

## Doing Quality Improvement? Publish it!

Many mid-career neonatologists are pursuing quality improvement (QI) as part of their professional and academic careers. QI can be rewarding for neonatologists in all types of settings, from clinically oriented private practices to large academic groups; the need to critically examine and systematically improve the care we provide to babies and families crosses all practice lines.

Like many pursuits in medicine, there is value to publishing QI. In addition to bringing deserved recognition and academic value to the project leaders, publications can be a vital mechanism for sharing knowledge, from improvement ideas and interventions that led to significant improvements to rigorous methods that provide frameworks for others to tackle similar projects in their units.

If you are interested in publishing your QI work, below are a few general thoughts that may help.

- The QI needs to be rigorous. While many of us do a fair amount of ‘informal QI’ that can be effective within our own local contexts, publishing a QI requires that there is something worth sharing that will be of value to others. The QI methods need to be rigorous and robust, and the project needs to show convincingly that system changes led to improvements.
- Get help! The SQUIRE guidelines (<http://www.squire-statement.org/>) are a great resource for helping identify all the components that make a QI project and a QI publication robust.
- Think about publication before you start your project! It is difficult to ‘retrofit’ QI methods to a QI project that has already been completed.
- Think broadly about potential journals. More and more journals are accepting quality reports. Both *Pediatrics* and *Journal of Perinatology* have sections dedicated to QI. *Journal of Pediatrics*, *Archives of Disease in Childhood Fetal and Neonatal Edition*, and many other journals will consider QI submissions. *Pediatric Safety and Quality* is a relatively new journal that is already well-regarded and is all quality and safety. *BMJ Quality and Safety* and the *Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety* are well-known journals that also focus exclusively on quality and safety and that have published pediatric and neonatal reports.

Best of luck!

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