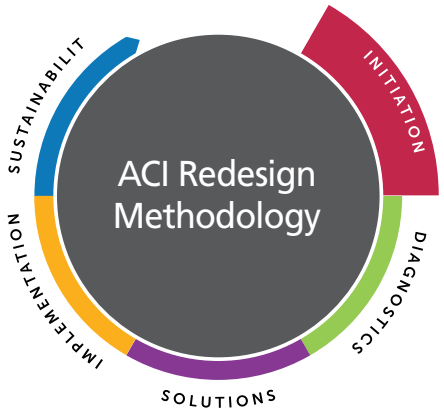
COMMUNICATION PLAN

Initiation



Communication plan

Good communication is essential to the success of your project. The best way to effectively manage communications with stakeholders is to develop and use a communication plan.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Ask the right questions

Start planning by looking at the big picture. Brainstorm with the team. Who are the stakeholders? What messages need to be communicated and why? What action do they need to make as a result of the communication? What style or vehicle of communication is best? How will you know your communication is successful? Who is credible and trusted by the stakeholders to communicate each message? How should it be communicated to stakeholders?

2. Choose your approach

Face to face is always the most effective and preferred method of communication, but you should also consider other approaches, such as video conferencing, emails and newsletters. It's often easier to make the most of existing communication channels and relationships, rather than starting from scratch, so find out what is already in place (e.g. regular meetings, newsletters) that you can use.

3. Create a toolkit

There are a number of documents that will make the communication process more consistent and organised. These include status reports, communication logs, standardised project newsletters and formal letters. You can use the templates below, or create your own project toolkit.

4. Use a calendar

Use a calendar to list your planned communication activities by date and who in the project team has been allocated responsibility. It should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure your messages are relevant to your current project stage and your stakeholders are up to date. Communicate regularly; don't wait until it's complete or 'perfect' If stakeholders don't receive regular updates, they will forget about your change or think it has stopped.

Considerations and tips

Every stakeholder group has their own needs, attitudes and behaviours. This often presents challenges, which can be addressed with good communication.

Positive attitude

Your attitude has a significant impact on how your project is received. Try to be enthusiastic, confident and genuine in every communication. Show you are committed to the project and, above all, listen to stakeholders and communicate honestly.

Feedback loops

Good communication involves sending and receiving messages. You won't know if your message is effective without feedback. No communication should go out unless there is a way for the receiver to provide feedback or to clarify the message.

Tailor the message

Keep the communication clear and concise, with no more than five key points each time. Think about who you are communicating with and tailor the message to the perspective and language of each stakeholder group.

Multiple methods

Don't rely on one communication channel. Email is fast, but largely ineffective due to high volumes being received. Focus groups are not for everyone because some stakeholders don't want to speak in front of others. In this case, consider methods such as anonymous surveys or one on one discussions.

Choose your approach

Communication plan

Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Communication Management

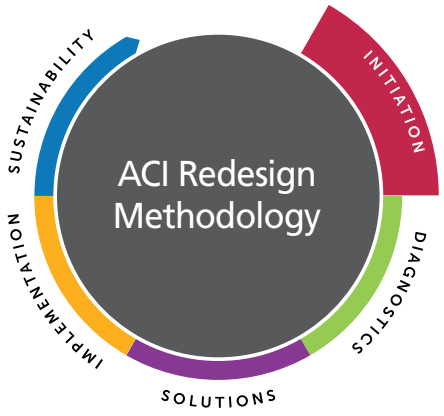
Next steps

Once you've developed and using a communication plan, you can be confident that all stakeholders will stay informed and consulted about your project. The next step is to determine how you will evaluate the success of your project.

ACI_0022 [12/18]

GOALS

Initiation



Goals

A goal or aim is a broad statement that describes what your project is about and what you're trying to achieve. It's the driving force behind the project and should directly contribute to the organisation's goals. Just as you can't start a road trip without a map, you can't start a project without a goal.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Identify the need

In most cases, projects are developed as a result of a need or an opportunity. You may have identified the issue yourself or someone else may have brought it to your attention. It's important to identify and understand the need or problem before you develop your goal – this will help keep your goal focused and specific.

2. Understand the context

Your project needs to align to the goals of your organisation. This will help you gain support from executives and sponsors, who are more likely to commit resources to a priority initiative. Review the strategic and operational priorities of your organisation, as well as the performance requirements of your department, to work out how your project will contribute to these goals. This information can often be found on your organisation's website.

3. Consider the Triple Aim

All projects should work towards the Triple Aim: improving the patient experience of care (including quality, access and satisfaction); improving the health of populations; and reducing the per capita cost of health care. Consider how meeting your goal would align with the Triple Aim.

