

# Planning a Pilot Test

## Participant training objectives:

- To understand the basic steps of pilot test design and implementation
- To be able to complete a pilot test plan

## Target audience:

QI team members involved in the pilot test phase

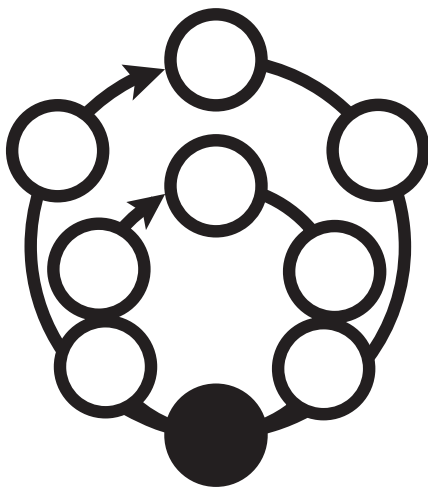
## Type of exercise:

Scenario; group exercise, 70 minutes

## Key concepts:

Pilot test planning requires the following steps:

- Define the pilot test
- Plan the pilot test implementation
- Decide how to review pilot test results
- Determine how to decide whether/how to move forward



## The Big Picture:

Pilot testing occurs after an improvement project team has investigated a particular problem and chosen a solution. In the HIVQUAL model, planning a pilot test is part of Step 4 in the project cycle: Project team plans and tests change(s). The pilot test is simply a small scale implementation of the solution which allows team members to assess its effectiveness before making changes system-wide.

SESSION AT-A-GLANCE	WHO	HOW LONG
1. Welcome, Learning Objectives, Agenda	Facilitator	5 minutes
2. QI Background: Pilot Test Implementation Plan	Facilitator	10 minutes
3. Group Exercise: Scenario	Participants	40 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
- Flipchart paper and markers
- Overhead projector/LCD panel (optional)
- Wipeboard/chalkboard (optional)

## 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.

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

Draw the planning template from the Answer Key on flipchart paper. Leave the answers blank for the Reporting Back portion of the exercise.

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.

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, if applicable.

## Notes

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# Planning 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 steps of pilot test design and implementation.
- Be able to complete a pilot test plan.

## Agenda


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

- Presentation of the steps in a pilot test
- Group exercise on completing a pilot test implementation plan
- Learning Transfer Worksheet to practice planning a pilot test 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 explaining that pilot testing is used after a project team selects a potential solution to its problem, but before the solution is implemented system-wide. The pilot test is a small scale implementation of a potential solution which should take approximately one month or less—typically two weeks—and which allows team members to assess the solution's effectiveness.

 Introduce the steps in a pilot test implementation plan:

**Define the pilot test.** Clearly state the basic elements of the test, including:

- Root cause that the pilot test is designed to eliminate
- Change to be tested
- Evaluation method(s) for assessing the pilot test outcome

**Plan the pilot test implementation.** List the steps required to make the pilot a reality.

**Decide how to review results of the pilot test.**

Plan who will evaluate the measurement results and solicit additional feedback from staff.

**Determine how to decide whether/how to move forward.** Plan how to work with the project team and/or quality committee to proceed with pilot implementation or to select a new pilot test.

State that the test plan should also identify who is responsible for specific tasks and when the tasks must be completed, both of which build accountability into the plan and increase the likelihood of task completion.

### 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 individually. (5 minutes)
- As a group, complete a pilot test implementation plan for each of the 3 pilots. (25 minutes)

Assist teams who have problems getting started or become stuck on a particular point. Alert participants when 5 minutes remain so that they are adequately prepared to report back.

### Reporting Back

Call time and select a representative from one group to define the various elements of the pilot test. Write the responses on the blank implementation plan you prepared on flipchart paper before the session. After one team completes its answer, ask other teams if they have anything new to add and write additional responses on the flipchart. Repeat the process for the remaining steps.



### Learning Transfer Getting Started

Distribute the worksheet and give participants 5 minutes to complete it.

### Debrief

If time permits, ask participants to individually share their chosen pilot test and the steps required for implementation.



