

Measurement Factsheets

#7 – Reviewing Your Chosen Measures

“In God we trust.
All others must
bring data”.

W. Edwards Deming

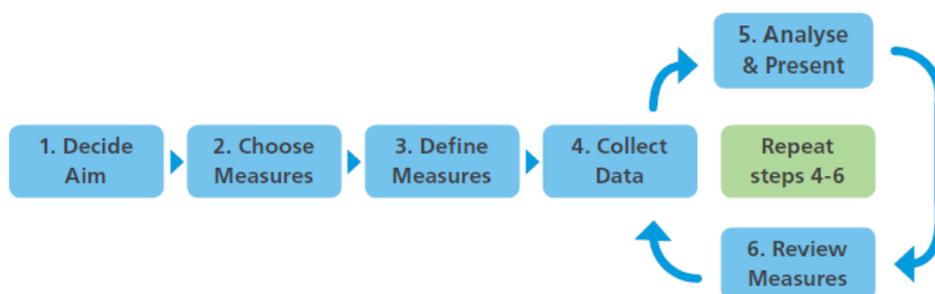


Background and context to this fact sheet

Step 6 of the Seven Step model for Measurement for Improvement is ‘Reviewing Measures’ and as one of the AEC Measurement Workshop slides says, “It is a waste of time collecting and analysing your data if you don’t take action on the results.”

Many people have a stake in how your AEC unit performs and so lots of people should be involved in looking at, and acting on, the data and measures. Regular review meetings can:

- Promote improved and consistent communication between staff
- Promote cohesive teamwork to achieve AEC objectives
- Encourage ownership and responsibility for problems and solutions
- Promote the use of the measures to drive improvement in a way that involves everyone



Set up a regular review meeting

It is vital that you set aside regular times where you and your team can come together to look at what your data is telling you and use this information to decide what you might need to do next. If you don’t have an existing meeting that includes the right people, you will need to set one up. It needn’t be a long meeting, 30 minutes is perfectly adequate to review where you are and decide the next actions. Remember that the purpose of measurement is to lead you to making the right decisions about your improvement projects.



Key questions to ask at review meetings

By reviewing the measures you will learn about how your AEC unit is performing. You will analyse the information and develop conclusions about whether you are measuring the right things. You will begin to understand the reasons behind what the information is telling you and identify the actions you need to take. The following questions can help guide your discussions at your review meeting.

- * **What outcomes did we expect (what was our aim)?** For example, if you have improved your ED pull process (made a change) you might expect to have more AEC patients which in turn may have led to better ED performance.
- * **Do the results indicate we are achieving those outcomes?** For example, are AEC numbers up and is ED performance better?
- * **Are we confident we have made the correct conclusion?** For example, is the flow better because of other changes we have made or some specific event that has occurred?
- * **Do the results indicate that we should be doing something else?** For example, maybe AEC activity hasn’t increased so we might then ask whether the pull/referral process is working as we planned it to.
- * **Are the measures useful?** Consider whether your measures really track what you thought they would. To get effective measures you need to have followed the 7 step process and have a completed measures checklist for each one. You may also need to ask whether you have measured for long enough to draw conclusions.
- * **Would some other measures tell us more?** You may be planning some changes which your current measures might not cover. If so, consider what you might add and also what you might drop. Don’t keep adding measures without reviewing the existing ones

Looking at your dashboard

It can be very helpful to take each graph in turn and get someone to take responsibility for presenting it (look back at the Measures Checklist and see the section on “Who owns this measure?” and “Who is responsible for taking action?”). They should:



- * Remind everyone about the measure—how it links to the overall aim
- * Show the graph(s)
- * Mention anything which they felt has been especially difficult about the data collection
- * Comment on any big blips/spikes/outliers/special causes in the data
- * Comment on any obvious trends in the data e.g. runs of data which are above or below the average, or runs of data points heading in one direction, up or down.

Then consider each of these questions in turn before making one of these key group decisions:



What is the data telling you?
 What conclusions can you draw?
 Is the data presented in a way that you find helpful and easy to understand—if not, do you have any suggestions?
 Any thoughts on the target/setting a target?
 Any other observations or comments?

What ideas do you have for interventions that would drive an improvement in this measure?

Decision	Because
Do nothing	Performance is ok—we are hitting our target/met our aim
Contingency plans	Some sort of special cause variation had been noted which needs to be tackled
Process redesign	Only common cause variation is present so performance is predictable but needs to be better

Ensuring that your data is presented as run charts (or SPC Control Charts) which are annotated with key changes/points in time will facilitate this process of quickly reviewing your measures and deciding what you need to do next. If your data is not presented in the best way, then this is a change that you should consider. Remember that your use of measures to drive improvement is a PDSA cycle in itself.

A possible agenda for your review meetings

1. Welcome
2. Update on actions from previous week
3. Review charts and discuss changes since last week
4. Agree what actions to take to improve the measure
5. Decide who will take each action and by when
6. Confirm attendance for next meeting