4. Keep the solution out of the goal

It's important to make sure your goal doesn't pre-empt the solution. For example, if your goal refers to a new guideline, it suggests that developing a new guideline is the solution to the problem. Pre-empting the solution may take you down the wrong track and mean you are blinded to other causes and a more successful or accurate solution. Instead, your goal should refer to the overarching aim, such as reducing waiting times.

Considerations and tips

Your goal will be the basis of your project purpose and will help keep you on track to solving the identified issue. A well-defined goal will help you communicate your project and keep focused.

Test the goal with stakeholders

Seek feedback on the goal with frontline staff and other key stakeholders:

Does it inspire them? Do they understand what you are planning to achieve?

Goal statement

Keep the goal short and succinct, preferably to 1-2 sentences. Be clear and keep it well defined. Use the guide below to keep your goal on target.

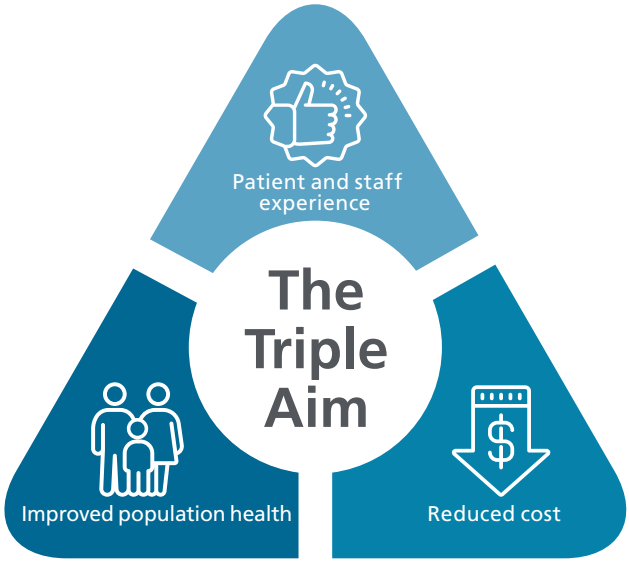
Quadruple aim

The fourth or 'quadruple' aim addresses the satisfaction of healthcare providers. Considering how it will impact staff involved is an important factor when developing your project and goals.

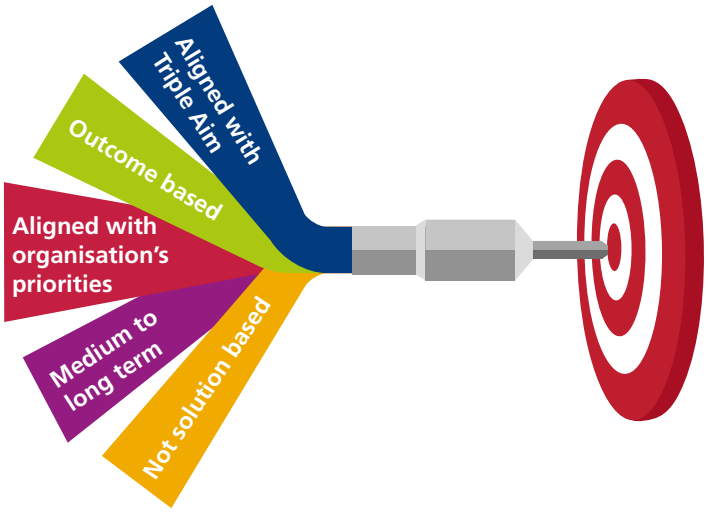
Keep the objectives separate

Remember to separate the goal from the objectives. The goal will be higher level; the objectives will be specific targets to help reach your goal (see Objectives and benefits fact sheet)

The Triple Aim



The goal



Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Goals and Objectives

NSW Premier's Priorities – www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/premiers-priorities/

Institute for Healthcare Improvement, Triple Aim Initiative – www.ihi.org/Engage/Initiatives/TripleAim/Pages/default.aspx

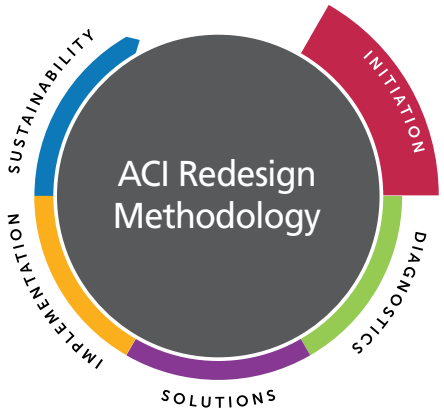
Next steps

Once you've established your goal, you can start to consider your objectives. These are short-term targets with defined, measurable achievements that will help you achieve your goal.

