

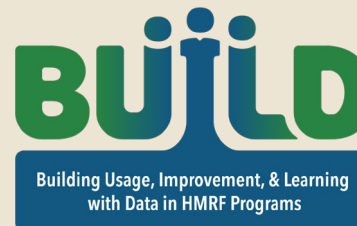
Streamlining CQI planning and documentation

Continuous quality improvement (CQI) office hours

April 25, 2023 | 2:00 – 3:00pm ET



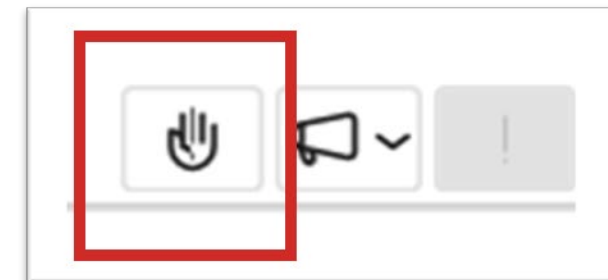
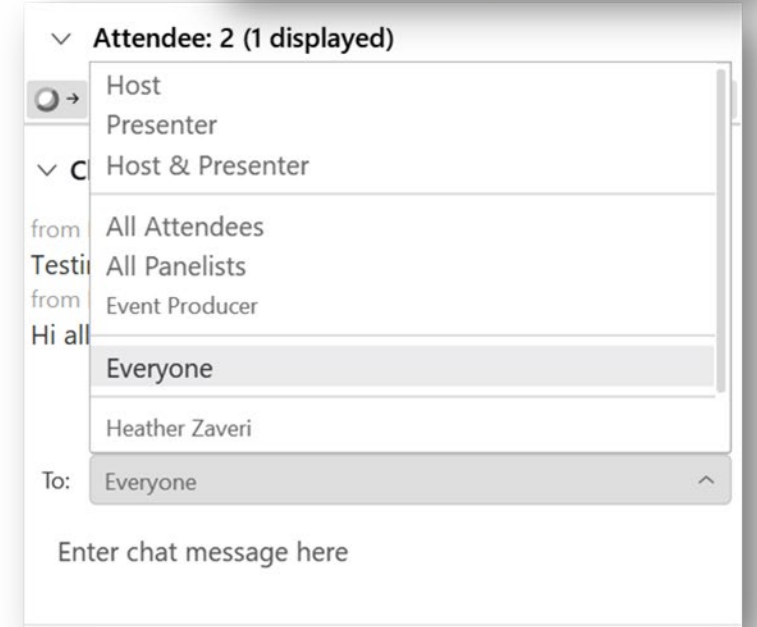
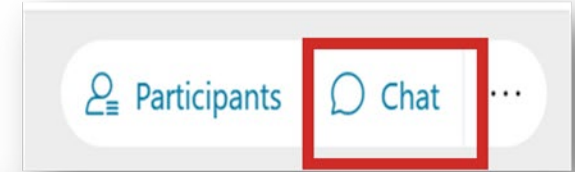
OFFICE OF FAMILY ASSISTANCE
An Office of the Administration for Children & Families





How you can participate

- / **Use the chat to ask questions**
- / **Ask questions or share verbally using the hand raise feature**
- / **REMINDER: Never text or email client personally identifiable information (PII), including during office hours or when contacting the TA teams**





Focusing on your CQI challenges

**A common CQI challenge:
Documenting CQI progress
and maximizing the value of
lessons learned**





Today's agenda

- / **A worksheet to support planning and intentionality with CQI**
- / **Exploring the worksheet**
 - How the worksheet relates to the CQI plan template
 - Resources to use with the worksheet
 - Reflection points to document insights



Introduction to the CQI plan worksheet




Benefits of the worksheet

- / **Organized like the full CQI plan template, but focuses on the most critical CQI questions**
- / **Offers space for reflection and links to helpful resources**
- / **Supports communication about CQI plans and progress**
 - With your CQI team
 - With your FPS

HMRP
HEALTHY MARRIAGE & RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD

Continuous Quality Improvement Plan Worksheet




Instructions

This worksheet is a companion resource to the [CQI plan template](#) found on the HMRP Grantee Resources site (<https://www.hmrpgranteeresources.info/continuous-quality-improvement>). It is an optional resource to help organize information about your grant's CQI cycles and review progress with your Family Assistance Program Specialist (FPS) in the Office of Family Assistance (OFA). OFA guidance is to review CQI plans with your FPS at the beginning and end of each CQI cycle.