### 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 steps of pilot test design and implementation
- To be able to complete a pilot test plan

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

## Planning a Pilot Test: Scenario

### Instructions:

Read the scenario and complete the pilot test plan based on the information provided and your own experience. You do not need to indicate who is responsible for each task.

### Background

A quality improvement team at a community health center was recently assembled to help increase the percentage of patients receiving dental services. The policy of the clinic states that each patient should receive an annual dental assessment and a referral to appropriate services.

After analyzing baseline data and investigating the process, the team members identified the following root cause: Although patients are screened for the dental exam and appropriate referrals are made, patients do not follow up with their dentists to receive the necessary services. The community health center does not have an on-site dentist.

To assist patients in receiving dental services, the team selects the following pilots.

- Organize an ‘Oral Health Awareness Month’ to increase awareness among patients: develop new educational materials to explain benefits of dental care, put up educational posters in the waiting room, and ask providers to personally remind patients about the importance of dental services.
- Make appointments at a nearby dental clinic directly for the patients while they are still at the community health center.
- Create a walk-in policy for same-day dental appointments (i.e. once the patient is at the community health center, he/she can walk straight to the dental clinic).

Pilot Test 1

**DEFINE THE PILOT TEST.**

Cause of Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

Change to be Tested: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluations Method(s) \_\_\_\_\_

	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHEN COMPLETED BY? (WEEK)							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>PLAN THE PILOT TEST IMPLEMENTATION.</b>									
a.	(NA)								
b.									
c.									
<b>REVIEW RESULTS OF THE PILOT TEST.</b>									
a.	(NA)								
b.									
c.									
<b>DECIDE WHETHER/HOW TO MOVE FORWARD.</b>									
a.	(NA)								
b.									
c.									

Pilot Test 2

**DEFINE THE PILOT TEST.**

Cause of Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

Change to be Tested: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluations Method(s) \_\_\_\_\_

	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHEN COMPLETED BY? (WEEK)							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>PLAN THE PILOT TEST IMPLEMENTATION.</b>									
a.	[NA]								
b.									
c.									
<b>REVIEW RESULTS OF THE PILOT TEST.</b>									
a.	[NA]								
b.									
c.									
<b>DECIDE WHETHER/HOW TO MOVE FORWARD.</b>									
a.	[NA]								
b.									
c.									

Pilot Test 3

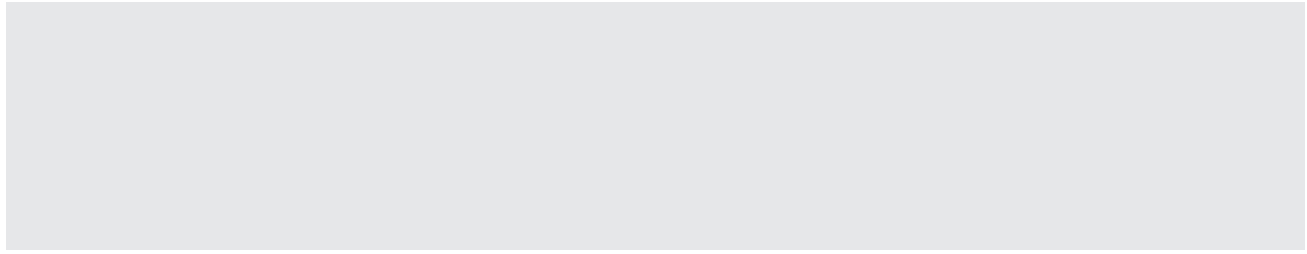
**DEFINE THE PILOT TEST.**

Cause of Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

Change to be Tested: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluations Method(s) \_\_\_\_\_

	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHEN COMPLETED BY? (WEEK)							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>PLAN THE PILOT TEST IMPLEMENTATION.</b>									
a.	(NA)								
b.									
c.									
<b>REVIEW RESULTS OF THE PILOT TEST.</b>									
a.	(NA)								
b.									
c.									
<b>DECIDE WHETHER/HOW TO MOVE FORWARD.</b>									
a.	(NA)								
b.									
c.									



# Planning a Pilot Test: Learning Transfer Worksheet

## Instructions:

Think of an improvement project in your facility which is either underway or could be underway in the future. Using the information from today's session, select a possible pilot test and complete the implementation plan.

