

CUSP Tool: Culture Assessment: Where to Start A Guide for CUSP Coordinators

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Research has shown that assessing culture at the unit level, debriefing results to frontline staff, and creating action plans to implement interventions can improve unit culture and clinical outcomes. It is the first task in the Pre-CUSP phase on the Phaseline. Administering culture assessments is relatively new to healthcare and some organizations may not have fully integrated surveying into their patient safety work.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS TOOL AND HOW-TO GUIDE:

The purpose of the Culture Assessment:Where to Start Guide is to provide a guide for CUSP coordinators to use to determine if their organization has administered a culture assessment, where to look for results, and what to do if data is not available.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS TOOL?

- The organization-level CUSP Coordinator should use this tool when planning CUSP implementation throughout a health system, entity, or at the unit level.

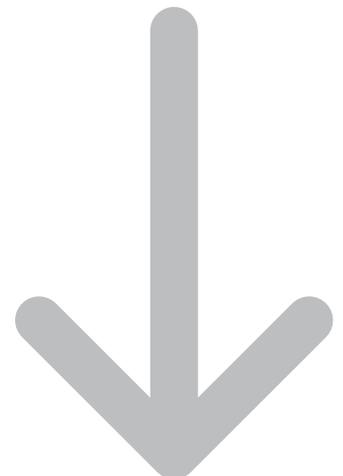
WHEN SHOULD THIS TOOL BE USED?

- The Culture Assessment:Where to Start Guide should be used during the pre-CUSP phase of the Phaseline.
- See The CUSP Phaseline:A Checklist To Independence document for more insight on the tasks of pre-CUSP.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL:

- It is best to work through this guide in the order it is written.

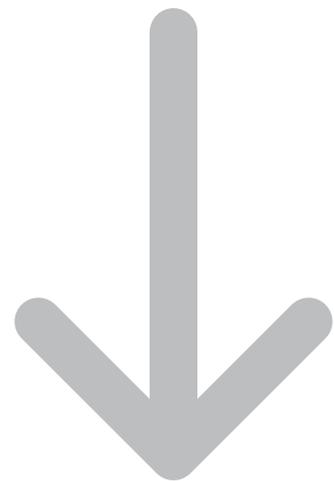
Note: Materials, tools, and webinars referenced in this document can be found at:
hopkinsmedicine.org/armstrong_institute/



WHERE TO LOOK FOR CULTURE OF SAFETY ASSESSMENT DATA

■ If you are not sure whether your organization, department, or unit has administered a culture of safety assessment to date (e.g., a survey or questionnaire completed by clinicians and staff), we suggest double-checking with the following departments.

- Central patient safety, quality improvement, or performance improvement department
- Department or Division administrator
- Unit nurse manager
- Department and organization human resources
- Ask these questions:
 - Was a culture assessment administered to unit X, or to the department or organization?
 - Were culture domains on safety and teamwork and other items included in other surveys, such as an employment satisfaction survey?
 - (For examples of questions see the CUSPCoaching Session: *Culture Matters: Measuring and Improving Patient Safety*)
 - May I have a copy of the instrument, survey, or tool used to assess our culture of safety?
 - (You should know and become familiar with the survey administered).
 - Is the data available and at what level (organization, department, or unit)?
 - When was the survey administered?
 - With whom should I work to obtain the data or a data report for our work area?
 - Were results of safety culture assessment discussed or fed back to frontline clinicians and staff in our work area? (i.e., Were frontline clinicians and staff who may have taken the survey debriefed on the results or were results shared with them in some way?)



STEP 2

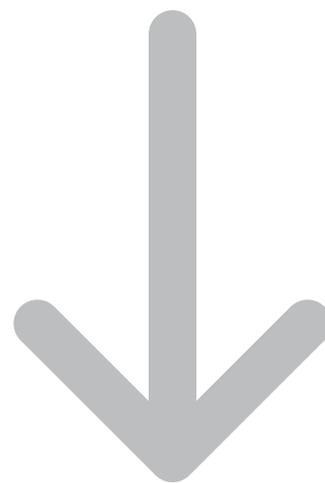
WHAT IF YOU FIND THAT THERE IS UNIT-LEVEL DATA?

- Gather all the data and reports for your work area.
- Ensure that you know which instrument was used to measure the culture of safety and become familiar with it.
- Determine whether results were debriefed, discussed, or otherwise fed back to frontline staff.
 - If not, utilize the “Culture Check-up Tool” to debrief results to frontline staff before moving on to the next Pre-CUSP steps in the Phaseline.

