

**Because a CAUTI initiative is especially dependent on nurses, an effective nurse champion is key. By effective we mean: well respected and trusted by peers, supportive of safety, and an agent of change.**

1. If a nurse champion is not yet identified

- The most successful nurse champions are those that know their way around the hospital hierarchy but are independent-minded in terms of finding solutions. S/he must be on good terms with her colleagues.
- Think twice about having a nurse executive or the director of nursing take on this role as there is danger that the bedside nurses may view the initiative as another occasion for obeying the boss.
- Some qualities that make a successful nurse champion include: being personable, enthusiastic, empathetic, and having great communication skills.
- There is no “one-size-fits-all” strategy. You must identify the type of individual that will work best in your organization.
- Consider a nurse manager, nurse educator, and even a respected licensed practical nurse who others go to for advice.
- Consider having co-champions if necessary.
- Far more than the physician champion, the nurse champion is the face of the project to the people most instrumental in the project’s success, the bedside nurses.

2. If the nurse champion on your team is not as effective or engaged as needed

- As with other members of the team, we have found that often the nurse champion has not been given dedicated time to work on this particular project. Supporting the nurse champion (e.g., reducing some of the clinical commitments in order to address the quality improvement project) during the initial stages may help with implementation efforts.
- If the nurse champion has the dedicated time but is lacking some of the necessary skills, we have found that coaching him/her can be very helpful. The ideal coach may be the senior leader who is tracking the outcome of this project.
- It is important to choose the champion based on his/her commitment to the issue and interest in safety. If it is clear that the nurse champion is not a good fit for the initiative (s/he may have been appointed rather than recruited), it may be time to consider replacing the nurse champion.
- It is also important to recognize the nurse champion for his/her efforts via such mechanisms as certificates of recognition, annual evaluation appraisals, mention in newsletters, and acknowledgement from the Chief Nursing Officer.
- We have also found that identifying and enlisting others who are either already engaged in this initiative or eager to improve patient safety can help support the efforts of the nurse champion.

3. For more information on nurse engagement, visit [Resources](#), then click on **Engaging Providers > Nurse Engagement**

#### 4. Further reading suggestions

- Draper, DA, Felland, LE, Liebhaber, A, Melichar, L. The role of nurses in hospital quality improvement. Research Brief No. 3, March 2008; Center for Studying Health System Change. <http://www.hschange.com/CONTENT/972.html>
- Gokula RM, Smith MA, Hickner J. [Emergency room staff education and use of a urinary catheter indication sheet improves appropriate use of Foley catheters](#). *Am J Infect Control*. 2007;35(9):589-93.