### DEFINE THE PILOT TEST.

Cause of Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

Change to be Tested: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluations Method(s) \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN THE PILOT TEST IMPLEMENTATION.	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHEN COMPLETED BY? (WEEK)							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
a.	(NA)								
b.									
c.									

## Planning a Pilot Test: Answer Key

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

Pilot Test 1

**DEFINE THE PILOT TEST.**

- Cause of problem: Although patients are screened for the dental exam and appropriate referrals are made, they do not follow up with their dentists to receive the necessary services.
- Change to be tested: Oral Health Awareness Month
- Evaluation method(s): Increase in dental appointments made by patients Of the appointments made, how many are kept; Number of materials given out to patients; Survey to assess patients’ understanding of the importance of oral health.

	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHEN COMPLETED BY? (WEEK)							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>PLAN THE PILOT TEST IMPLEMENTATION.</b>									
a. Develop educational materials.	(NA)	X	X						
b. Make a 20-minute presentation to providers during the nextstaff meeting to discuss what they should tell patients about oral health.	(NA)		X	X					
c. Put posters in waiting room.	(NA)	X							
<b>REVIEW RESULTS OF THE PILOT TEST.</b>									
a. Count materials being given out to patients.	(NA)				X				
b. Count how many educational sessions are conducted between providers and patients.	(NA)				X				
c. Survey patients to assess their understanding of the importance of oral health.	(NA)					X			
d. Look at how many dental appointments are made by patients and, of those, how many are kept.	(NA)				X	X			
<b>DECIDE WHETHER/HOW TO MOVE FORWARD.</b>									
a. Compile results in one report for final presentation.	(NA)					X			
b. Present results to quality committee.	(NA)					X			
c. Present results to staff.	(NA)					X	X		

## Pilot Test 2

### DEFINE THE PILOT TEST.

- Cause of problem: Although patients are screened for the dental exam and appropriate referrals are made, they do not follow up with their dentists to receive the necessary services.
- Change to be tested: Make appointments at a nearby dental clinic directly for the patients while they are still at the community health center.
- Evaluation method(s): Number of dental appointments made by health center staff for patients of the appointments made, and how many are kept

	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHEN COMPLETED BY? (WEEK)							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>PLAN THE PILOT TEST IMPLEMENTATION.</b>									
a. Identify a nearby dental clinic at which health center staff can make appointments for patients.	(NA)	X							
b. Make arrangements with the dental clinic so that the health center can call for appointments.		X							
<b>REVIEW RESULTS OF THE PILOT TEST.</b>									
a. Look at how many appointments are made by the health center for patients.	(NA)		X						
b. Look at how many appointments are kept by the patients at the dental clinic			X						
<b>DECIDE WHETHER/HOW TO MOVE FORWARD.</b>									
a. Compile results in one report for final presentation.	(NA)			X					
b. Present results to quality committee.				X					
c. Present results to staff.				X	X				

## Pilot Test 3

## DEFINE THE PILOT TEST.

- Cause of problem: Although patients are screened for the dental exam and appropriate referrals are made, they do not follow up with their dentists to receive the necessary services.
- Change to be tested: Create a walk-in policy for same-day appointments.
- Evaluation method(s): Number of same-day referrals made by health center staff. Of referrals made, how many are kept

	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHEN COMPLETED BY? (WEEK)							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>PLAN THE PILOT TEST IMPLEMENTATION.</b>									
a. Identify nearby dental clinic for same-day referrals.	(NA)	X							
b. Negotiate agreement for same-day appointments.			X						
c. Develop map to show patients how to get from the health center to the dental clinic.			X						
<b>REVIEW RESULTS OF THE PILOT TEST.</b>									
a. Look at how many patients were referred for a same-day appointment.	(NA)			X					
b. Look at how many patients were seen in the clinic through the walk-in policy.				X					
<b>DECIDE WHETHER/HOW TO MOVE FORWARD.</b>									
a. Compile results in one report for final presentation.	(NA)			X					
b. Present results to quality committee.						X			
c. Present results to staff.						X	X		