

Conducting a Change Project

One Aim, One Level of Care, One Location, One Population

Base Your Project on Five Questions

1. What is it like to be our customer?
2. What are we trying to accomplish?
3. How will we know if a change is an improvement?
4. What changes can we test that may result in an improvement?
5. How can we sustain the improvement?

Fill These Key Roles

- **Executive Sponsor:** Appoints the Change Leader, and works to remove all barriers to the Change Project
- **Change Leader:** Provides daily leadership, energy, enthusiasm, and coordination of Change Project
- **Change Team:** The staff members selected to work on the Change Project

Begin With a Walk-through

In a walk-through, staff members experience the treatment processes just as a customer does. The goal is to see the agency from the customer's perspective. Taking this perspective of treatment services—from the first call for help, to the intake process, and through final discharge—is the most useful way to understand how the customer feels, and to discover how to make improvements that will serve the customer better.

Testing & Implementing Change with PDSA Cycles

The PDSA Cycle is an efficient way to learn what will work in your organization, and should be the foundation of every change you make. The PDSA Cycle begins with a Plan and ends with Action based on the learning gained from the Plan, Do, and Study phases of the cycle:

Plan the change or test. What is the aim of the test, and how will we know if the change being tested is an improvement? What do we predict will happen? What steps are needed to prepare for the test (who, what where, when)?

Do the plan. Document problems and unexpected observations. Begin to analyze the data.

Study the results. Complete the analysis of the data. Compare the actual results to the predicted results. Has the change resulted in an improvement? Why or why not? Summarize what has been learned.

Act on the new knowledge. Should the change be increased in scope or tested under different conditions? Should the change be adopted, adapted, or abandoned? What will be the next cycle?



Measure Change

By collecting data before, during, and after the change you implement, you can measure, evaluate, and compare your agency's progress with respect to the goals you set out. The process of measuring change should speed the improvement process; you should begin with simple measures rather than spending time developing a complex measurement system.

Are you interested in more information? NIATx has it—both at the National Program Office and at www.niatx.net. Visit the Web site or e-mail info@niatx.net today to learn how to find resources that will help your organization improve its operations and the lives of its customers.