ACI_0022 [12/18]

OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS

Initiation



Objectives and benefits

A project goal is a broad statement about the problem you're trying to solve. An objective provides measurable criteria, or set targets, of what your project will achieve. You may have a number of objectives for your project. Each objective will help you stay on track and work towards your goal.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Consider your goal

An objective is a measure of how you will achieve your goal. When developing an objective, it's often tempting to draft a wish list of items that will make a difference in your organisation. It is important that each objective is focused, so keep referring back to the goal and choose the criteria you will measure success by. Usually 2-3 specific measurable objectives are enough. The benefits will be set separately.

2 Create SMARTA objectives

Keeping your objectives focused and clear can often be tricky. One way to develop well-written objectives is to use the SMARTA approach. This ensures your objectives are: Specific; Measurable; Attainable; Relevant; Timely and Agreed (see guide below). Use this as a guide when writing your objectives and ensure you can support each criterion, as this will help develop realistic objectives with validity and focus.

3. Understand the benefits

Apart from the objectives, your project will likely achieve a number of benefits for your organisation and consumers. Benefits are additional 'wins' that the project will achieve alongside the objectives. Benefits can be both expected (planned) or unexpected (discovered). This list will likely be more extensive than objectives. While it's important to capture all of the benefits, don't get too carried away and over promise.

4. Quantitative and qualitative benefits

The benefits may be quantative (such as increased revenue or reduced cost) or qualitative (such as improved morale or capability). It's important to keep track of these and include them in your project reports. Consider how they will be measured, as benefits will need evidence to support their achievement. It may be 'hard data' like percentage increase or KPI improvement, or survey responses to capture consumer benefits.

Considerations and tips

It's easy to get confused about the difference between objectives and benefits. For example, increasing the number of patients who leave the ED within four hours is an objective; increasing the morale of ED staff may be a benefit. Consider these points when developing your objectives and benefits.

Know the difference

Be aware of clearly defining your goal, objectives and benefits as separate items. Consider how each will be achieved and be clear on the difference. You may also need to help others understand the difference.

Evolving

It is difficult to set quantitative objectives at the beginning of the project unless you have baseline data. Ensure you have access to the data measures and consider how to track the improvement along the way and the final outcomes.

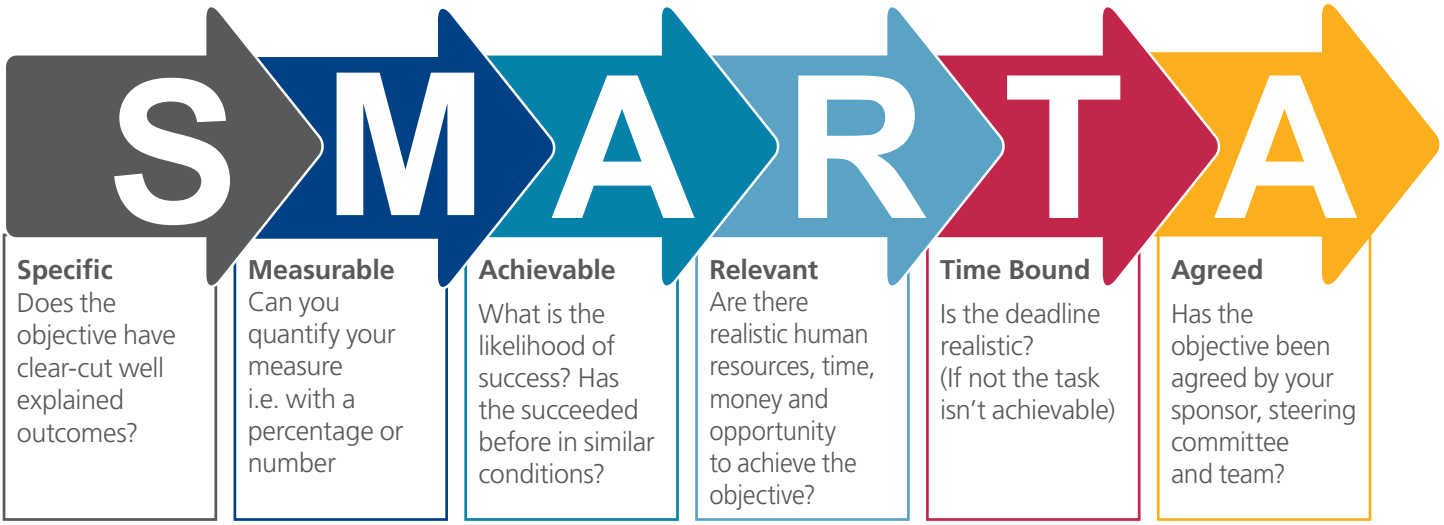
Action related

Think of an objective as an action statement. It will need to 'do' something, like 'reduce' or 'increase'. Support the action with specific measures and timelines. For example: Increase X from 50% to 85% by (date). This will help identify it as an objective.

