

# Setting Aims

To help organize your improvement efforts, the first question the Model for Improvement asks is, “What are we trying to accomplish?” Answering this question by developing a concise aim statement will help get your improvement teams off to a solid start.

An aim statement is an explicit statement summarizing what your organization hopes to achieve through the improvement process:

- Aims help focus your team on specific actions, and define which populations or areas your hospital will be involved.
- Aims should be time-specific and measurable.
- Aims should be “stretch goals” that are not achievable with your current process.

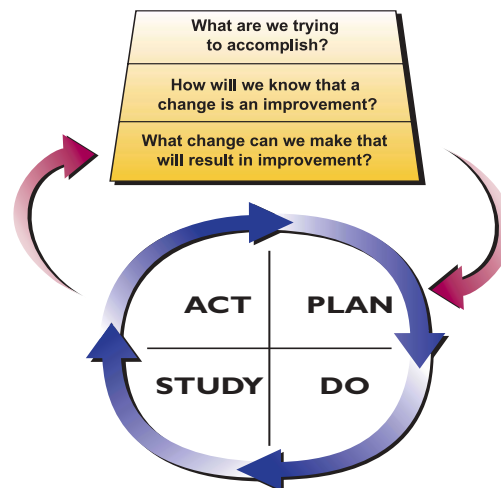
## Examples of Aims

- 100% of patients admitted will be assessed for pneumococcal immunization status.
- 90% of eligible patients (excluding patients with contraindications) will receive pneumococcal immunization prior to discharge.
- 100% of patients patient admitted to the ED, with a primary diagnosis of pneumonia, will receive an antibiotic within four hours of arrival.

## Recommendations for Setting Successful Aims

1. Involve senior leaders. Leadership must align the aim with the strategic goals of the organization. They must also provide support personnel and resources from departments such as nursing service, infection control, pharmacy, or medical staff.
2. Base the aim on both data needs and organizational needs. Examine the data within the organization to help set an appropriate aim.
3. State the aim clearly, and use numerical goals. Teams will have a clearer picture of the changes that need to be made if the aim is unambiguous and clearly stated. For example, an aim to “increase the percentage of patients assessed for pneumococcal immunization status and vaccinated by 50%” will be more effective than an aim to “improve inpatient immunization practices.”

## Model for Improvement



This information was adapted from the *BPHC Health Status & Performance Improvement Collaborative Train the Trainer Curriculum*.