

The ACS Quality Framework Components & Criteria

Component #1: Problem Detailing

Criterion	Definition
1.1 Local Issue	Describe how the issue was discovered at your institution. Include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The timeframe in which the issue was discovered b. The data sources that informed the identification of the issue
1.2 Problem Statement	Define a problem statement that presents a clinical reason to pursue the project. The problem statement should address: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Who does the problem affect or impact? b. When was the problem found (or did it begin)? c. Where is the problem happening? d. How often is the problem happening? e. What is happening (that shouldn't be), or what didn't happen (that should have)?
1.3 Baseline Data	Indicate the baseline measurement of the current process. Include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Source of data b. Amount of data used (minimum 10 data points) c. Timeframe in which data was collected d. Where the issue was occurring e. The results of the data
1.4 Local Impact	Describe the impact the problem is having and may have on the providers, hospital, and patients.
1.5 Patient Input	List the source(s) of patient-related data used to identify the problem (e.g., focus groups, PRO feedback, or patient comments/notes from medical records). Include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Source of data b. Timeframe in which data was collected c. Implications of data for the project

Component #1: Problem Detailing Cont'd

1.6 Improvement Team	<p>List the quality improvement team members that helped to identify and define the problem. Your team should have the following roles represented: clinical leadership, technical expertise, day-to-day leadership, project sponsorship.</p> <p>We recommend a team of 5-8 individuals.</p>
1.7 Internal Stakeholders	<p>List the internal stakeholders who will be impacted by the project (e.g., doctors, nurses, hospital leadership, and other hospital staff who are not part of the project improvement team).</p>
1.8 External Stakeholders	<p>Explain how your team evaluated the need for any external stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List any external stakeholders deemed necessary for the project (e.g., payer, consultants, collaboratives, and partner organizations). Explain why these external stakeholders are relevant to the project. • If your team deemed external stakeholders unnecessary to the project's success, explain why.

Component #2: Aim Specification

Criterion	Definition
2.1 Specific	<p>State the patient-related outcome(s) that the project will achieve.</p>
2.2 Measurable	<p>State the numerical or percentage value of the outcome measure(s) that your project intends to achieve. Make sure that this number reflects the baseline data referenced in your problem statement.</p>
2.3 Achievable	<p>Explain why this project is achievable at your institution given the existing time and resource constraints.</p>
2.4 Relevant	<p>Explain how the project aim will impact patients and stakeholders.</p>
2.5 Timely	<p>State the timeframe in which the project will be completed.</p>

Component #3: Strategic Planning

Criterion	Definition
3.1 Existing Research	Summarize the existing research on this problem. Include evidence-based solutions and best practices related to the problem. Make sure to cite your sources.
3.2 Description of Intervention	Provide a description of the quality improvement intervention your team designed. The description should have sufficient detail that others could replicate it. Make sure to include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Who is implementing the intervention, including their position and experience b. Intervention modes of delivery (face-to-face, telephone, or other medium) c. Where the intervention will occur, including any necessary infrastructure or relevant features d. The frequency that the intervention was implemented e. The time period during which the intervention was implemented
3.3 Intervention Rationale	Explain the rationale for the chosen quality improvement intervention. Include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. A summary of the root causes your team identified b. Which best practice guidelines, research, or experts were consulted c. A summary of the findings
3.4 Description of Implementation Strategies	Describe the implementation strategies your team selected to encourage uptake of the quality improvement intervention.
3.5 Implementation Strategies Rationale	Explain the rationale for the chosen implementation strategies. Include the contextual barriers unique to your project environment and why the chosen strategies address those specific barriers.
3.6 Stakeholder Involvement	Explain your strategy to gather stakeholder input throughout the project in relation to the intervention and implementation strategies. Make sure to include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. All stakeholders involved in the intervention and implementation strategies b. How your team will communicate with stakeholders regarding the intervention and implementation strategies

Component #3: Strategic Planning Cont'd

<p>3.7 Intervention Resources</p>	<p>Identify resources needed to operationalize the quality improvement intervention. Consider what others would need to know to replicate the project. At minimum, include a summary of the necessary resources in the following categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Staff b. Funding c. Medical Equipment d. IT Support (e.g., changes to the EMR or updating policies) e. Multimedia f. Physical infrastructure (e.g., meeting or patient rooms) <p>For any category of resources that was not necessary for the project, explain why that type of resource was not necessary.</p>
<p>3.8 Implementation Strategy Resources</p>	<p>Identify resources needed to operationalize the implementation strategies. At minimum, include a summary of the necessary resources in the following categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Staff b. Funding c. Medical Equipment d. Time e. IT Support (e.g., changes to the EMR or updating policies) f. Multimedia g. Physical infrastructure (e.g., meeting or patient rooms) <p>For any category of resources that was not necessary for the project, explain why that type of resource was not necessary.</p>
<p>3.9 Intervention Data</p>	<p>Indicate the outcome, process, and balancing measures for the quality improvement intervention. For each measure, indicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection start/end dates • Data source • Frequency of collection • Operational definition • Baseline measurement • Target measurement • Known issues with data • Resources necessary for collection/analysis
<p>3.10 Possible Limitations and Challenges of the Intervention</p>	<p>Identify at least one possible limitation or challenge that might prevent the quality improvement intervention from being effective. Include a mitigation strategy for each limitation/challenge.</p>