STEP 3

WHAT IF YOU FIND THAT A CULTURE ASSESSMENT WAS ADMINISTERED AT THE ORGANIZATION OR DEPARTMENT LEVEL, BUT NOT THE UNIT LEVEL?

- If it was administered at the organization or department level and data are available then:
 - Obtain a copy of the safety culture assessment results report for your department. Though these results may roll up data from other work areas it provides a starting point for checking up on the current safety culture in your work area.
 - Debrief the data with the unit’s frontline staff using the “Culture Check-up Tool.” Try to determine if the data is representative of how the unit staff feels. Debriefing is very important with higher-level data. Ask frontline clinicians and staff to discuss if the results from the department or organization align with how they view safety culture in their work area.



STEP 4

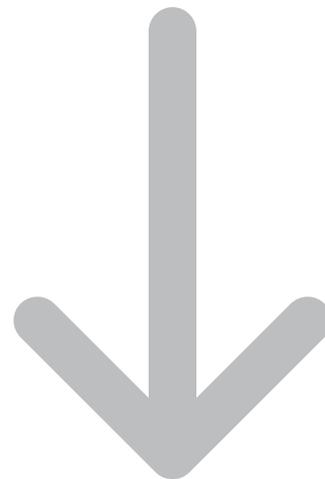
WHAT IF YOU HAVE DATA AT ANY LEVEL, BUT IT IS >12 MONTHS OLD?

- Follow the advice in Step 2. In this case it is very important to debrief the data again with the unit's frontline staff to determine whether it still reflects the perceptions of staff on the unit. Remember that any survey captures data from a snapshot in time. All debriefing is important but even more so if data are old or not at the unit level.

STEP 5

WHAT IF YOU FIND THAT A CULTURE ASSESSMENT HAS NOT BEEN ADMINISTERED AT ANY LEVEL AND YOU WOULD LIKE TO MOVE FORWARD WITH IMPLEMENTING CUSP IN A UNIT?

- If a culture assessment has not been administered then we recommend the following:
 - Determine whether your organization is planning to administer a culture assessment in the future. If so, when?
 - If the organization is not planning to administer an assessment in the near future consider reviewing the peer-reviewed articles below to become familiar with the survey instruments available.
 - Many instruments are available in the public domain for free. Some surveys also offer toolkits to support you in collating your data and generating a report of your results. Many private vendors also offer services related to administering and analyzing such survey data.
 - Determine whether you would like to administer a survey and if you have the time and resources to do so.
- Peer Reviewed Articles to Consider:
 - Qual Saf Health Care. 2005 Oct; 14(5):364-6. Measuring patient safety climate: a review of surveys. Colla JB, Bracken AC, Kinney LM, Weeks WB.
 - Qual Saf Health Care. 2006 April; 15(2): 109–115. Measuring safety climate in health care, R Flin, C Burns, K Mearns, S Yule, and E M Robertson
 - Curr Opin Crit Care. 2010 Dec; 16(6):632-8. Hospital safety climate surveys: measurement issues. Jackson J, Sarac C, Flin R.



CULTURE ASSESSMENT: WHERE TO START
A GUIDE FOR CUSP COORDINATORS

STEP 6

WHAT IF YOU DECIDE THAT ADMINISTERING A SURVEY IS NOT POSSIBLE AT THIS TIME?

- You will still want to explore some of your unit's safety culture strengths and weaknesses qualitatively. One way to do this is through conversations with frontline clinicians, staff, and leaders. In a morning huddle, staff meetings, or one-on-one conversations, you may want to ask your team members to:
 - Imagine that we are going to work on optimizing safety in our work area (provide some examples of recent patient safety threats or events here as needed, or examples of things that might be targeted for improvement).
 - What aspects of our unit and how we work together currently might influence the success of these efforts to improve safety (i.e., what things might help this effort be a success and what things might keep these efforts from being successful in improving safety for our patients)?

STEP 7

WHAT NEXT?

- After following the steps above, determine the cultural health of your unit.
 - If you did formally administer a culture assessment, determine if results were in the danger zone or goal zone for the instrument used
 - If you did not formally administer a culture assessment but rather asked questions in Step 6 above, get a feel for whether your unit has a strong safety culture
 - It is advisable to review the CUSPCoaching Session, CUSP How do you know if you are ready? for advice on moving forward with CUSP Implementation utilizing the Phaseline.