## STEP 7: SUSTAINABLITY

| Factor | Importance to sustainability |
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| **Monitoring progress** | • Does the change require special monitoring systems to measure improvement?<br>• Is there a feedback system to reinforce benefits and progress and initiate new or further action?<br>• Are mechanisms in place to continue to monitor progress beyond the formal life of the project? |
| | **Sustainability process example** |
| | If your aim was to reduce the cancer waiting times for first appointments, have an on-going data measurement to show how many patients are seen after x number of days on a weekly basis.  This will help you identify areas where sustainability is declining.<br>Also, set up a formal reporting structure (e.g. the measurement is reported to team meetings or divisional meetings) to help keep the awareness raised and help embed the change. |
| **Training and involvement** | **Importance to sustainability** |
| | •     Do staff play a part in innovation, design and implementation of the change?<br>• Have they used their ideas to inform the change process from the beginning?<br>• Is there a training and development infrastructure to identify gaps in skills? |
| | **Sustainability process example** |
| | For example, if your improvement idea involves nurses assessing patient's risks, try to ask ward areas to keep a log of staff who has been trained and who need training.<br>Keep in touch with as many people as possible so you can track where new challenges arise. These challenges need addressing early on to sustain the improvement changes made. |
| **Behaviours** | **Importance to sustainability** |
| | •     Staff encouraged & able to express their ideas regularly throughout the change process and is their input taken on board?<br>•     Do staff think that the change is a better way of doing things that they want to preserve for the future? |
| | **Sustainability process example** |
| | It's important to recognise external factors that might hinder the sustainability of your improvement idea. Through engagement, feedback and on-going involvement try to track any potential new challenges, changes that might need further small scale PDSA cycles (done by staff) to refine areas that might need adapting. |
| **Senior Leaders** | **Importance to sustainability** |
| | • Are the senior leaders trusted & influential?<br>• Are they involved in the initiative, do they understand it and do they promote it?<br>• Are they taking personal responsibility to help break down barriers? |
| | **Sustainability process example** |
| | It's important to ensure that leadership is an ever remaining presence. They might not get involved as much once the changes have spread; but keep them engaged and use senior leadership to influence sustainably. |
| **Clinical Leaders** | **Importance to sustainability** |
| | • Are the senior leaders trusted & influential?<br>• Are they involved in the initiative, do they understand it and do they promote it?<br>• Are they taking personal responsibility to help break down barriers? |
| | **Sustainability process example** |
| | If your improvement idea requires clinical staff to change ways of working or incorporate a new process; it's important to ensure certain clinical leaders will reinforce the required change long-term. They are influential in promoting the change with clinical staff so keep them engaged and updated |
| **Fit with Aim and culture** | **Importance to sustainability** |
| | • The aim of the change clear and shared?<br>• Are they clearly contributing to the overall organisational strategic aims? |

Safe | Personal | Effective

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| | **Sustainability process example** | |
| | This depends on the scale and nature of your improvement idea. Consider sustainability through promoting it alongside the organisational aims. | |
| **Infrastructure** | **Importance to sustainability** | |
| | • Are the staff fully trained and competent in the new way of working?<br>• Are there enough facilities and equipment to support the new process?<br>• Are new requirements built into job descriptions?<br>• Are there policies and procedures supporting the new way of working?<br>• Is there a communication system in place? | |
| | **Sustainability process example** | |
| | Embedding the change idea into the infrastructure helps to achieve sustainability. Consider different ways this could be done such as job descriptions, Personal Development Reviews, part of/new procedures.<br>A communication system is needed to ensure new staff or other services are fully aware of what is expected and how to incorporate the change into day to day working. You could consider creating a guide that could be shared widely. | |
| **Benefits beyond helping patients** | **Importance to sustainability** | |
| | • In addition to helping patients, are there other benefits?<br>• For example, does the change reduce waste or avoid duplication?<br>• Will it make things run more smoothly?<br>• Will staff notice a difference in their daily working lives? | |
| | **Sustainability Process Example** | |
| | Being able to demonstrate all the benefits will help sustain the changes. Think of all the positive impacts the changes have for: Patients, staff, certain services, costings, time…etc. Make a list of them all and promote them at every opportunity. | |
| **Credibility of benefits** | **Importance to sustainability** | |
| | Are benefits to patients, staff and the organisation visible?<br>• Do staff believe in the benefits?<br>• Can all staff clearly describe the full range of benefits? | |
| | **Sustainability Process Example** | |
| | If your change is on a wider scale, ask managers in other areas or senior leaders to promote the benefits you have found. Make sure the benefits are "visible" and understood by staff. | |
| **Adaptability** | **Importance to sustainability** | |
| | Can the new process overcome internal pressures, or will this disrupt the change?<br>• Does the change rely on a specific individual or group of people, technology…etc., to keep it going?<br>• Can it keep going when these are removed? | |
| | **Sustainability Process Example** | |
| | Over time, changes happen which might disrupt your change. Plan ahead and think about trying to make your change **SYSTEM** dependant rather than **PERSON** dependant. Even though staff might have to carry out the change, try to incorporate it into a systematic way of working. | |

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