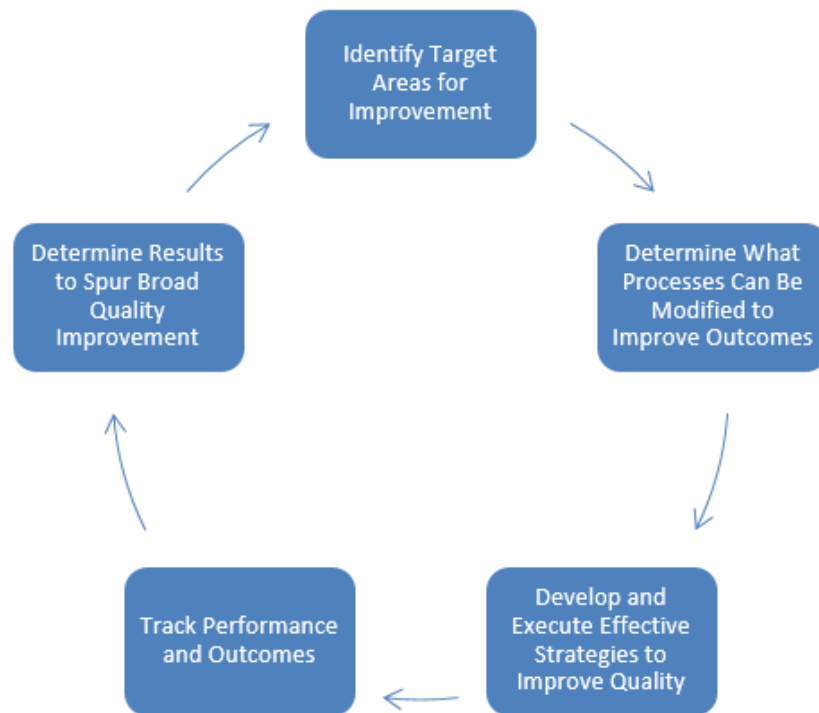




INSTITUTE FOR
INTERNATIONAL
MEDICINE

International Service-Learning Reduced Duration Pathway Quality Improvement Project Guidelines



Steps in the Quality Improvement Process¹

What Is a Quality Improvement?

Quality improvement (QI) in healthcare is intentional action that leads to measurable improvement in healthcare services, and ultimately the health status of the community. Ideally, QI also is part of the culture of an organization, reflecting attitudes and behaviors that influence how a team embraces quality.

What Is the Quality Improvement Process?

¹ Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement. Wyoming Department of Health. <https://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/infectious-disease-epidemiology-unit/healthcare-associated-infections/infection-prevention-orientation-manual/quality-improvement/>. Accessed July 28, 2020.

Action for quality improvement follows a problem-solving process, one which has much in common with the scientific method.

1. Identify target areas for improvement

Within the context of health and healthcare, determine and prioritize potential areas for improvement. Especially consider the needs of your particular workplace or profession. For example, identify

- Barriers to patient care
- Frequently diagnosed chronic conditions
- Groups of high-risk patients
- Management issues such as low morale
- Patterns of concerning health behavior

Reference to established quality measures may be useful, such as those from the National Quality Forum, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Quality Payment Program.

2. Determine processes to improve targets

This phase involves collecting and analyzing data regarding the target areas. Such data will help you to understand:

- How the systems work
- How the systems can best be improved
- How to set measurable goals

3. Develop and execute effective strategies to improve quality

Select and initiate specific actions to achieve these quality improvement goals. Ideally such actions are SMART:

- Specific: understandable even to an outsider
- Measurable: can be quantified on a scale
- Attainable: are realistic given the resources
- Relevant: the actions address the identified target
- Timely: conform to the allotted timetable²

4. Track performance and outcome

² Smart Goals. Mind Tools. <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/smart-goals.htm>. Accessed July 29, 2020.

Document the method for collecting and analyzing results that are gathered throughout the quality improvement project. Compare these results with the baseline information assembled at the beginning of the project. If necessary, make modifications to the actions that will be necessary to achieve the targets.

5. Determine results to spur broad quality improvement

At the conclusion of the quality improvement project:

- Clearly state which quality improvement actions proved to be effective
- Incorporate these actions into the structure of the organization
- Communicate your results so that the entire organization will benefit

Finally, remember that quality improvement is an ongoing process. Commit yourself to continually improving performance by revising the above quality improvement process.

Project Report Specifications

The report of an INMED Service-Learning Reduced Duration Pathway Quality Improvement Project should conform to the following specifications:

- Organized according to the above headings in the quality improvement process
- Approximately 1200 words
- At least 5 references
- References may be in any recognized style (AMA, APA, etc.), and the same style should be used throughout
- Footnotes are preferred over endnotes