

Using a Fishbone Diagram for Cause and Effect Analysis

WHAT IS IT AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

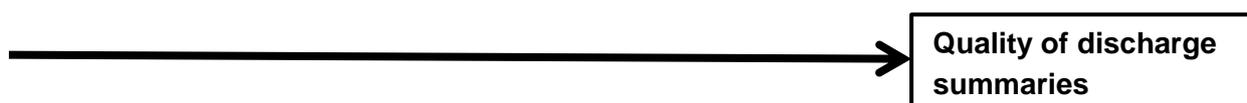
This is a quality improvement tool which helps you to quickly and thoroughly think through your problem/issue and identify the causes of the problem. The tool ensures that you identify all the causes of the problem including the root causes and those which are not immediately obvious. It helps you to understand the problem more clearly and to identify areas which merit further exploration. By identifying the root cause of the problem you will be better able to implement changes which work to resolve the problem.

WHO SHOULD COMPLETE IT?

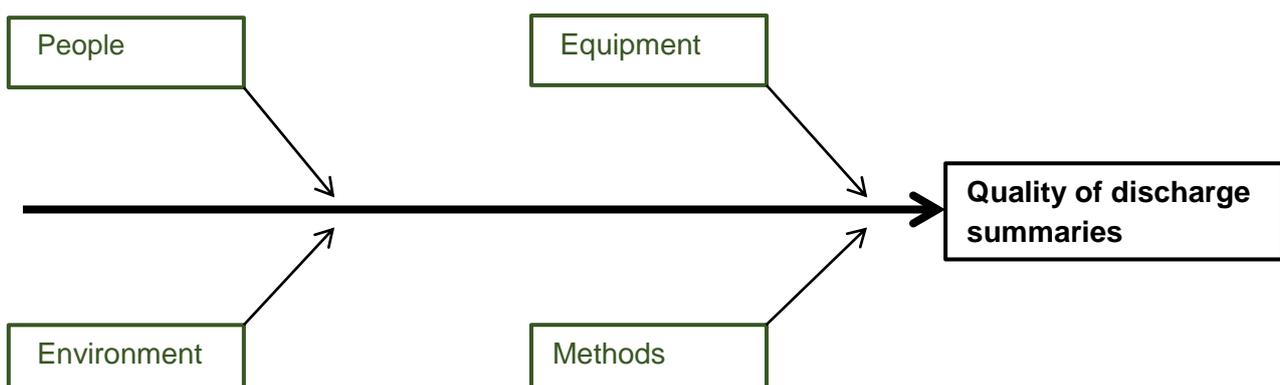
It is best to adopt a team approach in completing a Fishbone diagram. The team should include your key stakeholders and any patient involvement representatives. This means that everybody has an opportunity to provide their personal insights into the problem, to gain additional insights and possible solutions. This shared contribution means that the team focuses on the content of the problem and not individual interests. Overall, it supports development of a team consensus around the problem.

HOW TO COMPLETE IT?

