Model for Improvement

Question 1: What are we trying to accomplish?

**AIM:**
A specific, measurable, time-sensitive statement of expected results of an improvement process (a statement of a specific, intended goal)
A strong, clear aim gives necessary direction to improvement efforts, and is characterized as
• Intentional, deliberate, planned
• Unambiguous, specific, concrete
• Measurable with a numeric goal, preferably one that provides a “stretch” to motivate significant improvement
• Aligned with other organizational goals or strategic initiatives
• Agreed upon and supported by those involved in the improvement and leaders

Make your Aim actionable and useful.
Include the following:
• A general description of what you hope to accomplish
• Specific patient population who will be the focus
• Some guidance for carrying out the activities to achieve Aim

Sample Aim Statement

By [insert date], Happy Valley Pediatrics will improve the provision of preventive and developmental services to patients younger than 5 years by implementing the Bright Futures framework in our practice. Our office will focus on adopting strength-based counseling strategies and tools, the routine use of structured developmental assessments, forming links with resources in our community, and instituting a recall and reminder system.
We will achieve this Aim by using the Bright Futures Implementation and Training tools and materials so that
• One hundred percent of charts for children younger than 5 years have preventive services documented on a preventive services prompting sheet.
• Ninety percent of children younger than 5 years have structured developmental assessments documented in their charts.
• More than 90% of families with children younger than 5 years have parental strengths and needs assessed at well-child visits.

Question 2: How will we know that a change is an improvement?

**MEASURES:**
Measures are indicators of change. To answer this key question (“How will we know that a change is an improvement?”), several measures usually are required. These measures also can be used to monitor a system’s performance over time. In PDSA cycles, measurement used immediately after an idea or change has been tested helps determine its effect.
In improvement, key measures and measurement should
• Clarify and be directly linked to aims or goals.
• Seek usefulness over perfection.
• Be integrated into daily work whenever possible.
• Be graphically and visibly displayed.
• For PDSA cycle measurement, be simple and feasible enough to accomplish in close time proximity to tests of change.

Question 3: What changes can we make that will result in an improvement?

**IDEAS:**
Ideas for change or change principles to be tested in PDSA cycles can be derived from the following:
• Evidence—results of research/science
• Critical thinking or observation of the current system
• Creative thinking
• Theories, questions, hunches
• Extrapolations from other situations

When selecting ideas to test, consider the following:
• Direct link to the Aim
• Likely impact of the change (avoid low-impact changes)
• Potential for learning
• Feasibility
• Logical sequencing
• Series of tests that will build on one another
• Scale of the test (3 patients NOT 30)
• Shortness of the cycle (1 week NOT 1 month)
Model for Improvement Key Points

Why a Model? What Purpose?
- Provide organizing structure to guide thinking.
- Ensure discipline and thoughtfulness.
- Support improvement principles.
- Facilitate improvement.
- Foster common language.

Improvement Principles
- Listen to customers.
- Tap knowledge of the system and people in it.
- Understand processes and interactions in the system.
- Use disciplined method in successive cycles to test changes.
- Test on small scale: move rapidly to improve.
- Measure to learn and to understand variation.

Model for Improvement
3 Key Questions for Improvement
- What are we trying to accomplish? AIM
- How will we know that a change is an improvement? MEASURES
- What changes can we make that will result in an improvement? IDEAS

Tips to make the most of PDSA cycles and tests of change
- Think a couple of cycles ahead.
- Plan multiple cycles to test and adapt change.
- Scale down size of test (number of patients, location)...A “cycle of 1.”
- Do more cycles, at a smaller scale and faster pace instead of fewer, bigger, slower.
- Test with volunteers first.
- Do not seek buy-in or consensus for the test—particularly early on.
- Be innovative and flexible to make test feasible.
- Collect useful (and only just enough) data during each test.
- Test over a wide range of conditions.
- Learn from failures as well as successes.
- Communicate what you have learned.
- Engage leadership support.
| Model for Improvement PSDA Planning Worksheet | Team Name: __________________________ |
|                                             | Cycle: ___________ Date: __________________________ |

**PLAN**

Objective for this cycle:

Questions:

Predictions:

Plan for change or test: (Who, What, When, Where?):

Plan for collection of data: (Who, What, When, Where?):

| **DO:** Carry out the change or test. Collect data and begin analysis. Describe observations, problems encountered, and special circumstances. |

| **STUDY:** Complete analysis of data; summarize what was learned. |

| **ACT:** Are we ready to make a change? Plan for the next cycle. |