

TIP SHEET FOR SUPERVISING A SUCCESSFUL RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

- ✓ **Select a relevant topic.** Sometimes tests or treatments are perceived to be overused when in fact any overuse is minimal or has little impact. A review of the literature and/or local data can help confirm whether a perceived issue does in fact present a worthwhile opportunity for resource stewardship research and intervention.
- ✓ **Create an improvement team.** Resource stewardship projects are almost never undertaken in isolation. Although a trainee may be given the lead, the role of faculty is to ensure that key stakeholders become involved early in the project. Sometimes interdisciplinary supervision can help ensure that there is a more complete understanding of the problem and that all stakeholders help to design the changes proposed.
- ✓ **Avoid scope creep.** Resource stewardship projects have a tendency to expand, involving more tests and broader patient populations than in their original conception. Clearly defining the scope of the project with regard to the test, treatment or procedure of concern, the patient population involved, and the specific type of project that is being undertaken (e.g., defining the problem) will help to ensure that the project is completed within the allotted time.
- ✓ **Build on existing projects.** Taking a resource stewardship project from start to finish is not always realistic. It may be feasible for one resident to conduct the first phases of a project and then hand it on to other trainees for completion. For example, a project that has revealed the key drivers of overuse and articulated a strong hypothesis could be handed off to another trainee to develop tests of change at a small scale, that could in turn could provide the basis for a pilot project to be conducted by others.
- ✓ **Block off time to meet with trainees regularly.** Taking on a resource stewardship project can be daunting, as it often means questioning the status quo and thinking innovatively about solutions. Trainees will encounter roadblocks along the way that will require faculty input as to how best to proceed. Scheduling regular meetings with trainees to monitor progress will help maintain momentum and ensure that educational needs are met.
- ✓ **Have a protocol.** As in other scholarly projects, a protocol for a resource stewardship project should be developed. This will serve as the roadmap for the project but will also set clear expectations for the work to be completed. It will also identify areas where additional supports may need to be provided, such as access to administrative data.