This worksheet is structured based on the steps in the CQI process (Figure 1, outer circle) and the corresponding sections of the CQI plan template. Click on the links provided with the "Need help?" icons in the worksheet to access resources relevant to that step in the CQI cycle.

FIGURE 1. THE CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROCESS



Grantee and CQI plan information

Grantee name Click or tap here to enter text.

Start date of CQI cycle Click or tap here to enter text.



When to use the plan template or worksheet

/ **OFA's expectations for CQI plans**

- CQI plans are a living document to update as you advance through CQI steps
- CQI plans should be submitted at the beginning and end of each CQI cycle, and as agreed upon with your FPS
- Grantees should discuss timelines with their FPS based on their own CQI cycles; there is no universal deadline for submitting CQI plans in year 3

/ **Discuss the worksheet with your FPS**

- Consider using the worksheet to communicate about CQI plans and progress, if your FPS agrees it will convey enough information



What's different about the CQI worksheet?

/ Links to resources to support your team

- Engaging fully with CQI means participating in the processes behind each step

CQI Process

Step 1. Identify an area to improve

What is the specific problem or issue you are trying to solve? Click or tap here to enter text.



Need help drafting your problem statement? [This worksheet](#) walks through how to draft a strong problem statement. Click [here](#) for additional resources.



What's different about the CQI worksheet?

(continued)

/ Each step contains built-in reflection points

- Helps ensure your team can build on insights that emerge throughout a CQI cycle

CQI Process

Step 1. Identify an area to improve

What is the specific problem or issue you are trying to solve? Click or tap here to enter text.



Need help drafting your problem statement? [This worksheet](#) walks through how to draft a strong problem statement. Click [here](#) for additional resources.



Document your insights: What insights or additional issues did your team identify while investigating the problem? For example, what root causes did your team identify? What should you consider for future CQI cycles?

Click or tap here to enter text.



Using the CQI worksheet for documentation: What to document?



Insights that emerge over the course of a cycle

- EXAMPLE: While working on a retention challenge, you discover that clients appear to drop off after the first workshop



Parking lot issues

- EXAMPLE: You're focused on improving recruitment numbers and you learn through client interviews that your enrollment process is too complicated



Notes about improving your CQI process

- EXAMPLE: We didn't loop other staff into the road test during this cycle, which made scaling the strategy very difficult. Next time, we need a communication plan.



Exploring the worksheet: Steps 1-3, Identify an area to improve and a strategy





Step 1: Identify and get specific about a challenge

- / **Key process: Learn about and define your challenge**
- / **Key process: Identify root causes to support targeted strategy development**

Step 1. Identify an area to improve

What is the specific problem or issue you are trying to solve? Click or tap here to enter text.

 **Need help drafting your problem statement?** [This worksheet](#) walks through how to draft a strong problem statement. Click [here](#) for additional resources.

 **Document your insights:** What insights or additional issues did your team identify while investigating the problem? For example, what root causes did your team identify? What should you consider for future CQI cycles?

Click or tap here to enter text.



Step 1: Resources to support your team

/ Problem statement tip sheet

- New resource on how to develop a thorough problem statement to set a strong foundation for your CQI effort
- Includes a worksheet for drafting your problem statement

/ Strategy development tip sheet (root cause section)

- First section of this resource provides tips for identifying root causes



Developing a problem statement

A problem statement is a succinct but thorough continuous quality improvement (CQI). A clear one is all on the same page about what, specific statement is an important step toward engaging might have varying perspectives on or understa

Grantees are asked to specify their problem sta strong problem statement, however, can be its process of developing a clear problem stateme is included in the appendix. The worksheet can

Steps for crafting a problem statem

- 1. Identify a priority problem.** The first step i challenge. You may identify a problem thro feedback you get from staff or clients. Your key problem at a time to improve your likeli than one pressing problem, prioritize one w hearing everyone's voices, try a prioritizatio high-level challenge in Question 1 in the wc
- 2. Use your data to drill down.** When you ha one problem, drill down to get more specific problem. For instance, instead of listing you "program completion," examine nFORM dat factors are associated with dropping out. At the program do people drop out? Do differe workshop facilitators have different rates of completion? Document what you discover i worksheet in the appendix.
- 3. Use what you learned to state your spec** may have learned that program completion "program completion," write "Men in our we find jobs." This helps narrow the focus for b selected challenge. Document your team's worksheet in the appendix.
- 4. Identify the root causes.** You explored yo where, when, and with whom the challenge doesn't necessarily explain why. For instan why men are struggling to complete the p asking them directly and talking to your staf might hold a focus group with male clients. get feedback from the clients who dropped to get insights about attendance struggles c