Accountability

Ensure that the objectives are agreed. Once they fit the SMARTA criteria, your sponsor and steering committee need to be in agreement of accountability to the objectives before you move forward in the project.

SMARTA framework



Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Goals and Objectives

10 steps to setting smart objectives – www.projectsmart.co.uk/10-steps-to-setting-smart-objectives.php

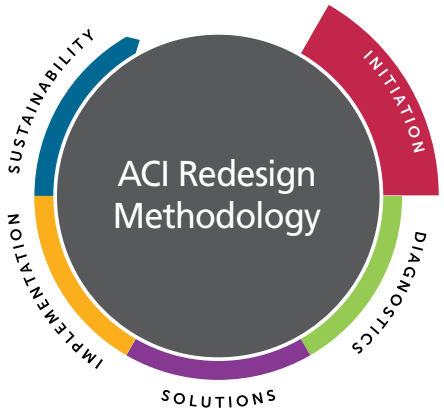
Next steps

Once you have established the project objectives and benefits, you can start thinking about the people who will help you achieve them. Involving people and engaging stakeholders is essential to achieving the objectives and overall goal.

ACI_0022 [12/18]

RISKS AND ISSUES

Initiation



Risks and issues

Every project has some level of risk that could take it off course. The success of your project will depend on your ability to manage these risks and resolve any issues along the way. A risk is something that may happen in the future, while an issue is something that has happened or is happening now.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Identify risks

Identify the top five risks that may negatively impact your project. Ask 'what if' questions to develop a list of risk scenarios for each stage of the project. For example, one of your risks could be if your project team doesn't have time to catch up regularly. To determine your risks, consider the people involved, the project timing, the quality of work, and the budget and costs.

2. Analyse and evaluate risks and issues

A risk is something that might happen, an issue is something that has actually happened. Look at each risk scenario and determine how likely it is to occur (rare, unlikely, possible, likely or almost certain). Then work out what the consequences would be to the project if that risk did occur (minimal, minor, moderate, major or extreme). Use a risk matrix to determine an overall risk and issue rating. You will need to consider the consequence of issues as they emerge.

3. Treat risks

Consider what you can do before the risk occurs, to prevent it from happening or reduce its impact. Use your risk register to develop a detailed plan to reduce the risks that are extreme or high, including what specific action will be taken, by who and when. You may need different people to manage different risks. For example, a team member can manage a minimal risk, while an extreme risk often needs to be escalated to the sponsor or steering committee.

4. Evaluate

The actions you take to reduce a risk should be evaluated regularly to see if the risk has been reduced or removed, or if there has been no change and additional action is required. Issues are managed in the same manner and dealt with as they arise.

Considerations and tips

When reviewing the risks and issues that may impact on your project, consider the following.

Seek support

Don't assume you can identify and manage all the risks by yourself. Use your team, sponsor, stakeholders and experts to consider the main risks and issues.

Is the risk too high?

If you find that you have a large number of high or extreme risks that are difficult to mitigate, seek advice from your sponsor on whether it is the right time to proceed with this project.

Highlight and address risks

Don't be afraid to identify and highlight project risks and issues. Dealing with them appropriately will reduce the risk of project failure.

Risk register

Consider the importance of maintaining a risk register. This helps you organise and keep track of your risk rating and mitigation planning. Your organisation may have a preferred template or you can refer to Gem for examples.

Risks and Issues Rating Matrix

	Likelihood		Impact				
			1	2	3	4	5
	Probability	Frequency	Catastrophic	Major	Moderate	Minor	Minimal
1 Almost Certain	96% - 100%	Is expected to occur in most circumstances	Extreme	Extreme	High	Medium	Medium
2 Likely	71% - 95%	Will probably occur in most circumstances	Extreme	Extreme	High	Medium	Medium
3 Possible	31% - 70%	"Might occur at some time"	Extreme	High	Medium	Medium	Low
4 Unlikely	5% - 30%	"Could occur at some time"	High	High	Medium	Low	Low
5 Rare	< 5%	May only occur in exceptional circumstances	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Low

Catastrophic Likely catastrophic events resulting in project failure and benefits not being realised

Major Likely to cause significant disruption to the project, resulting in the need to conduct re-planning and re-estimating. In the extreme, it may result in failure of the project

Moderate Likely to cause delays or additional work that would exceed existing contingencies, resulting in exceeded time scales, additional resource and/or additional budget requirements

Minor Likely to cause delays or additional work that could be contained within existing contingencies

Minimal Likely to cause negligible delays

Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Risk and Issue Management

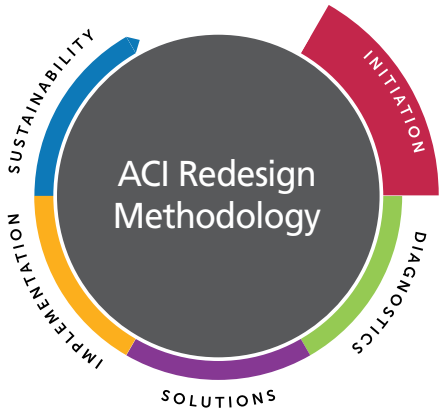
Next Steps

Now that you've determined the risks associated with your project, it's important to monitor them on a regular basis. Allocate time for project team meetings to review your risk register to determine if you need to take action or if the strategies you've developed are still effective.

