

Evaluating a Pilot Test

Participant training objectives:

- To understand the basic criteria for evaluating pilot test results
- To know how to use pilot test results to determine the next steps in an improvement project

Target audience:

QI team members involved in the solution implementation and evaluation phases of QI project cycles

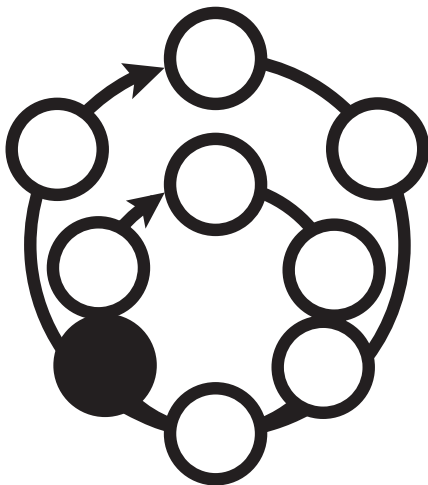
Type of exercise:

Scenario; individual and group exercise, 60 minutes

Key concepts:

After pilot testing the solution to a quality problem, project team members determine their next steps by evaluating the results against the following criteria:

- Effectiveness against goals
- Range of impact
- Resources allocated
- Time required
- Ownership of solution



The Big Picture:

Pilot testing, a small scale implementation of potential solutions, allows team members to assess the effectiveness of the solution before making changes system-wide. In the HIVQUAL model, pilot test results are evaluated during Step 5 of the project cycle: Project team evaluates result(s) with key stakeholders. That assessment occurs during the pilot test evaluation phase when team members, the quality committee, and staff review the pilot test results.

SESSION AT-A-GLANCE	WHO	HOW LONG
1. Welcome, Learning Objectives, Agenda	Facilitator	5 minutes
2. QI Background: Pilot Test Evaluation Criteria	Facilitator	10 minutes
3. Group Exercise: Scenario	Participants	30 minutes
4. Learning Transfer: Worksheet	Participants	10 minutes
5. Wrap-up	All	5 minutes
		70 minutes

Materials

For this group learning session, you will need the following materials:

- Participant handouts:
 - Scenario
 - Learning Transfer Worksheet
 - Copy of slide presentation
- Overhead projector/LCD panel (optional)
- Wipeboard/chalkboard (optional)

Photocopy the Scenario, Learning Transfer Worksheet, and slide presentation for each participant.

Prepare your presentation slides for display:

- Photocopy the slides, or write the slide content on transparencies or on flipchart paper.
- For display using an LCD panel, enter the content into a computer file.

Preparation

To prepare for the group learning session, complete the following tasks:

Familiarize yourself with the session's structure and content:

- Read through the Group Exercise notes in their entirety, including the exercise answer key, presentation slides, and participant handouts.
- Practice the presentation outlined in the Group Exercise notes.

Prepare the training room:

- Arrange the tables and chairs in a circle or square shape, if possible.
- Set up and test equipment (e.g. overhead projector), if applicable.
- Make sure you have enough chalk or wipeboard markers,

Notes

Evaluating a Pilot Test: Group Exercise

Welcome and Introductions

To begin the group learning session, welcome participants and thank them for their participation. If necessary, ask individuals to introduce themselves to the group.

■ Learning Objectives

Tell participants that by the end of the session they will:

- Understand the basic criteria for evaluating pilot test results
- Know how to use pilot test results to determine the next steps in an improvement project

Agenda

Provide a brief description of the session's primary components:

- Presentation of basic criteria for pilot test evaluation
- Group exercise on completing pilot test evaluations
- Learning transfer worksheet to practice pilot test evaluation for one of your own projects

Quality Improvement Background

Distribute a copy of the slides to each participant for note taking and/or future reference.

Begin by reviewing the purpose of a pilot test: to assess the effectiveness of potential solutions before implementing a successful solution system-wide.

- Introduce the basic criteria against which pilot test results should be evaluated:

Effectiveness against goals. Ultimately, the pilot test should help achieve the goal as stated in the improvement project memo and serve as a baseline against which future improvements can be measured.

Range of impact. The range of a pilot test's impact increases with the number of patients upon which it has a positive effect.

Resources allocated. The resources allocated to a pilot test should be no more, and no less, than the minimum required for its basic implementation.

