

Practice Change Fellows (PCF) Program
A Technical Report: Assessment of PCF by First Cohort of 10 Alumni
September 2010

In July 2010, all alumni from the first PCF cohort were invited to participate in an online survey. The survey consisted of a mix of quantitative and qualitative questions regarding the quality and outcomes of their participation. The survey explored the extent to which: fellows achieved personal gains in knowledge and skill; use what they learned for improvements in care; and expanded their networks of influence. What follows is a synthesis of the results of this survey.

❖ **Outcomes Were Achieved on Multiple Levels**

- **The PCF Program resulted in positive personal outcomes for Fellows, programmatic and organizational improvements, and health improvements for older adults.**

Health Outcomes

- These 10 alumni report that their projects have resulted in both improved health outcomes and improved health care at their organizations.

Programmatic / Organizational

- Most alumni report that their care improvements have been fully implemented at their home organizations and all alumni indicate that at least some aspects of their care improvements have been implemented.
- Most alumni agreed or strongly agreed that they had “garnered leadership buy-in” from their home organization for their care improvements. For example, one Fellow reported that the PCF project had become a positive talking point for the CEO. Even during these difficult economic times, over half have garnered financial support for their ongoing improvement efforts.
- Most alumni agreed or strongly agreed that they had developed new relationships in their organizations that are critical to improvement efforts. For example, one respondent cited new geriatric care skills among frontline staff as a positive outcome of the improvement project.
- Approximately half of these alumni agreed that their project had saved the organization money and/or improved the organization’s capacity for geriatric care.

