



## Quality Improvement in a Portuguese Hospital through Action Learning

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## Breaking down the barriers to quality improvement

**Primary objectives**

- Greater collaboration between departments
- Overcome resistance to implementation of accreditation



**Method:** two-pronged approach:

- working towards achieving accreditation standards
- Developing teamwork through action learning



## Action Learning

- Action learning teams set up across amalgamated departments that had previously been working separate
- Participants kept a journal of their learning as a vehicle of shared learning enabling:
  - the Board to learn about how they could support the clinical teams
  - the clinical departments to learn how to influence other departments and the Board.

## The results

- Departments worked collaboratively to implement the accreditation standards
- Managers and staff members acknowledged the importance of listening & taking account of opposing views
- Staff developed a greater level of understanding about the work of other staff and specialist services
- Working together facilitated improvements to patient care by physical alterations to the building
- At the end of the six month Action Learning project the accreditation survey team found significant improvement in compliance with the standards

## Lessons learnt

- working with accreditation standards helped to lever service improvements across all dimensions of the healthcare service
- To gain maximum benefits from using the accreditation tool, hospital staff need to have a culture which enables joint working, sharing of good practice and the flexibility to embrace the changes that come with service developments
- The Action Learning approach was the catalyst for changing staff attitudes