Time required. By definition, a pilot test is a small scale implementation. It should be completed in approximately 1 month or less—ideally, in 2 weeks.

Ownership of solution. Both the quality committee and staff should be engaged in the solution to the extent that they will support any process changes required for its long-term implementation.

- Explain that the pilot test evaluation helps team members and the quality committee to decide how to move forward, and specifically whether the pilot test should be:

Terminated—makes sense if all stakeholders agree that the pilot test did not achieve the goal as stated in the improvement project memo and that a modified test would produce similar results.

Implemented system-wide—makes sense if all stakeholders agree that the pilot test achieved the goal as stated in the improvement project memo.

Repeated—makes sense if pilot test results are inconclusive. Before repeating, however, the test should be modified to correct any deficiencies (e.g. excessive length, inadequate resources, inappropriate target population).

Add that the final step in pilot test evaluation is to identify the follow-up tasks required to pursue the chosen course of action.

Getting Started

Divide the participants into teams of roughly equal size, 4-6 people per group. You can assign participants to teams yourself or ask them to count off by a given number and form teams with other participants who have the same number.



Scenario Group Exercise

Distribute the scenario to each participant and provide directions for completing the exercise:

- Read the scenario and complete the pilot test evaluations individually. (10 minutes)
- Review the evaluations as a team and reach consensus on each answer. (10 minutes)

Call time after the first 10-minute interval and remain available to answer questions and facilitate the process. Assist teams who have problems getting started or become stuck on a particular point.

Reporting Back

Call time after the second 10-minute interval. Read the first pilot test out loud and select a team to provide its evaluation responses. After one team completes its answer, ask other teams if they have anything new to add and include any points from the answer key that have not addressed. Repeat the process for the remaining pilot tests.



Learning Transfer Getting Started

Distribute the worksheet and give participants 5 minutes to complete it, or—if not all participants have an improvement project upon which to base the evaluation—complete the worksheet as a large group.

Debrief

If time permits and participants completed the worksheet on their own, ask individuals to share the next steps in their improvement projects based on the evaluation results.



Wrap-up

Ask participants to provide feedback on whether or not they have achieved the objectives introduced at the beginning of the group learning session:

- To understand the basic criteria for evaluating pilot test results
- To know how to use pilot test results to determine the next steps in an improvement project

Schedule an informal follow-up session with any participant(s) who has not reached the objectives.

Evaluating a Pilot System: Group Exercise

Instructions:

Read the scenario and complete each of the 3 pilot test evaluation forms based on the information provided.

Background

A project team was formed to improve the patient show rate for initial medical appointments from 35% to over 60%. Three pilot tests were implemented with the following results. All test results were reviewed by the quality committee and project team members.

Pilot Test 1:

Give an incentive—free transportation vouchers—to patients who show up for their initial medical appointments.

- Pilot test period: 1 week
- Result: 45% show rate

Most patients who received the vouchers were aware of the incentive before arriving for the appointment. The vouchers cost a few dollars per patient. However, the hospital is not willing to pay for the incentive—other funds must be used. Desk staff reported frustration with the voucher distribution process and is reluctant to supervise the transactions given the heavy patient traffic.

PILOT TEST 1 :

Evaluation Questions

- Was the pilot test completed within a relatively short period of time? Yes No
- Were adequate resources allocated to pilot test implementation? Yes No
- Did the pilot test impact the majority of selected patients? Yes No
- Did the pilot test achieve the goal stated in the improvement project memo? Yes No
- Will the solution be accepted and supported by staff? Yes No

Next Steps

- Should the pilot test be terminated? Yes No
- Are you ready to implement the pilot test system-wide? Yes No
- Do you want to further test this pilot? Yes No

Follow-up Required:

Pilot Test 2:

Send welcome package to new patients that includes staff biographies/photos, peer comments, and a clinic map to help familiarize patients with the facility.

- Pilot test period: 3 weeks
- Result: 49% show rate

The welcome package was developed and mailed at relatively low cost. While the packages were mailed one week before the appointments, however, many patients did not receive them prior to their scheduled visits. In addition, the addresses were missing for over half of the patients scheduled for an initial medical appointment.

