

## Measurement

Quality measures may be used for quality improvements within an institution or system of care (internal quality improvement). Using measures for quality improvement involves three basic steps:

- 1) Identifying problems or opportunities for improvement
- 2) Selecting appropriate measures of these areas
- 3) Obtaining a baseline assessment of current practices, and then re-measuring to assess the effect of improvement efforts on measure performance

Baseline quality measure results can be used to better understand a quality problem, provide motivation for change, and establish a basis for comparison across institutional units or over time. Baseline results also enable prioritization of areas for quality improvement.

### Creating a Measurement Plan:

Decide how frequently you want to collect data (e.g., daily, weekly or monthly). It must be frequently enough that your QI team will be able to assess the impact of changes as they are testing them.

Collect information related to each of your project's outcome, process and balancing measures using a Measurement Plan template to assist you. The template will help you clarify how you will collect data, and how often. It will also prompt you to outline particular sampling strategies or system analysis strategies you may decide to use.

### Key measurement guidelines

- Choose measures that support the team's aim statement
- Use existing data collection systems, whenever possible
- Integrate measurement into the daily routine
- Plot measures each month
- Use a set of five to seven measures to track progress throughout your QI project

Sometimes, QI teams need simple ways to collect data in order to be able to collect it frequently enough to assess the impact of changes. Two simple ways to collect data are mini-surveys and sampling.

*Adapted from Health Quality Ontario*