ACI_0022 [12/18]

CASE FOR CHANGE

Initiation



Case for change

People need reasons to change. A case for change is a concise collection of evidence that can be easily communicated to demonstrate the reasons for change and the risks of not changing. Taking the time to develop a strong case for change is a worthwhile investment as it will help stakeholders clearly understand the what, why and how of your project.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Begin with the problem or opportunity

Start by recording the reason you asked (or were nominated) to do this project. Is it due to an adverse event, or is the service no longer performing effectively or efficiently? Has there been emerging evidence of a better way to deliver care? Consider why this would important to your managers and other staff. Seek out your organisation's strategic plan, and consider how doing this project will help to achieve a goal listed on the plan.

2. Gather the available evidence

Confirm the need for the change initiative using clear supporting evidence. Study the literature to find out and document what work has already been done and the outcomes. Use locally available data on service performance, quality indicators or patient demographics to demonstrate issues. See if predictive data are available, which can be useful for forecasting.

3. Determine the consequences

Consider how the current state is impacting on patient and staff experience, and how making a change would not only benefit the organisation, but also patients and staff. Use your evidence to forecast or illustrate the consequences if nothing changes or the current situation worsens. Include stories about the situation from staff and patients to demonstrate the personal impact.

4. Engage stakeholders

Once you have drafted your case for change, consider and test how the information you have can be packaged for presentation to different people. An effective case for change must appeal to different perspectives and drivers for change. For example, managers may be interested in how the change will improve KPIs and quality of care, clinicians may be interested in the clinical evidence, and executives may want meet a strategic priority.

Considerations and tips

Your case for change will be your reference point when you need to present or communicate about your project. Remember to keep it adaptable to the relevant group or situation and have it ready when the opportunity arises!

Appeal to the head and the heart

Create motivation and urgency to change by capturing the heart and mind of your audience. Support your case for change with analytics and evidence, but also tell the emotive stories to highlight the human experience and impact.

Consider stakeholders' perspectives

To help you engage stakeholders, put yourself in their shoes. Ask yourself, 'For this change, what's in it for me (WIIFM)?' The incentive may be a decrease in workload, time savings, reduced costs, etc. This will encourage buy-in and help get stakeholders on side.

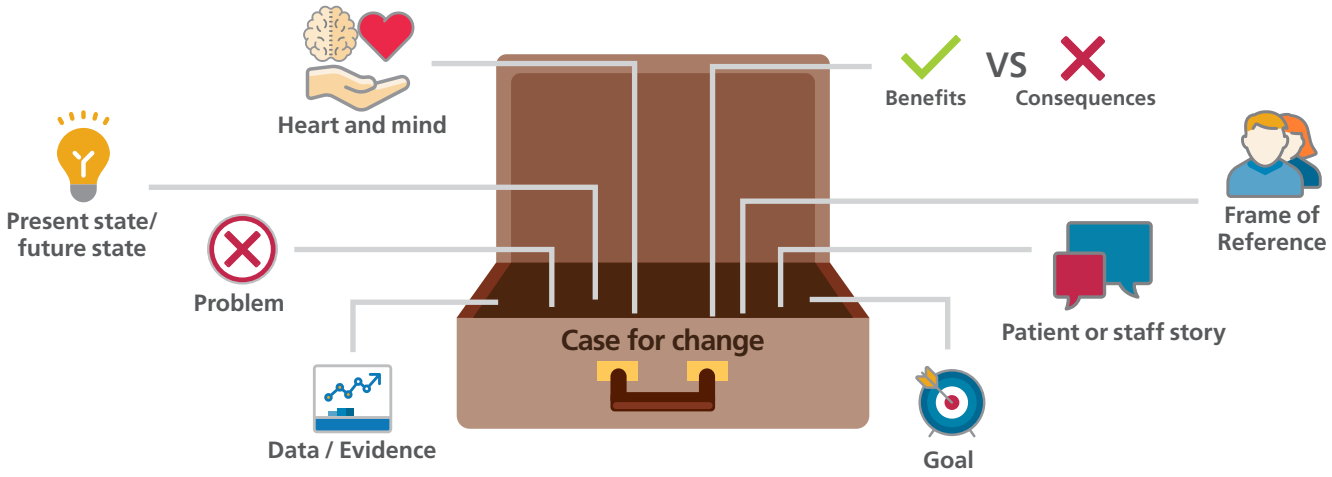
Presentation tips

Learn how to communicate your case in different formats. Rehearse and test a rapid fire 30 second version for when you need to deliver it fast, as well as five and 30 minute presentations for different occasions. Develop one page information sheets and use visual cues, photos and graphs or charts to communicate efficiently.

