

# Getting Started



## Key Roles

There are 3 key roles involved in initiating, implementing and sustaining learning circles:	
<b>An Organizational Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Provides a project leadership role (e.g. issues approvals, updates).</li> <li>o Supports/advises project evaluation.</li> <li>o Identifies and communicates project wrap up expectations.</li> </ul>
<b>A Site Sponsor</b> (could also be the Organizational Sponsor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Prioritizes resources that support the learning circle (e.g. staff time for learning circle sessions).</li> <li>o Provides initial and ongoing logistical support for the operation of learning circles (e.g. ensures room is consistently booked).</li> <li>o Organizational leadership for the learning circle; ensures alignment and interprets relevance of team level topics to site/organizational priorities.</li> <li>o Acts as ongoing point of contact and support to facilitator for organization of learning circles.</li> <li>o Establishes communication expectations and processes between facilitator and organization/site sponsor.</li> </ul>
<b>A Learning Circle Facilitator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Is a clinical leader or educator (trained facilitator) selected for his/her knowledge of the workplace context.</li> <li>o Orients participants and champions cooperative learning process.</li> <li>o Guides introductions and structure of learning circle sessions.</li> <li>o Creates space for many perspectives, not allowing one person to dominate.</li> <li>o Listens to participants; lets silence be a tool when necessary.</li> <li>o Asks necessary questions that contribute to dialogue, not debate.</li> <li>o Summarizes ideas emergent from the group; uncovers areas of agreement and common concern.</li> <li>o Is impartial but contributes to the discussion.</li> <li>o Is not an expert or teacher in the traditional sense.</li> </ul>

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## Implementation Activities

Learning Circle Activity	Organizational Sponsor	Site Sponsor	Facilitator	Participant
<b>Determine General Topic Area:</b> Program or practice priority identified by or confirmed with site/organization leaders.	X	X	X	
<b>Create Goal and Objectives:</b> After deciding on general topic area, facilitator creates specific goal and objectives in conversation with participants.			X	X
<b>Length of Sessions:</b> Decide how much time you have to conduct the Learning Circle. A length of 1.5 hours is recommended understanding that scheduling challenges may prove difficult to address. Sessions should not be less than 1 hour.		X	X	
<b>Arrange for a Meeting Space:</b> Choose a physical space that limits interruptions and supports small group discussion. Ideally, meetings should be held outside of patient/resident care space.		X		
<b>Invite Participants:</b> Invite staff members to participate. Attendance is voluntary so participants will choose to attend. In selecting the group, consider factors such as the number (6-8 people is ideal) and composition of the group. Learning circles can be effective for either interdisciplinary or single discipline groups.		X	X	
<b>Arrange for Staff Time:</b> Ensure learning circle participants are able to attend by coordinating pay for those attending on their time off, and backfill for those attending during work hours.		X		