

Q.1: Is there guidance for my FNF Improvement Project?

A condition of your scholarship is that you must undertake and publish an improvement project (IP.) Improving quality is about making health care safe, effective, patient-centred, timely, efficient, and equitable. Nurses and midwives have a role in improving the quality of health services.

Having knowledge of, and experience with, quality and service improvement tools is essential to get to grips with the various challenges of improving the quality, efficiency and productivity of healthcare services. Undertaking an improvement project is a challenge, but one that is achievable, enjoyable, and a keyway of achieving the skills needed to improve the quality of healthcare, demonstrate Leadership, and motivate others to do so. Careful planning and Organisation is required, but there are many resources available to help you.

Your improvement project can be any subject but must have an impact on nursing/midwifery practice, or health/patient outcomes. Be realistic, you are not undertaking a PhD! Choose a discreet project where a problem has been identified, practice needs to change, and you can implement the project within the scholarship year. The project needs to be finished and submitted for publishing by 30th June 2024.

Q.2: Is there guidance for managing my improvement project?

Health Foundation – Quality Improvement Made Simple offers a clear explanation of some common approaches used to improve quality, including where they have come from, their underlying principles and their efficacy and applicability within the healthcare arena.

[The Health Foundation: Quality Improvement made simple](#)

Q.3: What makes a good improvement project?

Planning! An improvement project should be a continuous process of learning, development and assessment and planning is crucial to the success of the project.

Q.4: How do I decide on the project to undertake?

Choose your project topic in consultation with your line manager to make sure you will be supported. Try to identify a specific aspect of practice that bothers you or others, where improvement would benefit health or patient care.

It should be:

- Relevant to your area of work.
- Aligned to local/national priorities.
- Able to make a difference to health or patient care.
- Straightforward enough to be completed within the time period given.

Q.5: Once I have decided on my project how do I set aims and objectives?

Define clear and focused objectives. It is important to set clear aims and objectives before embarking on your project and trying to collect data. There needs to be a clear rationale for your project, based on evidence and aligned to local/national needs, so research your proposed topic carefully.

You may wish to undertake a brief literature search, look at local activity data, or talk to “experts” in the field. Define what the goal is, and concisely describe what is to be achieved.

As an example, your goal statement could read something like this: to increase/decrease the number of xxx (outcome) from 60% (baseline %, rate, number, etc.) to 40% (future state %, rate, number, etc.) by four months (date, timeframe) for xxx patients in xxx hospital/healthcare setting (population impacted).

As a final check, ask others who are not part of the project team but who are associated or affected by the goal statement to give you feedback regarding its meaningfulness. If they report that it is vague or unrealistic, ask them to tell you how it could be made clearer or more feasible, and then revise your goal statement.

Make sure the objectives are SMART.

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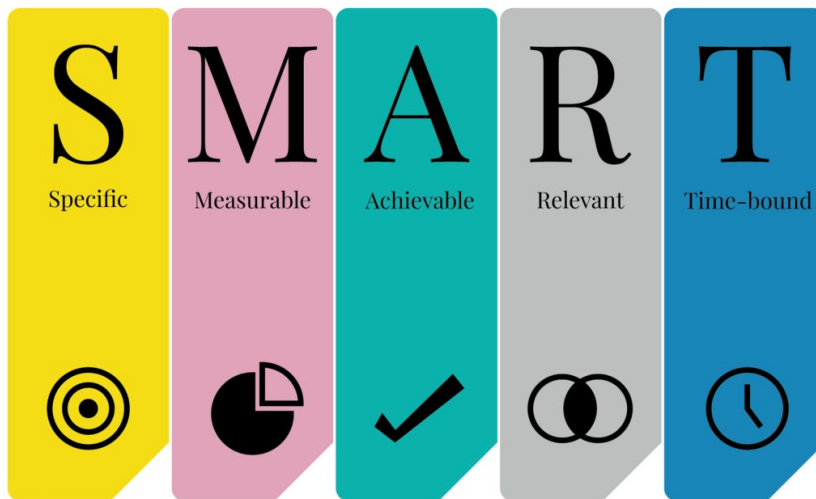
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S – Specific	This means that objectives must be clear, for example it must state that an organisation needs to improve hand hygiene rates, reduce waste, reduce environmental impact.
M – Measurable	You must have a measurable chance of success with defined outcomes e.g. efficiency, patient experience, quality. Include how you will evaluate this.
A – Attainable	Your project should have a realistic chance of success. Keep it simple. What will be the likely resources needed? People, expertise, time, affordability.
R – Relevant	Your project must be relevant to our work, local population, but not necessarily limited to this.
T – Time bound	The defined interim goals must have a time measure to ensure know you are on track (these can be linked to “touch-point” meetings).

Q.6: What resources are available to help me?

Seek the help of The Quality Improvement Lead in your Organisation. We also suggest you seek the support of a mentor throughout the project. This is someone in your Organisation who has undertaken an improvement project and will understand the ups and downs and has some ‘must do’ tips for you!

Online resources include:

- [The BMJ: How to get started in quality improvement \(Published 17 January 2019\)](#)
- [The Institute of Healthcare Improvement – Free resources](#)
- [Healthcare Improvement Scotland ihub – Free improvement resources](#)
- [East London NHS Foundation Trust Quality Improvement – Free resources](#)
- [Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership – Free resources](#)

Q.7: What are my obligations when I have finished my Improvement Project?

You have 3 obligations:

- Produce an abstract for the FNF website and for your sponsor – see the response to Q.8 for further details)
- Submit your improvement project to be published in a professional journal. You can choose any journal – see the response to Q.9 for further details.
- Complete a Leadership presentation video looking at 5 areas:
 - Introduce yourself, field of practice and your role.
 - Describe your experience of the FNF Scholarship – What were the standout moments and what impact did it have on you personally.
 - Outline the Quality Improvement Project or wider change you implemented as part of your scholarship.
 - What impact did it have on patients, colleagues, teams, service, policy, organisations etc.
 - What message would you like to send to your sponsor?

Q.10: Is there guidance for publishing my improvement project?

You are committed to undertaking and publishing an improvement project. Your publication will be your final report and no other report is needed.

Please choose an appropriate journal, read their guidelines (types of papers accepted, word length, diagrams, pictures).

Contact the Editor to make sure your paper is something they would publish before you submit as all have different requirements.

Q.11: Are there specific journals that publish improvement projects?

Yes, the BMJ Open Quality is the BMJ's own improvement journal but please note it charges for publishing. However, if you join [Health Foundation Q Community](#) there is no cost to publish in BMJ Open Quality.

Why publish in BMJ Open Quality?

- Opportunity to share your work with others.
- PubMed indexed.
- Peer reviewed.
- Dedicated to publishing high quality, peer reviewed healthcare improvement work.
- Articles covering original research, local, national, and international QI projects, value-based healthcare improvement initiatives and educational improvement work are all considered.

Q.12: What is the deadline for submitting my publication?

It is preferable that you submit the publication to us as a PDF, but we are happy to accept the editor's email of acceptance if your work has been accepted for publication but not published by the deadline.