

# Are Our Processes Reliable?

**AHRQ ECHO National Nursing  
Home COVID-19 Action Network**



# Core questions

- How do we know if our process is reliable?
- What do we do if it is not?

Session 5\_QI Tool.pdf



## NATIONAL NURSING HOME COVID-19 ACTION NETWORK

### HOW TO STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN NURSING FACILITIES

#### HOW TO MAKE CHANGE STICK

- Focus initially on **KEY PROCESS** rather than on benchmarked outcomes.
- Evaluate if staff **KNOW** the process.
- **KEEP** it SIMPLE!
- Commit to be a **LEARNING ORGANIZATION**.

#### REASSESS THE GOAL

- The goal is 95% performance.
- **WHY?** 95% or better means it is likely to be **SUSTAINABLE** over time.



#### KEEP IT SIMPLE

- It is more important that the process be **STANDARD** than it be perfect.
- When you design for perfection - you often get overly complex protocols, planning for every contingency.
- A policy and procedure make look great

## FOCUS ON PROCESS

If you think a **PROCESS** works pretty well, test the **FIVE ATTRIBUTES**

5

- **WHO** does it
- **WHEN** should it be done
- **WHERE** is it done
- **HOW** is it done
- **WHAT** is needed to do it

• Ask **5 staff** to describe the 5 attributes.

• If 5 direct care staff can describe the work with the 5 attributes, you have a good chance to achieve 95% performance and **SUSTAIN** the performance over time.

5

• If they can't, determine which attribute they can't describe and develop a simple process for improvement.

If you have a process that does **NOT** work so well

- Determine if it is a **COMMON** or **INFREQUENT** failure.
- Observation of **ONE PERSON** does not mean it is a common failure.
- Fix **ONE Attribute** (*who, when, where, how, what*) at a time.

### COMMON

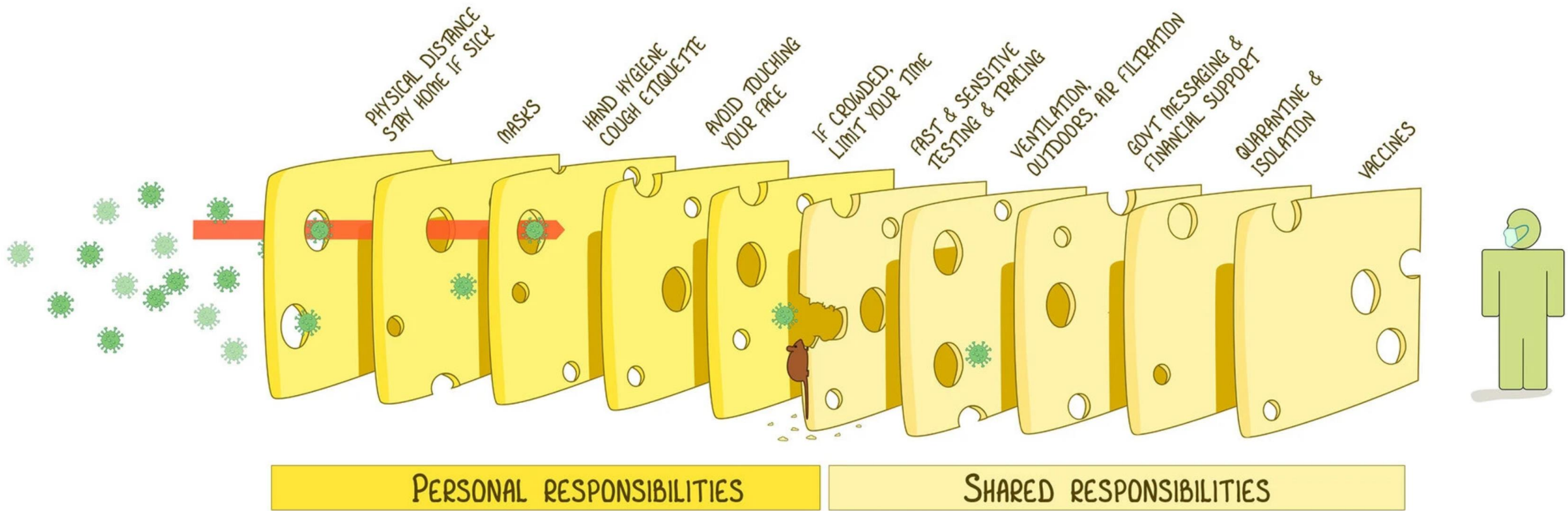
- Don't rely too heavily on education as **THE FIX**.
- Get **CURIIOUS** to determine **WHY** this is occurring.
- Inform staff on the **WHY**:
  - **WHY** is this process important.
  - **WHY** do we do it this way.
- Get **CURIIOUS** - **WHY** are they **NOT** following the process.
- Develop a plan to fix **ONE** process, test and refine.
- Keep it **SIMPLE!**

### INFREQUENT

- Infrequent does **NOT** mean you have a bad process.
- Don't try to make it perfect - you will use up too many precious resources.
- Talk to that one person to reeducate or determine **WHY** it is occurring.
- Accept defeat & **MOVE ON** to focus on another process.

# THE SWISS CHEESE RESPIRATORY VIRUS PANDEMIC DEFENCE

RECOGNISING THAT NO SINGLE INTERVENTION IS PERFECT AT PREVENTING SPREAD



EACH INTERVENTION (LAYER) HAS IMPERFECTIONS (HOLES).  
MULTIPLE LAYERS IMPROVE SUCCESS.

Adapted from James Reason by Ian Mackay.  
New York Times Dec 5, 2020

IAN M MACKAY  
VIROLOGYDOWNUNDER.COM  
WITH THANKS TO JODY LANARD, KATHERINE ARDEN & THE UNI OF QLD  
BASED ON THE SWISS CHEESE MODEL OF ACCIDENT CAUSATION, BY JAMES T REASON, 1990  
VERSION 3.0  
UPDATE: 24OCT2020

# How do we know if a process is reliable?

- Ask 5 staff
  - WHO does it
  - WHEN should it be done
  - WHERE is it done
  - HOW is it done
  - WHAT is needed to do it
  
- If all staff can provide consistent answers high likelihood it is reliable

# What do we do if it isn't?

If you have a process that does NOT work so well...

- Determine if it is a COMMON or INFREQUENT failure.
- Observation of ONE PERSON does not mean it is a common failure.
- Fix ONE Attribute at a time using an improvement process

# Attending to Common Problems

## COMMON

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- Evaluate if staff KNOW the process.
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- Commit to be a LEADER ORGANIZATION.

#### REASSESS THE GOAL

- The goal is 95% performance.
- WHY? 95% or better means it is likely to be SUSTAINABLE over time.

95%

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# Leave in Action

- Choose one process in your facilities covid-19 response that you are unsure is reliable
- During walk-rounds, or unit huddles, ask 5 staff
  - WHO does it
  - WHEN should it be done
  - WHERE is it done
  - HOW is it done
  - WHAT is needed to do it
- Observe if the responses are correct and consistent
- Gather staff ideas about how the process could be made more reliable