Developing effective program improvement strategies

A common approach to addressing a programmatic issue or challenge is to try something and then if it doesn't work, try something else. Continuous quality improvement (CQI) is a more systematic approach for designing strategies that are best able to address your improvement goals. In CQI, strategy development is three-pronged: (1) investigate the problem and identify root causes, (2) consult a range of sources to identify promising improvement ideas, and (3) specify the rationale for your strategy to ensure it aligns with your theory of improvement and to set your team up for piloting the strategy. This brief describes how HMRF grantees can develop improvement strategies and resources to support each step in the process. Please remember to discuss any proposed changes to your project design or implementation with your Family Assistance Program Specialist (FPS).

1. Investigate the problem and identify root causes

Often, when a program identifies a problem, staff are identifying a symptom of the problem rather than its cause. For example, low workshop attendance or difficulty recruiting a population of interest are both symptoms that flag deeper issues. Root cause analysis is a process to uncover those deeper issues, which is a critical step for effective strategy development. The key is to ask: Why is our program experiencing low attendance in our workshop? You can seek to answer that question by talking to staff, partners, and clients and exploring data in nFORM. Here are some tools to support your investigation and synthesize and prioritize what you learn:

nFORM reports allow your team to dig into the aggregate performance measures included in the quarterly reports sent to ACF. For instance, you can examine week-by-week or day-by-day average attendance for your workshop to understand when clients begin to drop off, you can also examine average attendance for a specific population group. nFORM data can provide your team with a more refined understanding of the "who, what, and where" related to a challenge. For more information about nFORM reports, please see Module VIII of the [User Manual](#).

Empathy interviews can help your team understand the experiences of staff, partners, and/or clients in relation to the problem you are trying to address. Empathy interviews are unstructured, meaning most questions are not predetermined and the interviewer engages in free-flowing conversation. For example, an interviewer could begin with the question, "What makes it difficult for you to attend the workshop?" and then allow the client to direct the conversation from that point. The goal is to encourage storytelling to learn the in-depth perspectives of those affected by an issue. See [page 4](#) for more information on empathy interviews.

Pulse surveys are a quick way to gather information about an issue from a larger number of clients at regular time points. For instance, you might administer a two- or three-question survey to learn more about engagement challenges with questions like, "Which parts of the lesson did you find most engaging today?" Closed-ended response options could include small-group discussion, games or activities, and role-playing. If you only need a one-time feedback survey, consider adding more questions. See [page 5](#) for more information on pulse surveys.

Process maps help your team visualize an organizational process and identify the parts of the process that aren't working well. For instance, you might map out each step in your enrollment process, as the client experiences it, to identify bottlenecks. See [page 6](#) for more information on process maps.

Fishbone diagrams are useful tools for synthesizing learning gathered through the investigation of programmatic issues (for example, information on attendance challenges gathered from empathy



What do I document in Step 1?



What did you learn about the challenge that is important to remember going forward?

- Drop-outs tend to happen after the first workshop



What other root causes did your team identify?

- Document them in the CQI worksheet or on a tool like a fishbone diagram, which maps your understanding of the challenge
- Most complex challenges are multifaceted and not resolved with one strategy



Step 2: Describe what success looks like

/ **Key process: Define what success looks like**

/ **Key process: Create a plan to measure progress**

Step 2. Describe what success looks like

What is the SMART goal that would show an improvement on this issue? Click or tap here to enter text.

What data source will you use to measure progress towards that goal? Click or tap here to enter text.



Need help developing a SMART goal? Click [here](#) for guidance on how to make a strong SMART goal, and for help with determining your measurement strategy.



Step 2: Resource to support your team

/ SMART goals tip sheet

- An existing resource that covers considerations for developing a strong SMART goal
- Includes a template for drafting a SMART goal

Guiding CQI with SMART goals

Improvement goals, often referred to as SMART goals, are useful for guiding CQI efforts. After your CQI implementation team identifies and defines a challenge, it should next create a SMART goal that answers the question, what are we trying to accomplish? SMART goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and [time-bound](#). A well-developed SMART goal will provide a gauge of success over time and help to foster clarity about the aims of the improvement effort.

