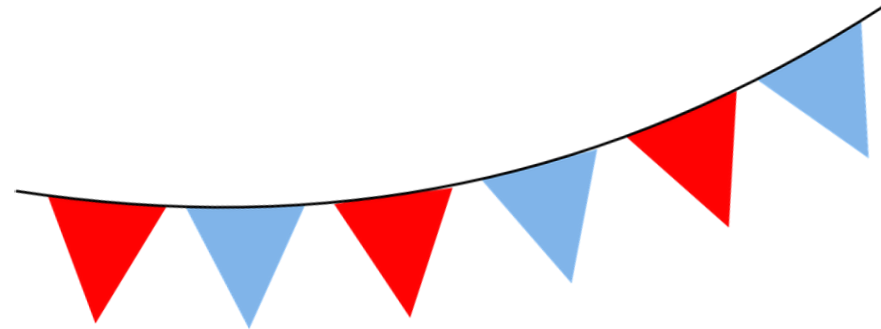
Unit Review Checklist

❑ Described the change management process in evaluating, recommending and implementing health IT/eHealth and related information systems (FA18)

❑ Incorporated methods of project management and change management into HIT/eHealth/health informatics functions for clinical data (FA10)

❑ Identified the barriers to successful informatics-enabled change and analyze how each barrier might be tackled or prevented through the use of effective change management techniques and good practice (FA09)

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1. Consider the following scenario: You have invested a big amount of time and money into the latest electronic health record system for your organization; there has been training sessions for all your staff and the functions of the new system should have made everyone's life easier. Months later people still persist in their old ways. Why?

2. Name the key steps in the change management process.

Unit Exam

1. Change management is about
   a) Creating a common understanding of why the system is being implemented
   b) Making people feel more uncertain and fearful
   c) Designing a better database for the information

2. Each change has an estimated time for completion
   a) True
   b) False

3. When implementing an EHR system, many organizations focus their time and effort on engaging employees who will be using the system the most when they should be more concentrated on gaining approval from leadership executives.

    a) True

    b) False

4. Creating a sense of urgency alerts employees that the change must occur.

    a) True

    b) False