

Assessing Results of a Quality Improvement Project



FAQ 7 in a series committed to assisting the HOPA membership along the quality improvement journey



Now that we have analyzed the data, what should we do with it?

The next step in a quality improvement project after data collection and analysis is to decide whether to take action and, if so, how to do so. In this FAQ, we provide tools and tips to begin the approach toward the next phase of the PDSA cycle.

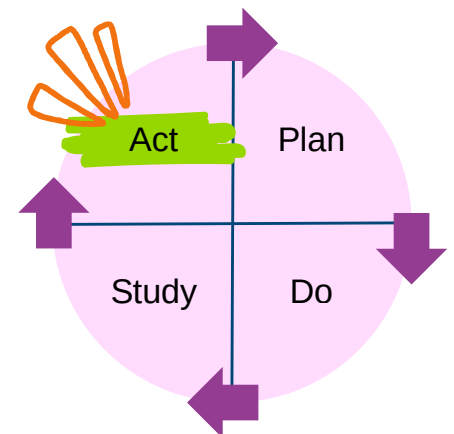
Adapt, Adopt, or Abandon

Following data analysis, the next steps of a QI project should be planned. The observed change will be adapted, adopted, or abandoned. This is the “Act” phase of the PDSA cycle. (See FAQ #2 of this series for more on the PDSA cycle.)

ADAPT the change if unexpected problems or consequences arose

ADOPT the change if the goal was met with a sustainable process

ABANDON the change if it is found to be ineffective or unsustainable



Consider the following questions when deciding what to do about the observed change:



- Did we achieve our desired outcome?
- Was the change meaningful?
- Is the change scalable?
- What problems did we encounter?
- Did this change have any unforeseen consequences?
- Should this change be continued?

Adapt	Adopt	Abandon
Modify the intended change to account for problems or unexpected outcomes	Implement the change as studied	Do <u>not</u> implement the change
Conduct the next PDSA cycle at the same scale, or a smaller scale if needed	Move forward with the change on a larger scale	Clearly communicate the stop to the change
Plan changes for the next PDSA cycle	Communicate that the change will continue as part of normal processes	Dedicate resources to other PDSA cycles or projects



PAUSE!

Is another PDSA cycle needed?

Many projects require three or more PDSA cycles to demonstrate meaningful change from baseline!

Sustainability

The quality improvement process doesn't stop once a change is adopted. Teams must ensure that the work is sustainable for every role involved. Use MOCHA to assess sustainability:

M: Measurement

- Decide what will be measured moving forward
- Set data cutoff points that would flag a negative signal with the project

O: Ownership

- Determine who will lead the new process
- Ensure that they are committed to the change

C: Communication & Training

- Consider the best way to message your team about the change
- Who will communicate the change?
- How should training take place?

H: Hard-Wiring the Change

- Integrate the change into the standard workflows
- Standardize your resources
- Make the new change as intuitive as possible

A: Assessment of Workload

- Regularly reassess workload following the change
- If workload is increasing, aim to find a solution



References

1. Bugnitz C, Sandberg KC. Creating effective PDSA cycles. Curr Probl Pediatr Adolesc Health Care. 2025;55(4):101759. doi:10.1016/j.cppeds.2025.101759
2. Christoff P. Running PDSA cycles. Curr Probl Pediatr Adolesc Health Care. 2018;48(8):198-201. doi:10.1016/j.cppeds.2018.08.006
3. Quality Improvement Essentials Toolkit. Boston: Institute for Healthcare Improvement; 2017. (Available at [ihi.org](https://www.ihim.org))

Stay tuned for future topics:

QI models and frameworks ~ QI tools ~ Developing QI projects: Understanding the problem, diagnosing the problem, data in quality, defining measures and countermeasures, assessing results ~ Quality indicators and metrics ~ How to teach residents about quality ~ Designing a quality rotation vs longitudinal project ~ Sharing results

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