Below are a few common questions about SMART goals and measures to understand progress toward meeting them.

What is a SMART goal?

A SMART goal defines what success looks like for your improvement effort. When your CQI team identifies a challenge, a key next step is to develop a SMART goal before starting to brainstorm and test strategies. Being clear about what you are trying to accomplish makes it easier to determine how to get there. In the [HMRP CQI template](#), use Table D1 to specify your SMART goal and the measures you will use to assess progress toward your goal.

Why create SMART goals?

SMART goals serve a couple of purposes.

1. SMART goals provide **a means for assessing the success** of your team's improvement efforts. In developing a SMART goal, your team will specify by how much you are aiming to improve related to your challenge. At various points during the improvement effort, your team should track progress toward your SMART goal to understand whether you are moving in the right direction.
2. SMART goals should also **inspire and motivate** the team to achieve improvement and should help to **get everyone on the same page** about what the team is trying to accomplish.

To serve both purposes, a SMART goal should strike a balance between being practical and inspirational.

What makes an effective SMART goal?

As noted above, effective SMART goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and [time-bound](#). Below, we break down what each of those terms means in the context of improvement work.

Box 1. Program B's experiences developing improvement strategies prior to setting a quantifiable goal

Program B's CQI team has identified exit survey response rates as a challenge and sets a goal to improve response rates. With approval from their FPS, the team decides to pilot a strategy to offer incentives for survey completion. They pilot in two groups and achieve 66% and 68% response rates. They look back and see this was up from an average of 62%.

Was the strategy a success? The pilot groups had higher response rates, but the team never defined what success meant, so is not sure whether the slight bump was the improvement they were looking for or if further work needs to be done.



What do I document in Step 2?



What did you learn about your baseline state while developing your SMART goal?

- And what factors did you consider when setting your desired state (your improvement goal)?



Reflect on your process for setting a goal. Do you feel the goal you set was achievable? Did it feel relevant to all staff?

- If not relevant, how can the team set goals that feel motivating and relevant to all staff who are affected by the challenge?



Step 3: Identify an improvement strategy

/ **Key process: Co-create a strategy**

/ **Key process: Think through the rationale for your strategy**

Step 3. Identify an improvement strategy

Describe your strategy [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Describe your rationale for the strategy: Why might this strategy lead to improvements? [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)



Need help identifying a strategy? The [strategy development tip sheet](#) describes how to generate ideas. Click [here](#) for more resources on identifying strategies.



Document your insights: Use this space for important notes related to strategy development. For example, did your team develop other promising strategies (in addition to your priority strategy) that you might test later?



[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)



Step 3: Resource to support your team

/ Strategy development tip sheet

- An existing resource that covers the process of brainstorming strategies and specifying your rationale
- Includes useful human-centered design activities to support strategy development






 CQI Best Practices Series 

Developing effective program improvement strategies

A common approach to addressing a programmatic issue or challenge is to try something and then if it doesn't work, try something else. Continuous quality improvement (CQI) is a more systematic approach for designing strategies that are best able to address your improvement goals. In CQI, strategy development is three-pronged: (1) investigate the problem and identify root causes, (2) consult a range of sources to identify promising improvement ideas, and (3) specify the rationale for your strategy to ensure it aligns with your theory of improvement and to set your team up for piloting the strategy. This brief describes how HMRF grantees can develop improvement strategies and resources to support each step in the process. Please remember to discuss any proposed changes to your project design or implementation with your Family Assistance Program Specialist (FPS).

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-  **Process maps** help your team visualize an organizational process and identify the parts of the process that aren't working well. For instance, you might map out each step in your enrollment process, as the client experiences it, to identify bottlenecks. See [page 6](#) for more information on process maps.
-  **Fishbone diagrams** are useful tools for synthesizing learning gathered through the investigation of programmatic issues (for example, information on attendance challenges gathered from empathy



What do I document in Step 3?



How did you inform the strategy?

- Note it here, so you remember what information sources contributed to the development process that led you to feel the strategy was promising



Was your process inclusive of all key voices?

- Did staff responsible for implementing the strategy have input? Was there a need to gather client input?