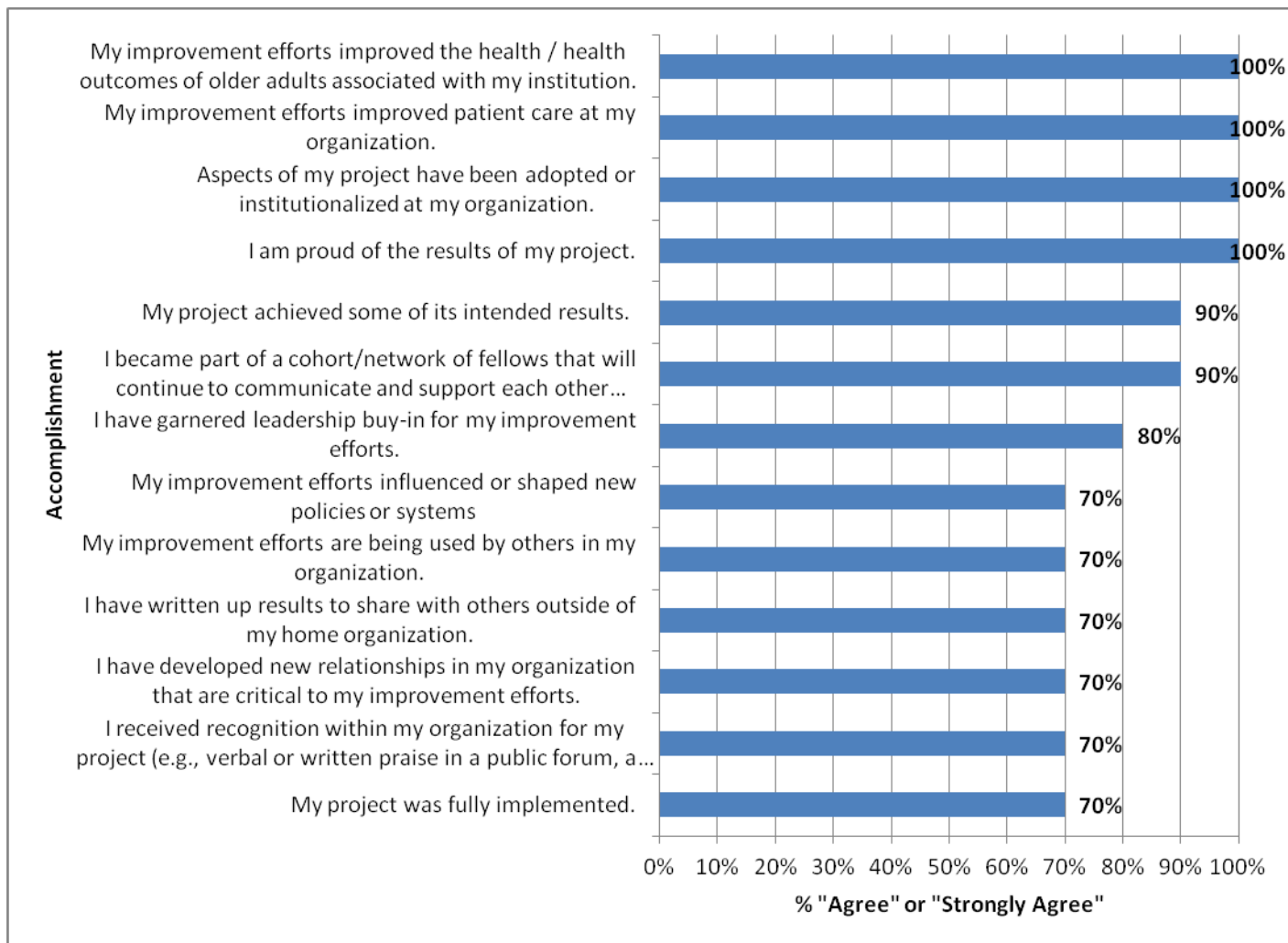
Personal

- On a personal level, PCF alumni were universally proud of the results of their projects. Most had received some form of public recognition (e.g., praise, promotion, salary increase, and/or bonus) as a result of their PCF-related improvements in geriatric care.

➤ **The PCF Program has impact beyond just the Fellows involved.**

- Most alumni indicated that their care improvements were being adopted by other individuals at the home organization. For example, alumni described how these care improvements were part of broader integration initiatives and/or facilitated the development of new, positive external relations.

Graphic 1: PCF Alumni Top Rated Post-Program Outcomes



❖ **Post Fellowship Interactions with Advisory Board members, Mentors and Peers is Satisfying and Ongoing**

- **Overall, alumni were positive about the support they continue to receive from their peers, mentors and Advisory Board Members.**
 - Most alumni indicated that they were between “satisfied” and “extremely satisfied” with the quality of their interactions with Advisory Board members. Alumni spent more time talking with current or former Fellows than with their mentors and Advisory Board members.
 - PCF alumni stated that they were supported by Advisory Board members in three primary ways: technical assistance and the sharing of best practices; providing a conduit for networking with professionals and projects at other institutions; and making themselves available to provide general advice and support to Fellows.
 - Alumni frequently cited the sharing of best practices and the opportunity to “brainstorm” or use peers as “sounding boards” as the means by which they continued to receive support from current or former Fellows. They also reported receiving assistance with problem solving and visiting other Fellows’ home organizations.
 - Below is a selection of quotes from alumni regarding the support they receive as a result of having been a Fellow:
 - *“I really gained so much positive support and encouragement from the PCF faculty. Their wisdom and expertise really helped drive me to continue to do the work we do at my home institution.”*
 - *“I can't really say that I had a tremendous amount of interaction from many members of the advisory committee during the past year. What I can say is that the folks I did talk with were helpful in helping me think through several grants and projects and provided some support to partners of mine who were considering design and implementation of a care transitions program.”*