Component #4: Process Evaluation

Criterion	Definition
4.1 Project Timeline	Indicate your project timeline, including the order in which the components of the intervention and implementation strategies were put into action. Describe how the implementation strategies impacted the intervention components.
4.2 Problems Encountered	Identify at least one barrier/problem that was encountered during the execution of the intervention and/or the implementation strategies. Summarize the findings of your team's formal analysis as to why this problem occurred.
4.3 Changes Undertaken	Describe any significant changes that impacted the who/what/when/where/how of the intervention and implementation strategies. Indicate why each change was made (in response to a barrier, your team found opportunities for improvement, etc.).
4.4 Process Measure Results	Indicate the results of your process measures indicated in Criterion 3.9. In addition to the requirements described in 3.9, ensure that you include the following for each process measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final or most current results • Timeframe between data collection • Method of data collection • A summary of the methods your team used to analyze the data you collected.

Component #5: Outcome Evaluation

Criterion	Definition
5.1 Outcome and Balancing Measures Results	Indicate the results of your outcome and balancing measures indicated in Criterion 3.9. In addition to the requirements described in 3.9, ensure that you include the following for each measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final or most current results • Timeframe between data collection • Method of data collection • A summary of the methods your team used to analyze the data you collected.
5.2 Limitations	Identify at least one limitation in the outcome of your project. Some possible limitations may be: generalizability of your results to other contexts within or outside of your institution, other potential causes for your outcome results outside of the intervention, and/or limitations related to how data was collected and analyzed.
5.3 Unintended Consequences	Describe any significant unintended consequences of implementing the intervention (besides your balancing measure results). Discuss at least one possible explanation for the unintended consequence.

Component #6: Cost Evaluation

Criterion	Definition
6.1 Cost of Project	Record the costs of doing the project that would be relevant to anyone replicating the project or would be useful for demonstrating the project's value to stakeholders, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any monetary or budget allotment • # of FTE • Cost of project resources
6.2 Team's Perspective on Value	Provide a brief reflection on the project team's perspective on the value of the project. Does your team feel the project was worthwhile? Why or why not?
6.3 Stakeholders' Perspectives on Value	Summarize the feedback from stakeholders on the value of the project. At minimum, stakeholders should have the opportunity to provide this feedback during a presentation of the project's results. Additionally, your team may gather feedback via surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups.

Component #7: Knowledge Acquisition

Criterion	Definition
7.1 Key Takeaways	Describe at least one lesson that your team has taken away from the quality improvement project. The lesson(s) you describe should be specific to your project and be helpful to others conducting projects with similar aims and/or in similar settings. Some questions you may consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on the relationship between your process and outcome measures. How did the processes your team tracked affect the outcomes of the project? • If your results exceeded your expectations, why was this possible? • If you failed to meet your goals, what could have been done differently? • How do the results of your quality improvement initiative compare to similar studies in other contexts? • What are other possible influences on your results, besides the intervention and implementation strategies?
7.2 Sharing Results with Stakeholders	Explain how frontline staff and other relevant stakeholders were informed of the results of the project, including the process, outcome, and balancing measures.
7.3 Publishing and Presenting	Identify any actions (current or future) regarding use, knowledge acquired, or lessons learned (e.g., sharing or publishing). Your answer should indicate (a) at least one specific setting in which the project results will be presented/shared and (b) the timeframe in which the results will be shared.

Component #8: End-of-Project Decision-Making

Criterion	Definition
8.1 Future Actions	Decide whether the project will continue as is, continue with revisions, scaled up to other areas of the institution or other institutions, or if it will be de-implemented. Your decision may be informed by a readiness assessment that helps your team to evaluate contextual facilitators and barriers.
8.2 Post-Project Plan	Describe your team's plan for de-implementation, sustainment, or scale-up of the change. Plans to continue the project should indicate who will be the long-term champion or owner, how results will be monitored long-term, and how those results will be disseminated.