You might generate several ideas in a brainstorming session for improvement strategies

- Save unused ideas in case your first idea doesn't work as you expected and you come back to try a new strategy



Menti: Share with us (Step 3)

/ **What do you do with leftover (promising) strategies that you don't move forward with?**

- We don't generate multiple ideas; we come up with one and proceed with it
- We try them all at the same time!
- We write them down and come back to them later
- We don't save them once we've committed to another idea





Exploring the worksheet: Step 4, Road testing



Step 4: Create a road test plan

/ Key process: Develop your learning questions

/ Key process: Detail your strategy implementation plan

4. Conduct a road test

Create a road test plan and implement it

What are your learning questions for the road test? *Click or tap here to enter text.*

When and how will you implement the strategy? Consider staff responsible, training/tools needed, and key processes. *Click or tap here to enter text.*

What is your timeline for the road test? When will you start, collect feedback, and complete the road test? *Click or tap here to enter text.*

How will you collect feedback during the road test? *(Check all that apply)*

Staff feedback through:

- Questionnaire
- Focus group
- Interview
- nFORM
- HCD activity¹
- Other *(please specify)*

Client feedback through:

- Questionnaire
- Focus group
- Interview
- nFORM
- HCD activity
- Other *(please specify)*

Others' feedback:



Please specify who and how



Step 4: Resource to support your team

/ Learning questions tip sheet





- New resource to help your team develop strong learning questions to frame your road test

 CQI Best Practices Series 

Using learning questions to guide road testing and reflection

Learning questions are an important component of a successful CQI road test. Your CQI team should develop learning questions when you start planning to test an improvement strategy. This prompts your team to intentionally consider and align on what you need to know about how the strategy works before you test it. Your learning questions will also inform the data you need to collect during the road test. During and after the road test, use your learning questions to make sense of the information you have gathered and to develop evidence-informed next steps. This tip sheet walks through how to develop useful learning questions to frame road testing and use them to guide reflection.

What types of questions are appropriate for a road test?
Learning questions should focus on the quality and feasibility of implementation and short-term outcomes. They are typically related to time (how long did it take?), process (how did you do this?), or response (how did you experience it?). Learning questions can also tie to outputs (did the strategy help staff provide more referrals?), and short-term outcomes (were clients satisfied with the program?). Learning questions should not focus on long-term outcomes or effectiveness, as a road test is not designed to answer causal questions. When developing learning questions, CQI teams should consider:

-  **Uncertainties related to how the strategy will work**
For example, you may be interested in learning whether clients will engage with a new service or program component, and what factors affected their participation level.
-  **How staff, clients, and partners experience the strategy**
Ensure you are accounting for a range of perspectives. For example, you may be interested in learning about supports staff need to implement the strategy, as well as client and partner satisfaction with the strategy.
-  **Contextual factors that might influence implementation**
A strategy is not implemented in a vacuum. Develop questions related to contextual factors that may help or hinder implementation to learn how to address those factors. For instance, how did agency leadership help or hinder our ability to execute the strategy?
-  **Assumptions about how the strategy will work**
A key goal of a road test is to understand how your strategy works, with a focus on strengthening the design and implementation. Develop questions related to the rationale for your strategy that you spelled out in section D2 of the HMRF CQI plan template. This speaks to how you assume the strategy will work. Use a road test to explore these assumptions—what outputs or short-term outcomes are you hoping to see that will support progress toward your long-term goals?

What process works well for creating learning questions?
When developing learning questions, gather input from the CQI team as well as relevant staff, such as those who will be responsible for implementing the strategy. One way to accomplish

Not sure what to ask? To ask questions, you need a well-defined strategy and a detailed account of what you plan to do. A useful framework for defining a strategy is the 4Ps¹: Ensure you have spelled out the *people* implementing and affected by the strategy; *processes and practices* to implement the strategy; *products*, or tools and resources needed to support implementation; and *principles* that will guide proper implementation (e.g., coaching must be trauma-informed). Then, ask questions about those components. For example, did our training adequately prepare staff to provide trauma-informed coaching?



Step 4: Analyze the road test

/ **Key process: Reflect on road test information**

/ **Key process: Make an evidence-informed decision**

Once you're done, analyze road test results

Analyze the road test results: What worked well, what should change? Click or tap here to enter text.

Decide whether to revise, maintain, or abandon the strategy.