❖ **The Value of the Practice Change Fellows Program is Building Leaders**

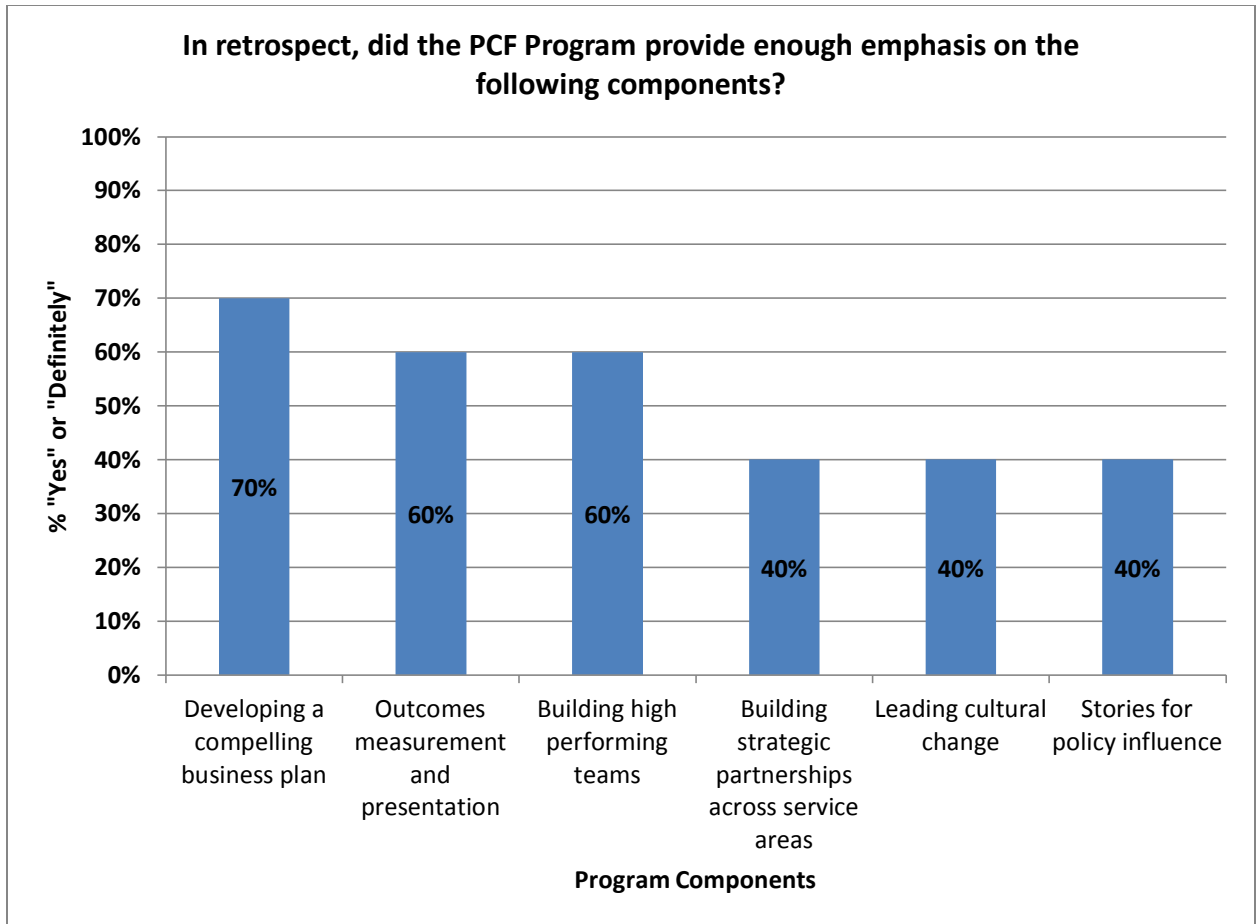
- **The value of the Practice Change Fellowship lies in the opportunities for building leadership capacity—i.e., learning from experts, and gaining knowledge and skills for organizational change.**

- The most frequent reasons cited by Fellows for recommending this program to others is: an “interest in learning from and networking with established national leaders in geriatrics and aging” followed by “interest in gaining knowledge and skills in making meaningful change at my organization.” Some alumni also found value in learning to lead change at the national level.

❖ **Programmatic Content of the Fellowship Viewed Favorably**

- **Looking back, alumni believed that the PCF program focused sufficiently on its core programmatic content areas although they expressed an interest in learning even more.**
 - Most alumni stated that the PCF Program sufficiently emphasized business plan development, outcomes measurement and presentation of findings, and building high performance teams.
 - Most wanted more attention given to leading cultural change, preparing stories for policy influence, and building strategic partnerships across service areas.

Graphic 2: Alumni Perception of Program Components



❖ **Dissemination is Happening Through Post-Program Publications and Presentations**

- **Alumni have written up the results of their improvement projects and/or presented at conferences.**
 - Most of the alumni indicated that they had written up results to share with others outside of the home organization. Some indicated that they had presented on their care improvements at local, state and national conferences. Alumni are publishing in book chapters, journals and the media, such as the Huffington Post.

❖ **PCF Has Potential for National Impact**

- **Alumni recognize the potential of PCF for national influence while acknowledging that it is too soon to assess impact.**
 - *“PCF leaders created an opportunity for Fellows to tell their stories to CMS policymakers.”*

- *“[The] collective voice of the Fellows and Advisory Board [attracts] national attention for geriatrics, it is too early for dividends I feel because work takes time to get published. [PCF] have impacted things more locally at this stage versus nationally.”*
- *“I think the PCF program as a collective entity has the capacity to influence. The power of the program rests in the combination of the national leaders that comprise the mentor group and the Fellows who bring a broad perspective of geriatric health care.”*