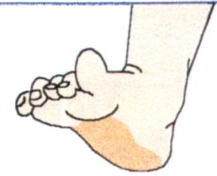


Simple Steps to Successful Audit



What is Audit?

Audit is a way of improving patient care by looking at what you do, to see if you can do it better.

What are the Seven Simple Steps to Success?

1) Identify area/problem for audit

You may decide to audit an area of care which is causing concern, or is a special interest to your practice. It's best to choose an area where there is good evidence to indicate what should ideally happen.

2) What should be happening?

Decide on criteria and standards

A criterion is a specific element of care or activity that can be measured. A standard is the actual number count applied to a criterion. It may reflect ideal practice or minimal acceptable practice. A standard of 100% may not always be realistic or appropriate.

3) Plan audit method

What data needs to be collected? where from? how much? by whom (and do they know it)?! how will it be analysed? where will results be presented? Pilot your method to iron out any problems.

4) Collect and analyse data

Apply a uniform approach and use a simple data collection form.

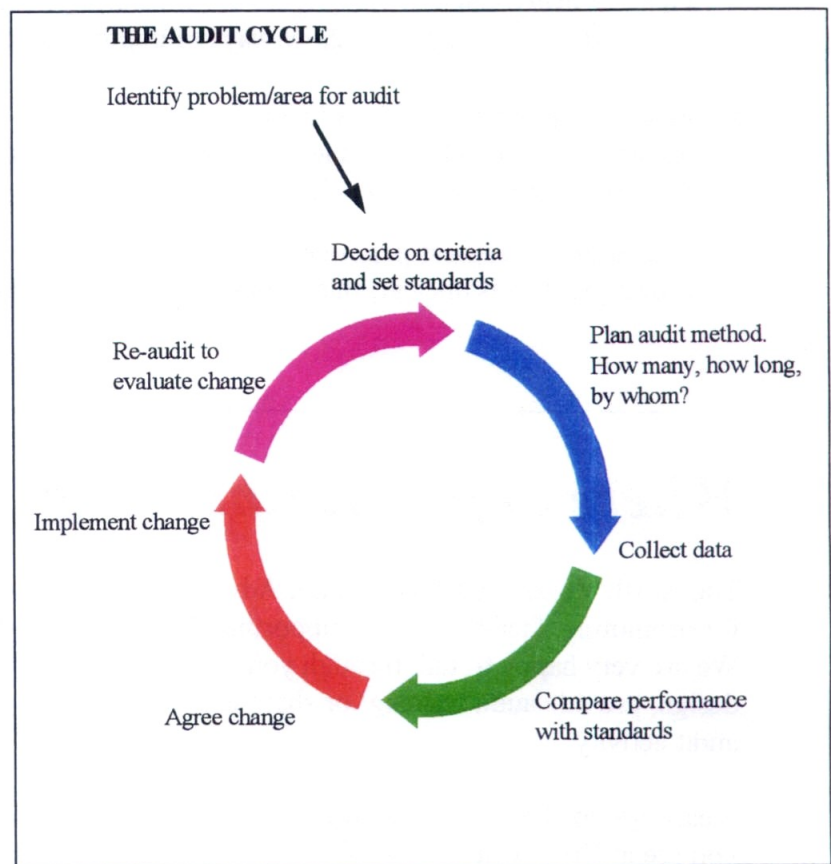
5) Compare performance with standards

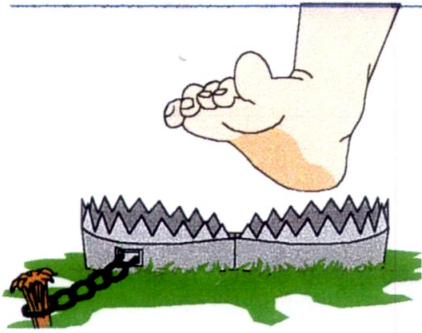
Is there room for improvement?

6) Agree, plan and implement changes

Making changes is often the most difficult part of the audit process, and it requires careful planning. Present your audit results clearly to the rest of the practice team, demonstrating the need for change; Discuss the issues and try to reach a consensus on the changes to be made; Nominate a person(s) to be responsible for co-ordinating the change. Think about **who** will be involved, **what** the changes will involve, **where** they will happen and **how** they will be implemented. Remember ... it is easier to implement changes if all relevant people feel involved.

7) Has it made a difference? - Re-audit





A Word of Warning!

It is easy to get caught out by the following ...

- 1) Clear objectives not set**
It is hard to provide a clear answer without a clear question.
- 2) Standards not set**
Evidence based standards provide a yardstick against which to compare and interpret results.
- 3) Poor planning and lack of pilot study**
Think of *every* stage of the project before starting, and then follow this by a pilot study. In almost all cases a pilot will show ways of improving the original design.
- 4) Problems identified not addressed**
Involving people who are able to change a situation, and those affected by it from the onset of a project will aid change if it's required.
- 5) Auditing where best practice is unclear**
If best practice is unclear, this is an area for further research before audit.

Where to find further help

The North Yorkshire Clinical Audit Advisory Service is responsible for promoting, facilitating and supporting Primary Care audit activity. We are very happy to talk through your audit idea and advise on design, provide audit training, or share examples of local and national audit activity.

Please do not hesitate to contact us on 01904 825218, or next time you are in York, call in at the CAAS office. We are based on the 4th Floor, Ryedale Building, Piccadilly, York, YO1 1PE.