PILOT TEST 2 :

Evaluation Questions

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Was the pilot test completed within a relatively short period of time? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Were adequate resources allocated to pilot test implementation? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Did the pilot test impact the majority of selected patients? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Did the pilot test achieve the goal stated in the improvement project memo? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Will the solution be accepted and supported by staff? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Next Steps

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Should the pilot test be terminated? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Are you ready to implement the pilot test system-wide? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Do you want to further test this pilot? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Follow-up Required:

Pilot Test 3:

Provider makes personal reminder phone call to his/her patients about upcoming appointments.

- Pilot test period: 1 week
- Result: 58% show rate

Virtually all patients responded positively to personal contact from their respective providers. The providers were reluctant to assume the responsibility of making reminder phone calls. Most were too busy to make the calls during the day and had to stay at least 30 minutes after their last appointments to do so. In addition, many patients could not be reached personally until after regular business hours or

due to missing phone numbers. It was decided not to leave messages on answering machines due to confidentiality concerns.

PILOT TEST 3 :**Evaluation Questions**

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Was the pilot test completed within a relatively short period of time? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Were adequate resources allocated to pilot test implementation? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Did the pilot test impact the majority of selected patients? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Did the pilot test achieve the goal stated in the improvement project memo? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Will the solution be accepted and supported by staff? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Next Steps

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Should the pilot test be terminated? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Are you ready to implement the pilot test system-wide? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Do you want to further test this pilot? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Follow-up Required:

Evaluating a Pilot Test: Learning Transfer Worksheet

Instructions:

Think of an improvement project in your facility that is currently underway or was recently completed. Using the information from today's session, complete the pilot test evaluation form for one of the project solutions.

PILOT TEST:

Evaluation Questions

- Was the pilot test completed within a relatively short period of time? Yes No
- Were adequate resources allocated to pilot test implementation? Yes No
- Did the pilot test impact the majority of selected patients? Yes No
- Did the pilot test achieve the goal stated in the improvement project memo? Yes No
- Will the solution be accepted and supported by staff? Yes No

Next Steps

- Should the pilot test be terminated? Yes No
- Are you ready to implement the pilot test system-wide? Yes No
- Do you want to further test this pilot? Yes No

Follow-up Required:

Evaluating a Pilot Test: Answer Sheet

The sample response does not reflect how the facility necessarily should or would complete the pilot test evaluations, but rather one way the evaluations could be completed.

PILOT TEST 1 :

Evaluation Questions

- Was the pilot test completed within a relatively short period of time? Yes No
- Were adequate resources allocated to pilot test implementation? Yes No
- Did the pilot test impact the majority of selected patients? Yes No
- Did the pilot test achieve the goal stated in the improvement project memo? Yes No
- Will the solution be accepted and supported by staff? Yes No

Next Steps

- Should the pilot test be terminated? Yes No
- Are you ready to implement the pilot test system-wide? Yes No
- Do you want to further test this pilot? Yes No

Follow-up Required:

None. This pilot test should most likely be terminated given its:

- Questionable support among front desk staff.
- Lack of hospital funding.
- Relatively low improvement cases.

PILOT TEST 2 :

Evaluation Questions

- Was the pilot test completed within a relatively short period of time? Yes No
- Were adequate resources allocated to pilot test implementation? Yes No
- Did the pilot test impact the majority of selected patients? Yes No
- Did the pilot test achieve the goal stated in the improvement project memo? Yes No
- Will the solution be accepted and supported by staff? Yes No

Next Steps

- Should the pilot test be terminated? Yes No
- Are you ready to implement the pilot test system-wide? Yes No
- Do you want to further test this pilot? Yes No

Follow-up Required:

- Download the updated patient address list from other patient databases.
- Modify the pilot test so that the package is mailed out 2 weeks prior to the scheduled appointment dates.

PILOT TEST 3 :

Evaluation Questions

- Was the pilot test completed within a relatively short period of time? Yes No
- Were adequate resources allocated to pilot test implementation? Yes No
- Did the pilot test impact the majority of selected patients? Yes No
- Did the pilot test achieve the goal stated in the improvement project memo? Yes No
- Will the solution be accepted and supported by staff? Yes No

Next Steps

- Should the pilot test be terminated? Yes No
- Are you ready to implement the pilot test system-wide? Yes No
- Do you want to further test this pilot? Yes No

Follow-up Required:

- Change the pilot test to allow providers to leave phone messages with their patients.
- Brainstorm ways to free up provider time at the end of the day for reminder phone calls.