- Revise → Restart Step 4 and revise your plans for road testing the strategy.
- Maintain → Continue to Step 5 to implement the strategy and monitor over time.
- Abandon → Return to Step 3 to identify a new strategy to address the problem.



Need help analyzing road test results and deciding next steps? See the [tip sheet for reflecting on your road test](#) and the [decision tree tip sheet](#) for suggestions. Click [here](#) for more resources on planning, conducting, and analyzing results of a road test.



Document your insights: Use this space to note insights that emerged from the road test. Note any unanticipated or unrelated challenges that you should return to later.

Click or tap here to enter text.



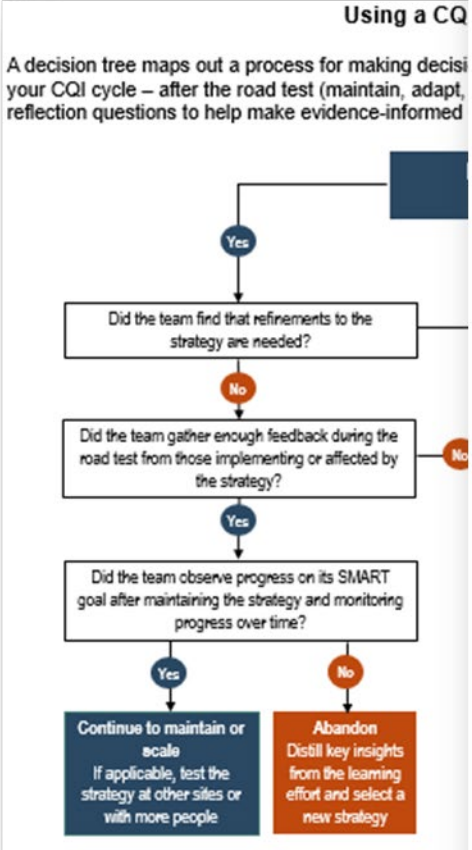
Step 4: Resources to support your team

/ Learning questions tip sheet

- Return to the learning questions tip sheet for guidance on reflection

/ Decision tree tool

- A tool to facilitate a nuanced reflection on the results of your road test to support evidence-informed decisions about next steps



Contextual factors that might influence implementation
A strategy is not implemented in a vacuum. Develop questions related to contextual factors that may help or hinder implementation to learn how to address those factors. For instance, how did agency leadership help or hinder our ability to execute the strategy?

Assumptions about how the strategy will work
A key goal of a road test is to understand how your strategy works, with a focus on strengthening the design and implementation. Develop questions related to the rationale for your strategy that you spelled out in section D2 of the [HMRF CQI plan template](#). This speaks to how you assume the strategy will work. Use a road test to explore these assumptions—what outputs or short-term outcomes are you hoping to see that will support progress toward your long-term goals?

What process works well for creating learning questions?
When developing learning questions, gather input from the CQI team as well as relevant staff, such as those who will be responsible for implementing the strategy. One way to accomplish this is to give staff 3-5 minutes to brainstorm questions on sticky notes, then cluster and refine questions. Ensure questions are exploratory, feasible to answer with existing data or new data collection efforts, and useful for informing next steps.

After the road test: Reflecting on learning

Use your learning questions as a guide for reflecting on the road test
Your learning questions spell out what you hope to learn in a test. But be open to other unexpected insights that may emerge through your road test. Gather your CQI team (and other staff involved in the road test, as relevant) to review your road test data and engage in collaborative sense-making. Start with a high-level reflection of what happened:

What seems to have worked consistently well and not so well? What was inconsistent?
Think about your learning questions related to implementation of the strategy. For example, maybe at the start, you were interested in whether staff would have time to implement the strategy. If staff share that they struggled to find the time to implement the strategy, ask for suggestions for how to support them better.

Consider opportunities to adjust your strategy. How might we build on and use our strengths (aspects that have worked well)? How might we address or resolve the challenges that arose (aspects that have not worked well)?

Keep in mind that the strategy may not have worked the same way for all users (e.g., staff or clients). Examine findings by subgroups, if possible. For instance, if you administered a feedback survey to clients to understand their satisfaction with the program's new incentive structure, examine results by employed and unemployed clients – were both groups equally able to take advantage of the incentives?

