

Community-Wide System for Learning & Improvement

Built for Zero Learning Session September 2023

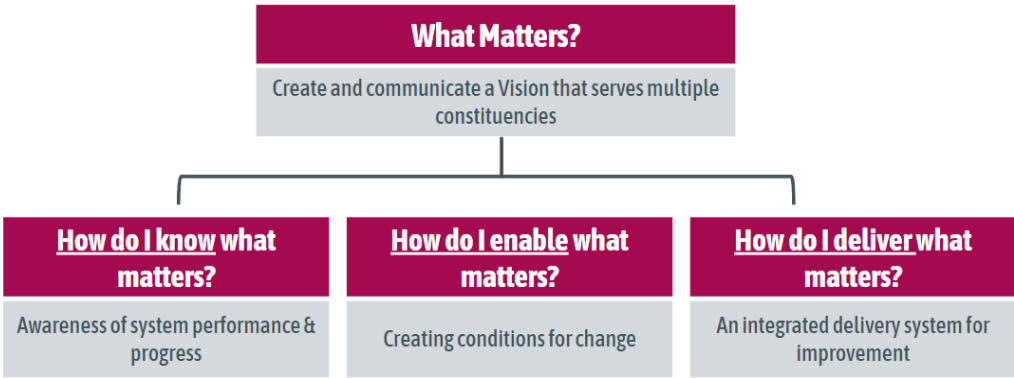
A Community-Wide Learning System: 4 Components

The components of an effective learning and improvement system can be applied to all aspects of your work. This simple yet powerful framing will help you to build and sustain the infrastructure needed to support the culture of improvement at every phase of your journey!

1. Create and foster a **culture of improvement** in the work
2. Identify the **right measures, milestones, and feedback loops** that will help you know you are moving in the right direction
3. Create and use **a mechanism for reflection and learning** around these feedback loops
4. **Make decisions based on what you learn** – plan the work and then WORK. THE. PLAN.

1. Creating and fostering a culture of improvement in the work.

When creating a culture of improvement, reflect on these four questions both as a leader and as a team:



Adapted from Whole System Quality: A Unified Approach to Building Responsive, Resilient Health Care Systems. IHI White Paper, 2020. www.ihi.org

2. Identifying the right measures, milestones, and feedback loops: How do you know you are moving in the right direction?

When identifying the right measures and feedback loops, reflect on the following questions as a leader and as a team:

Quantitative Measures:

- What measures will tell our team whether the changes it is making are actually leading to improvement — that is, helping us achieve the stated aim? (Outcome Measures)
- What measures will tell our team whether a specific process change has been accomplished and whether it is having the intended effect? (Process Measures)
- What measures will help us make sure that changes to improve one part of the system aren't causing new problems in other parts of the system? (Balancing Measures)

Qualitative Data:

- Whose voices help tell us we are going in the right direction? In the wrong direction? What are they telling us?

Milestones:

- What thresholds do we/should we look for to know we are going in the right direction? What are the open doors we look for/should look for? The closed doors?

3. Creating a mechanism for reflection and learning.

When creating a mechanism for reflection and learning, reflect on the following questions as a leader and as a team:

- Where do we currently reflect on our data and other feedback loops?
 - Some examples: Weekly team meeting; Monthly coalition meeting; Quarterly board meeting; Compliance reporting/HUD reporting; Writing a grant report or applying for funding; Talking to reporters
- How can we make that more frequent and more formalized?
 - Where, When, Who, What

4. Making decisions based on what you learn.

Who makes a decision and how a decision gets made can be just as important as the decision itself, or make or break the success of that decision. Reflect on the following questions as a leader and as a team:

- Who makes decisions in our team or collaboration? Why?
- When was the last time we had a conversation about HOW decisions are going to be made? How might we bring rigor to that process?
- Consensus is not always the ideal, nor is it always feasible. What are our fallback strategies if consensus can't be reached?

A Community-Wide Learning System at Each Stage of the Journey

The following chart outlines guiding questions to help you think about your community's effectiveness in bringing data and decision-making together for action based on where you are on this journey.

<p>At the start of your journey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we have an inclusive understanding of our system? Who do we need to build relationships with to gain deeper insights about how the system currently operates? • How do we identify our priorities and define our shared aims? Who is actively engaged in system decision making processes? • Where are we collecting data? What type of data is being collected (i.e. client information, feedback, program outcomes, etc)? • Are our system processes clear and applied consistently across our system? What policies and procedures are in place to help guide our collaborations?
<p>As you implement change ideas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does your team incorporate data into your improvement work? Does your program team regularly review your performance data? If so, where and when? • Do we have a clear understanding of the outcome and process measures we have established? Have we received and incorporated feedback to achieve a shared understanding? • Does our team have established roles and responsibilities assigned to the change ideas? Do these roles have the ability to make decisions in the process? • How will we know if our changes are having the impact we hope to achieve? Do we have a system in place to collect and analyze service recipients' feedback?
<p>As you drive system improvement and reductions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways are we actively problem-solving as a team? Do we have system decision-makers included in those conversations? • Are our processes and procedures for identifying and swiftly connecting homeless households to permanent housing solutions understood and accessible? Have we incorporated feedback from persons with lived experience in those policies? • Do we have a system in place that allows us to understand our current needs and resources? If there are gaps in our resources, how can we work towards securing more resources? • Who do we need to seek input from in order to help validate that the data outcome is representative of the experiences of service utilizers?
<p>As you get closer to Functional Zero</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we have a clear and shared definition of what sustaining Function Zero in our community means? Has the definition been created with feedback from persons with lived experience? • What cross-sector systems do we need to engage with or strengthen relationships with to feel confident monitoring and responding to population inflow? Are there any policies and procedures we need to update or implement to support our ability to sustain? • Does your community have a way to report race and ethnicity data on the individuals on the by-name list to analyze system outcomes? • How are we incorporating lived experience into our decision-making processes for the community's sustainment work?