

## David C. Leach, MD Award Recipients

### Omar Bhutta, MD

Pediatrics

University of Washington/Seattle Children's Hospital, Seattle, WA

**Project:** *Creating a solution to a communication problem between nurses, hospital staff and residents due to the myriad of hand-offs*



#### **Nominators had this to say:**

In Dr. Bhutta's role as Chief Resident of the University of Washington and Seattle Children's Hospital (SCH) Pediatric Residency Program, Dr. Bhutta has demonstrated a great affinity and enthusiasm for quality improvement and the Continuous Performance Improvement (CPI) methodology employed by SCH. In CPI, two highly prized abilities are to 1) effectively analyze available data to understand and "scope" a problem and then to 2) expertly guide a team of individuals to the most likely solution in a "bottom up" fashion. Dr. Bhutta possesses great strength in both of these abilities (among many others).

In this particular project, Dr. Bhutta skillfully assessed the nature of the longstanding communication problem confronting our residents and other clinicians. Using his analytical and communication skills, he made the scope and significance of the problem clear to leaders, residents, and front line staff, and in so doing he garnered the necessary financial and cultural support to address the problem. In our CPI methodology, a key improvement tool is the weeklong Rapid Process Improvement Workshop during which a problem is described and, ideally, a solution is designed and implemented by week end. Critical to this effort is the Team Leader or "Process Owner," the role that Dr. Bhutta served. In this capacity, Dr. Bhutta's ability to appropriately guide the team through difficult debates, wrong turns, and dead ends was indispensable and his success laudable. Ultimately, the solution reached by Dr. Bhutta's team was a triumph of ingenuity and a testament to Dr. Bhutta's analytical and leadership skills.

The implementation of the solution proposed by Dr. Bhutta's team has been a great success. Incorrect pages and communication delays have been reduced and resident and nurse satisfaction with the new process is markedly superior to the previous situation. Dr. Bhutta's work has contributed greatly to greater efficiency and less waste in our residents' and nurses' communication processes, thereby supporting them in their work and creating a safer environment for our patients.