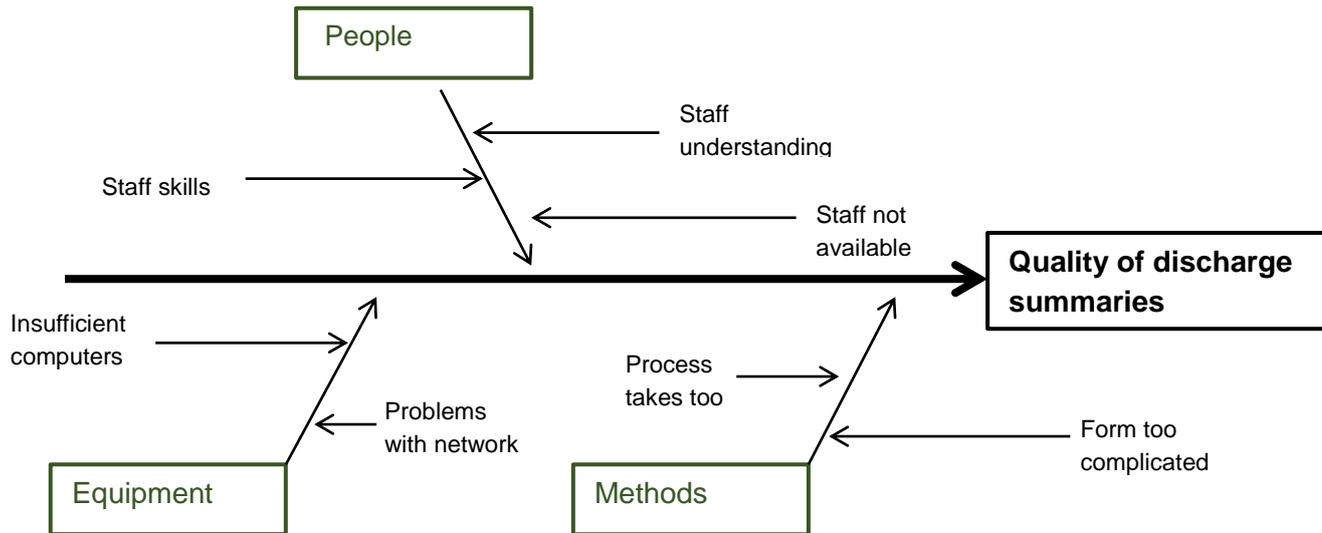
1. Write the problem in a box and draw an arrow pointing towards it.



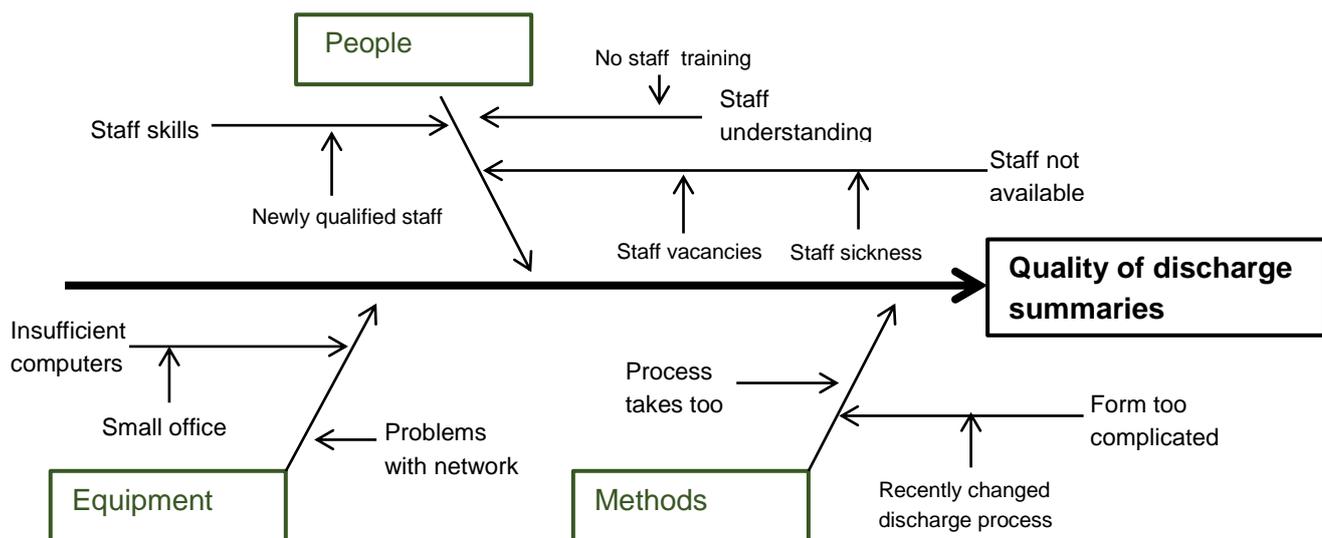
2. Identify the major categories of potential causes of the problem. For each one draw a branch off the large arrow and label them accordingly.



3. Take each of the main categories one at a time and brainstorm all the possible causes of the problem.



4. Explore each sub category to identify their potential causes. Continue branching off until every possible cause, or 'cause of a cause', has been identified.



5. You can now investigate each of the most likely causes further. This may involve collecting further data via surveys, interviews, or exploring existing routinely collected data if applicable to decide whether the causes identified are correct.

6. Plan and implement the quality improvement change.