Communication

The case for change needs to be communicated in multiple ways to get the message across. Consider several modes of communication such as steering committees, newsletters, staff meeting presentations, elevator grabs and other informal opportunities.

Case for Change



Further information

Making your case for change – www.shb.scot.nhs.uk/board/pfpi/documents/CaseForChange.pdf

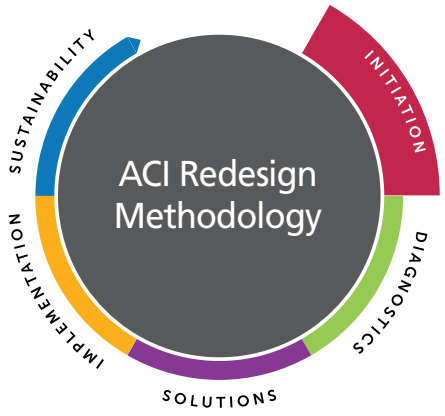
Next Steps

Your case for change will grow and strengthen in the diagnostics phase of redesign, so be prepared to continue to refine it as your project evolves. Now that you have your case for change ready, you should think about defining your goals. Setting a goal will help focus your project and keep you on track to success.

ACI_0022 [12/18]

EVALUATION PLAN

Initiation



Evaluation plan

Evaluation is a critical component of any project. If you don't plan to evaluate your project you will not know how successful or unsuccessful it has been.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Evaluate at the right time

Evaluation should be undertaken in a timely manner. It should start when a solution design is near completion and before implementation, so baseline data can be collected as a comparator for further analysis. Evaluation should be used to test if the implementation plan is resulting in change at key points, and not completed too early before measurable results are produced, especially if they are informing future funding decisions.

2. Establish an evaluation team

Expertise and independence is required for evaluation, so the evaluation team should include key stakeholders and at least one independent person who has evaluation expertise. The role of the team is to undertake the evaluation or guide external evaluators, and report back to the steering committee, keeping them informed of progress, risks and results. Stakeholders are vital to the interpretation of evaluation information and in making recommendations.

3. Plan the evaluation

Planning is done by the evaluation team and includes identification of activities, outcomes and expected impacts and the key times to evaluate during the implementation. The evaluation team will also develop a communications plan outlining stakeholder engagement and a plan for dissemination of results. The evaluation design outlines the overall methodology and evaluation tools that will be used throughout the evaluation.

4 Design and plan

The evaluation design involves defining the specific questions that will examine the project objectives and benefits. The data plan includes a list of data that will be collected, the definition of the data, where and when they are obtained, by whom, and their storage and usage. Training and testing may be required to ensure there is satisfactory reliability if more than one person is collecting the same data type.

Considerations and tips

Too often evaluation is left off the project plan and not done. An effective evaluation provides a platform for spread and learning, which are valuable assets to help organisations improve.

Be vigilant with scope

The evaluation plan needs to be realistically scoped to ensure the critical evaluation questions are answered. Consider the time and funds available for the evaluation and don't get side tracked collecting data that does not relate directly to the evaluation objectives.

Context

It is important to consider the context of the project when designing the evaluation. What is considered achievable at one site may be different to another. It is also important to use appropriate methods of data collection and source data that are both valid and reliable.

Key stakeholders

It is important that stakeholders are involved in evaluations from the beginning and throughout the process. This will ensure that what is measured is identified in a collaborative way. The involvement of stakeholders contributes to capturing diverse perspectives and increasing the quality and depth of the evaluation.

Ethical considerations

Evaluations should be conducted in an ethical manner. Evaluations may require access to personal data, patient interviews and information from vulnerable populations. Observe policies relating to the gathering, storage and use of information, engagement with patients/clients and adherence to standards.

ACI Evaluation cycle

Evaluation design	Data plan	Implementation	Communicating results	Incorporating findings
Questions, define evaluation type (formative, impact, etc), deliverables	Indicators and measures, instruments, data sources	Develop and test instruments, data collection, analysis	Reporting, dissemination of results to all participants, publish	Redesign, expansion, discontinue

Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202465121): Introduction to sustainability and Evaluation

NSW Government Program Evaluation Guidelines – https://arp.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/NSW%20Government%20Program%20Evaluation%20Guideline%20January%202016_1.pdf

Evaluation toolkit, NSW government – www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/tools-and-resources/evaluation-toolkit/

Next Steps

Undertaking the evaluation involves the development of tools, data collection, and analysis and interpretation of results. When possible, it is suggested that tools are tested on a sample of similar participants to identify and revise any potential issues before going live.

