



# Essentials for Successful Team Sponsorship

## Georgia region identifies five tasks too important to delegate

Sponsors play a crucial role in the development and advancement of teams, and successful sponsors understand that certain sponsorship tasks are too important to be delegated to others. But which ones? Georgia's joint UBT Performance Improvement Team has defined five tasks every sponsor should take on as his or her own.

"These are the things we know are going to fall in the sponsor's lap," says Ian King, a UBT consultant in Georgia. "We are trying to help them understand what they are supposed to do and define the sponsorship tasks that matter most to their teams."

### 1. Communicate regional business goals and measures

To advance their region's or department's business or clinical goals, UBTs need to know what those goals are and why they matter. Sponsors can help teams understand how the business is operated and how the teams can help make cost-saving, value-added improvements. "We've explained how the goals should align with our strategy," said management sponsor Sharon McDonald, an area operations director who attended several team meetings with her labor sponsor partner, Terry Brisbane, a steward at UFCW Local 1996. For instance, by showing the impact of patient education on the quality and cost of diabetes care, they helped an outpatient team set goals for increasing diabetes patients' enrollment in classes.

### 2. Participate in goal setting

Sponsors need not micromanage the work of team co-leads and team members. Feedback from sponsors adds quality to team brainstorming and improves alignment with regional goals. "Teams can use sponsors as a sounding board," King says. "It's not about an approval process. A team may need to narrow down some ideas or better understand a quality measure that the sponsor can help with."

### 3. Monitor project progress

Sponsors, pay attention to your regional UBT dashboard or regional goals. Understanding where your teams are on the Path to Performance means looking at what are they working on and what barriers they face. In monthly operational meetings, sponsors are discussing team advancement with regional leadership.

### 4. Allocate resources

Sponsors can provide access to the resources teams need to get their work done. For instance, an engaged sponsor can lead a team to good data—without which teams cannot benchmark their performance, measure their progress or set meaningful goals. Sponsors also can help teams manage another precious resource—the time needed to get training, meet regularly or engage in the problem-solving process.

### 5. Give rewards and recognition

Sponsors can use rewards and recognition to acknowledge and support teams and team members who move their work forward. Flowers, healthy snacks, written thank you notes—it doesn't have to be big or expensive, but to have meaning it should be delivered by sponsors themselves.