Improving the CME Application Using QI Principles

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AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS
Inspiring Quality:
Highest Standards, Better Outcomes
100+years

PartnerCME
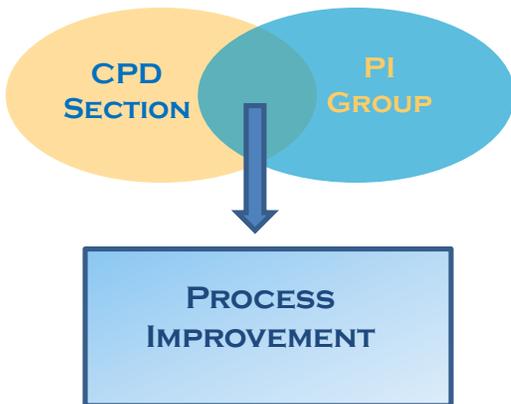JOINT PROVIDERSHIP PROGRAM
ACS DIVISION OF EDUCATION

BACKGROUND

Continuing Medical Education has become more sophisticated and **complicated**, and in order to **stay relevant** in our processes and offerings, we must harness the power of **quality improvement tools.**

The American College of Surgeons' (ACS) Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Accreditation Section partnered with the ACS Performance Improvement (PI) group to **enhance the CME Application process** with the goal of maintaining compliance while accrediting quality educational programs.
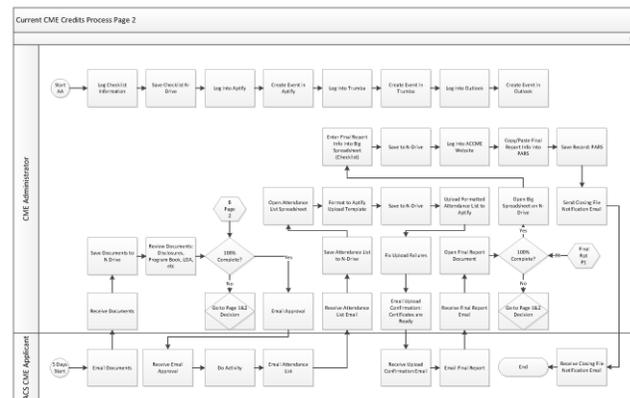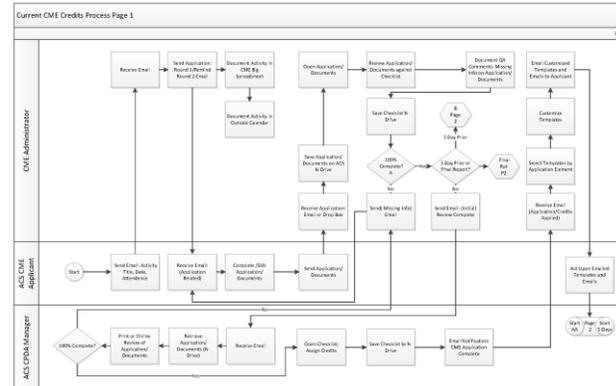
OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this project was to **utilize quality improvement tools** to convert a mostly **hard copy** CME Application **process to an electronic version**, with the help of the PI Group at ACS.
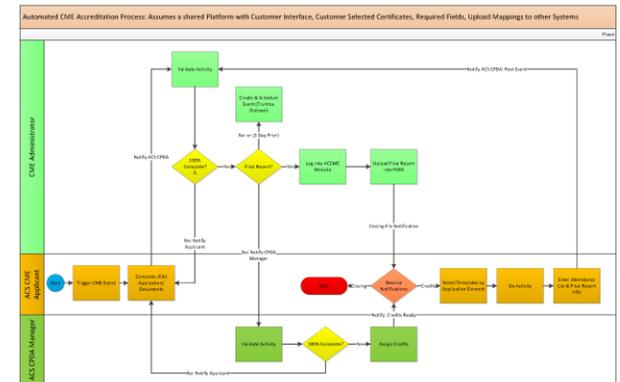
CPD Section

PI Group

PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

METHODS

❖ Relevant parties from across the institution convened
❖ PI principles were introduced
❖ PI staff facilitated a discussion to help all involved best understand the CME Application process:
 → Identifying the **critical steps** using a brief verb-noun term for each,
 → **Assigning process steps** to relevant parties,
 → Using sticky notes to illustrate the exact **sequence** of activities, and
 → Creating a **flow chart diagram** representing the process.

Current CME Credits Process Page 1

Current CME Credits Process Page 2

RESULTS

❖ A diagram of the streamlined process was developed; the number of steps in the process **reduced by 84% (from 80 to 13 steps!).**
→ *Reduction resulted from removing redundancy and manual processes.*
❖ Opportunities for further enhancement were identified.
❖ Information provided guidance to potential vendors being sought to develop an online CME Application system.

Automated CME Accreditation Process: Assumes a shared Platform with Customer Interface, Customer Selected Certificates, Required Fields, Upload Mappings to other Systems

CONCLUSION

❖ This project provided an opportunity to **enhance CME related processes** for greater efficiency, compliance and outcomes.
❖ Through the use of Performance Improvement (PI) tools, necessary **process components and sequencing were identified**.
❖ As a result of the collaboration between the PI Group and the Division of Education, there is now a record of the stream-lined process for **knowledge management purposes**.