What, if anything, was surprising, given expectations about how the new strategy would work?
Your assumptions about how the strategy would work are likely reflected in your rationale for the strategy. Return to your strategy rationale in section D2 of the HMRF CQI plan template. Does the strategy appear to be working that way? If you expected your improvement strategy would make it easier

Not sure what to ask? To ask questions, you need a well-defined strategy and a detailed account of what you plan to do. A useful framework for defining a strategy is the 4Ps¹: Ensure you have spelled out the people implementing and affected by the strategy; processes and practices to implement the strategy; products, or tools and resources needed to support implementation; and principles that will guide proper implementation (e.g., coaching must be trauma-informed). Then, ask questions about those components. For example, did our training adequately prepare staff to provide trauma-informed coaching?



What do I document for Step 4?



Road tests often produce many insights related to your challenge

- Even if your staff provides feedback in an ongoing way during testing, ensure you reflect on feedback and capture lessons learned at the end of the road test
- Note insights about what works, implementation challenges that get in the way, and solutions for overcoming challenges



Maintain focus on your current challenge; when other issues arise, document them on your worksheet



Reflect on how the road test went. Did you hear from everyone?



Menti: Share with us (Step 4)

/ How well does your team document your CQI plans, progress, and lessons learned?





Exploring the worksheet: Step 5, Monitoring improvement



Step 5: Monitoring improvement over time

/ Key process: Develop a monitoring plan

5. Implement the strategy and monitor and analyze improvement

What is your implementation plan? Click or tap here to enter text.

How frequently will you monitor your strategy, and until what point? (e.g. "monthly for 3 months")
Click or tap here to enter text.

Who is responsible for monitoring progress? Click or tap here to enter text.

Did you make progress toward your SMART goal? Click or tap here to enter text.



Need additional resources? Click [here](#) for resources on monitoring progress.



Document your insights: Did this CQI effort change your ongoing program monitoring processes? For example, if you were not already monitoring your SMART goal, will you incorporate it into your routine monitoring process?

Click or tap here to enter text.



Step 5: Resource to support your team

/ **June 2022 CQI office hours session on monitoring**



What should you monitor to assess a strategy after road testing?

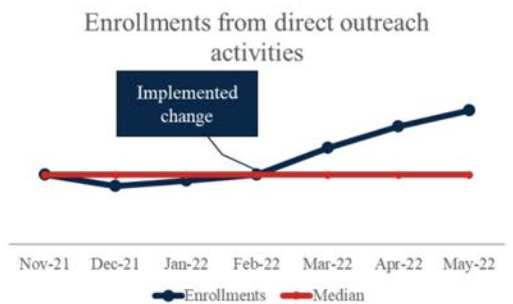
/ **Comprehensive monitoring involves understanding multiple aspects over time**

- Outcome measures: Are you making progress on your SMART goal?
- Process measures: Are staff continuing to implement the strategy as intended?

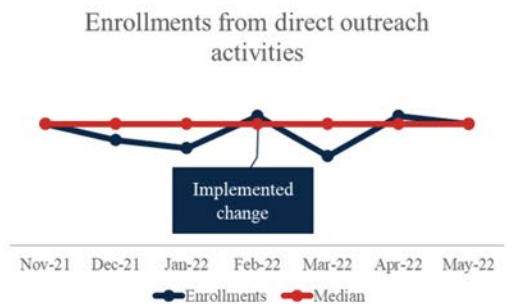


What makes an improvement?

You might hope to see this ...

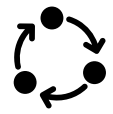


But instead, you see this ...





What do I document for Step 5?



Reflect on your program monitoring. Do you need to change what you monitor in an ongoing way?

- Will you monitor progress on your SMART goal just for the duration of the cycle or add it to the list of metrics you keep tabs on?



Exploring the worksheet: Steps 6-7, Next steps



Steps 6-7: Communication and next steps

/ **Key process: Develop a communication plan**

/ **Key process: Plan for scaling and sustainability**

6. Interpret data and communicate results

With your CQI team, review your data and decide on key summary findings for each learning question you identified in Step 4. Also consider progress made on your SMART goal. Begin each statement with the phrase: *We learned that...*

- We learned that: Click or tap here to enter text.
- We learned that: Click or tap here to enter text.
- We learned that: Click or tap here to enter text.

Describe how the CQI team will communicate findings and obtain feedback on issues to address, information. Click or tap here to enter text.



Need help with your communication improvement efforts describes communication. Click [here](#) for other resources on interpretation.

