

Summary

As part of the large-scale improvement programme 'Care for Better', an improvement project called Prevention of sexual abuse has been started to improve quality of care in the Dutch care sector by using the breakthrough method. Although this method can realise improvements on the short term, the literature shows that sustainability of results is often a problem. How to reach demonstrable and lasting improvements within the organization, is not clear from the literature. For this reason, the central problem definition in this thesis is:

“Which interventions and organisational factors have contributed to sustainability of results of improvement teams within the care for mentally handicapped?”

To investigate what is being meant with sustainability of results and which success or failure factors are being described in the literature and according to theory. In addition to that, face-to-face interviews were conducted with several respondents within three participating care institutions in the care for mentally handicapped. The interviews focused on the experiences with and the expectations of the sustainability of results.

The literature shows that there is a distinction between dynamic sustainability and end-point sustainability. Moreover, there are a number of distinguishable success factors, such as a good personnel policy, involvement and support of management and a positive improvement culture. To structurally anchor the acquired insights from the project in the organisation it is important to carry out concrete interventions, such as making a protocol and the provision of training and education to personnel. Finally it is essential that the compliance and the use of these interventions is monitored and reviewed on.

The analysis by topic and the comprehensive analysis generally showed that institution 3 has made the most success, when it comes to sustainability of results within the pilot team. They had a number of success factors that has made this possible. In addition, they are currently focussing on spreading the gained insights to other locations, another important goal of the breakthrough method. At the end of the project institution 1 and 2 realised more awareness about dealing with the topic of sexuality among employees and employees feel more free to speak about this topic. Moreover, both institutions have taken a number of concrete actions to sustain the results. However, a structural anchoring of the results has not taken place yet in these institutions.

It can be concluded that the extent, to which a team succeeds in sustaining improvements and results, depend on the success factors as mentioned in the literature, in the theory and from the possibility to structurally embed interventions in the organization. This study has shown that the role of management, the culture of the organization and functioning of the improvement team/or pilot team are of crucial importance for the success of the project in the phase of sustainability. Also, this study shows connections /relations between the various factors that have influenced the sustainability. There is a comprehensive picture of the institutions created and there is also considered whether certain factors have reinforced each other.