According to a study of how 1,000 nurses spend their time at work, more than one-third of nurses spend at least one full hour per shift finding items of equipment! That translates into 40 hours per month for a full time nurse.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is Grassroots Transformation?
Grassroots Transformation is an improvement journey that Quinte Health Care is embarking on in order to improve our current processes.

We’re using improvement techniques and lean methodologies that have been proven in other hospitals to help reduce time that is spent looking for supplies and equipment, while improving everyone’s experience. QHC has invested in External Improvement Quality and Coach Expert, Mike Elias from Breakthrough Horizons, who will work with us and teach us how to do things better on our journey of process improvement.

Grassroots Transformation is about empowering front line staff to make improvements that will better their work life and the patient experience.

Why are we investing in this improvement journey now?
We have had a tough few years at Quinte Health Care where we’ve had to make many difficult choices and changes. We realize through feedback from patients, staff and physicians that things are not ideal right now and we want to make them better.

We’re making improvements so that our care providers can spend more time providing quality patient care and less time on non-value added services such as time spent searching for supplies and equipment.

We want our staff and physicians to feel better at work, to feel that their time is being spent in valuable ways providing support to our patients and to feel proud to recommend QHC as a place to work.

How does this this improvement journey impact me?
Frontline staff and physicians have a key role to play in identifying and fixing broken processes as they know the systems and processes best. Managers will engage staff and physicians in conversations about how to improve care processes, and in particular, what changes can we make in order to better serve our patients. Once new processes have been created through improvement events, staff and physicians can then use what they have learned to identify further opportunities for improvement.

How are we incorporating patients in this improvement journey?
At Quinte Health Care our patients are our priority. We’re involving patients and their family members as much as possible and encouraging their feedback. A patient and
his wife participated in the Value Stream Mapping exercise that took place in April and provided feedback and suggestions on what they feel is important from the patient perspective. We are currently in the process of looking for a patient who would like to be part of our Grassroots Transformation Steering Committee. We hope to have a patient representative in place by this Fall.

What areas are we focusing on first?
Our initial focus is on improving the patient experience from the time they enter the ER, throughout their inpatient stay on our Internal Medicine Unit (Quinte 5) and/or the ICU, until their time of discharge.

As we learn and gain knowledge from our work in these areas of focus, we can then apply some of our improvement processes to other areas throughout the corporation. Please keep in mind that what works for one unit, or even the same unit at a different hospital, may not work for another.

We’ve been through improvement processes before and things went back to the way they were previously. How is this Grassroots Transformation Journey going to be different?
Sustainability is one of the most important steps in this improvement journey and in our previous improvements, there wasn’t enough focus on sustainability which is why things usually went back to the way they were previously. As part of each Kaizen event and improvement project there will be measures, audits, checks, and monitoring mechanisms put in place to ensure sustainability.

How long will this take?
There is no end date – there will always be an opportunity to improve on our current processes and to become more effective and efficient. At Quinte Health Care, we’re always striving to improve and our investment in this journey is not a time-limited project. Although improvement projects have been planned throughout the next year, our journey of improvement will extend well beyond that.

What is a Kaizen event?
A Kaizen event is a powerful and effective way to drastically improve a process. It is an intense 4-day improvement event which typically takes 3-4 weeks to plan and is followed by continuous support.

During the Value Stream Analysis exercise in April, we uncovered more than 48 key improvement opportunities that we will be focusing on as part of this improvement journey. Improvement opportunities have been prioritized and will fall under one of the three following actions: Kaizen event, Project, or “Just do It”. A Kaizen event is planned for almost every month over the next year.
**What is a Project and a “Just do It”?**
Projects can normally be worked through with regular meetings and “Just do its” are improvement opportunities that are assigned to an owner and they are empowered to make it happen.

**What does 5S mean?**
“5S” refers to the five steps that are used in creating a more organized workplace:
- **Sort**: Separate needed items from unneeded and eliminate what is not needed.
- **Set in Order**: Keep needed items in the correct place and allow for easy and fast retrieval.
- **Shine**: Clean the workspace
- **Standardize**: Create a consistent approach with which tasks and procedures are done
- **Sustain**: Maintain established processes

For those events that require a “5S”, we’ll be starting small by reorganizing supply rooms and carts with a goal to reduce the time spent looking for supplies and equipment and to make the carts as efficient and organized as possible. Reducing waste (time spent looking for supplies and equipment) will give us more time to spend caring for our patients and delivering “value added” care.