7. Plan next steps

Consider next steps based on your findings in Step 6. If you do not see progress on your SMART goal, will you revise or abandon your strategy? If your strategy has not been implemented program-wide, will you scale-up the strategy, and if so, how and when? If you are not ready to scale-up, what next steps will your program take towards improvement? Click or tap here to enter text.



Need help deciding? See the [decision tree tip sheet](#), or click [here](#) for additional resources.



Document your insights: Use this space to note key insights related to your strategy and your decision whether to continue it, revise it, expand it, or abandon it.

Click or tap here to enter text.





Steps 6-7: Resources to support your team

/ Scaling and sustainability tip sheet

- An existing tip sheet that covers considerations for scaling and sustaining a strategy, including formalizing the strategy and making a plan to support sustainability

/ Decision tree resource

- Return to the decision tree to consider final steps after monitoring

 CQI Best Practices Series 

Scaling and sustaining improvement efforts

When road testing is done and the CQI team has monitored outcomes, the CQI cycle is nearly complete. If the strategy is deemed a success—in other words, the test supports positive progress toward goals—teams should plan for how to scale a strategy more broadly (if applicable) and sustain the practice long-term. This tip sheet presents three steps and guiding questions your team can use to support successful scaling and sustaining of an improvement strategy.


When scaling and sustaining changes, these steps will help your team to distill what you learned from testing into a cohesive message and approach to support positive outcomes and a new way of working.

Box 1. Defining terms

Scaling: Replicating or expanding an improvement strategy to a greater number of people (e.g., staff implementing or clients receiving).

Sustaining: Maintaining the strategy as is, directed at the same group of staff or clients, for a longer period of time. Sustaining is not just about doing the same thing for longer but thinking about how to institutionalize a strategy to make it the standard way of doing business.

- **Reflect on learning.** Your CQI team had reflection points after the road test and may have checked in on what you were seeing throughout the monitoring phase. To help your team think more broadly about what you learned, your team should reflect across all steps in the CQI cycle and consider the most important points to communicate to others in your program who haven't been involved. (See [August 2022 Office Hours](#) presentation for more information.)
- **Formalize the strategy.** As you reflect, you should develop an implementation guide to document the steps of the strategy, what you learned about how to implement it well, and what parts of the strategy are core to its success. Describe what you found to be essential to maintain or flexible to change to help others replicate the strategy in their own context. This is also an opportunity for staff who were involved with testing to share their own tips for achieving success in implementing the strategy.
- **Make a tangible plan.** Scaling and sustaining improvement strategies does not happen organically; rather, scaling and sustaining require proactive planning. Consider what your team will do to transfer ownership of the strategy to other staff; communicate about the value of the strategy; hardwire the change to make it easy to implement; and reduce obstacles, such as workload challenges.

 **Reflect on learning**

An important step when concluding a CQI cycle is to reflect on what the CQI team learned throughout the process. For instance, what did the team learn about the specific challenge and its root causes? What insights came out of the road test? Did data demonstrate success in the monitoring phase? Gather your CQI team to reflect on:

- **Why did we originally start this improvement effort? What were we trying to improve?**
- **What did we learn about the problem?**
- **What did we predict would happen as a result of implementing the strategy? What, if any, assumptions were challenged or confirmed through testing the strategy?**



What do I document for Steps 6-7?



Reflect on the cycle. Note any final insights that emerged later in the cycle.



Did any lessons emerge about how to successfully scale strategies or ensure their sustainability long term?

- What might you do differently next time to ensure more success in scaling or sustaining your strategy?



Menti: Share with us (Steps 6-7)

/ What is the most challenging part of CQI for your team?





Announcements

- / **Next office hours is on May 23, 2-3pm ET**
- / **New date for June office hours! Tuesday, June 20 to accommodate regional roundtable schedule**
- / **For more resources:**
 - The HMRF Grantee Resources site (<https://hmrfggrantresources.info/continuous-quality-improvement>) contains CQI template, instructions, office hours slides, tip sheets, and other CQI resources
 - New tool: *CQI worksheet*
 - New tip sheets:
 - *Developing a problem statement*
 - *Using a CQI decision tree to make evidence-informed decisions*
 - *Using learning questions to guide road testing and reflection*
- / **Submit questions to hmrfcqi@mathematica-mpr.com**



Thank you!