



Excellence Exchange Corner

Q: We currently collect a lot of data manually. What suggestions do you have for overcoming barriers to data collection?

A: This is a great question and a common challenge. Data should serve as the driver for decisions at all levels of the organization, so it is crucial that data collection structures and processes are accurate, user-friendly, efficient, and timely. To help overcome barriers, start with an assessment to better understand your current data collection structures and processes including existing data sources (where does the data come from), collection procedures (how do we get the data), internal and external databases (where is the data reported and what information does the database provide), reporting requirements (internal and external), definitions (what definitions are we using), and the end-users of the data (who receives the information, how do they receive it, what is the format, what do they do with the data, do they understand how to interpret the data etc.).

This assessment will help you better understand what is working well, the pain points, any overlaps or redundancies, available resources, and where to focus your efforts. Look for any opportunities to automate and integrate data collection into your existing systems such as automated collection from electronic health records, event reporting systems, HR databases, etc. Ensure that event reporting systems are user-friendly, non-punitive, capture the data you need, and align with the definitions used by your databases. If you find that additional resources are needed, develop a business case for why the resource is needed and the value to the organization, patients, and staff.

We would love to hear from you, please submit your questions [here](#).

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