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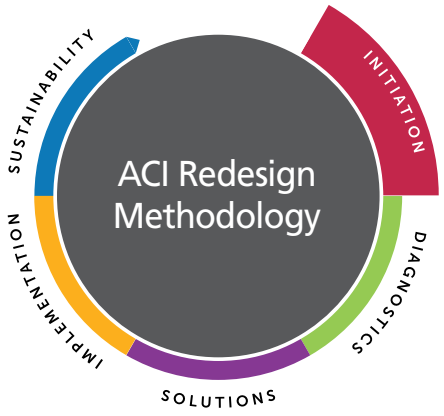
THE SPONSOR

Initiation



The sponsor

The project sponsor role is held by the person or people with authority to make changes in their organisation. This means they have the ability to allocate resources to make the change and are accountable to the organisation for the change success. The sponsor determines the scale of the project.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Determine sponsorship

Sometimes the sponsor initiates a change project in order to solve a problem in the organisation or service, but in other cases they are nominated to the project by someone else, usually an executive. Regardless of how it is determined, the sponsor needs to demonstrate ownership of the project (for example, through chairing steering committees, making decisions to maintain momentum and expressing personal commitment to the change).

2. Sponsor responsibilities

At the start of the project and throughout the change, sponsors establish and communicate the case for change, participate in goal setting, allocate resources and play an active role in managing stakeholders (e.g. chairing steering committees and managing escalated project risks and issues). During implementation it is likely there will be more sponsors at all levels of the organisation who need to reinforce required behaviours and monitor and act on progress.

3. Establish strong relationships

Project managers need to establish strong working relationships with sponsors. This may be daunting if the sponsor is in a much more senior role, but it is vital to establish mutual trust and credibility and working together to achieve success. Clear expectations on both sides need to be set from the start and agreed between you and your sponsor.

4. Sponsor meetings

Be prepared to have regular meetings (e.g. weekly or fortnightly) with your sponsor. Set an agenda including a progress update, time to identify strategies for managing risks and agree and record next steps required by you and your sponsor to keep the project moving. Only request (or contract) your sponsor to do actions specifically required by their role and influence and make it as easy as possible for them (for instance draft emails for them).

Considerations and tips

Working well with a sponsor is essential for project success. Make sure you keep the relationship on track and manage any issues as they arise.

Engage multiple sponsors

If the change is happening across a number of services or departments, there will be more than one sponsor. For the change to be successful, all sponsors must agree that it is a priority for them and there should be wins for all departments involved.

Don't assume

Don't assume that sponsors understand their role in your project and what is required of them. Similarly, don't assume that the sponsors have all of the answers and will be able to solve all of the issues. Trust and clear and open communication is required.

Sponsor risks

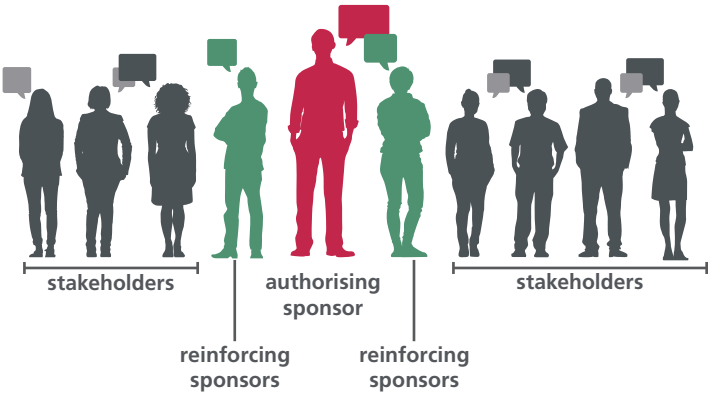
Due to the nature of their roles, sponsors are often busy people and this can affect their input during the project. If sponsors don't follow through on their actions or if they are not available, you will need to address this as a priority. If the sponsor changes during the project, it is important to re-contract a sponsor to progress.

Stay on Track

You only have permission to work within the scope of the project you have been given, and change as much as the sponsor has asked. If you believe the scope of the change needs to be broader, you must first get agreement from the sponsor.

The sponsors

Engage different levels of sponsorship to reinforce the change



Sponsor contracting

Agree and contract actions to keep the project moving.

Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Introduction to Project Initiation
AIM Generate Sponsorship (213401372)

Implementation Management Associates, Sponsorship resources – www.imaworldwide.com/resources-sponsorship

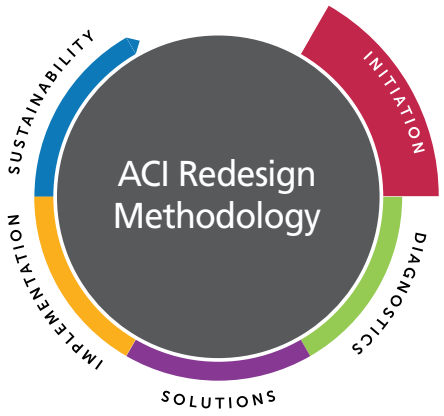
Next Steps

Once the sponsor has been established, the next step is to identify the other stakeholders in your project. Who will the project impact upon and how will your sponsor's message reach them?

ACI_0022 [12/18]

PROJECT GOVERNANCE

Initiation



Project governance

Project governance is the decision making structure for the project, and may differ from usual reporting lines if a number of services are involved.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Identify and document

Project governance should be documented in the project plan, including the names and roles of the sponsor/s, steering committee, clinical champion/s, advisory group (if needed) and the project team. The roles and responsibilities of committees and key individuals are listed and agreed. It also includes the schedule of meetings. The documentation and management of risks and issues is also part of project governance.

2. Involve sponsors and steering committees

Sponsors and steering committees are the usual decision makers in a project. Large projects involving many stakeholders require steering committees with senior representation. The executive sponsor of the project will chair this committee and drive decision making to keep the project moving in the right direction. If a new steering committee is developed, it will need new agreed terms of reference as part of governance.

3. Engage clinical and consumer leads

The clinical lead is usually a senior medical practitioner who has knowledge, credibility and influence in the area of your project focus. Medical leads are key to engaging medical staff and bring an important perspective to the steering committee. Consumer leads may be invited to participate as steering committee members. It is important that everyone have the requisite skills and have been briefed so they are able to fully participate.

4. Be alert to warning signs

Watch for signs that the project governance is not working. Are decisions not being made or severely delayed? Are agreed resources unavailable? Are meetings cancelled or poorly attended? Is the schedule slipping? If the warning signs are ignored, the project is at risk of failing. Good documentation will make it easier to raise concerns promptly with the sponsor or steering committee, set actions to resolve it and monitor it closely.

Considerations and tips

Effective governance is the key to achieving project success.

Governance model

It is important to select the correct governance model for your project. The model should align to the size, budget and importance of the organisation. An overcomplicated or top-heavy model for a small project will likely lead to slow progress and low stakeholder engagement.

Who is accountable?

The composition of the governance team depends on the project size, complexity and cost; where in the organisation the change is occurring; and what the change will entail. Ensuring the terms of reference align to the members is an excellent way to start.

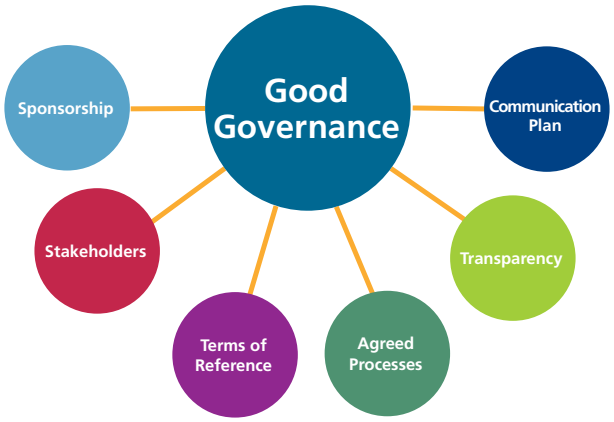
Information to govern

The ability of sponsors and steering committees to make good decisions is dependent on having credible information and data to base them on. Always ensure information is reliable, valid, and factual (not subjective). Be honest if there is unknown information or potential errors in the data.

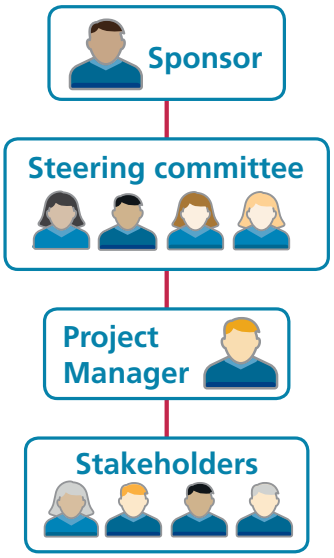
Keep the project in check

In theory, keeping track of the project should be relatively straightforward, but often this is the most challenging part. Engaged and functional project governance is non negotiable – it provides appropriate decision making to support successful management of timelines and resources.

Good governance



Governance structure



Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Introduction to Project Initiation

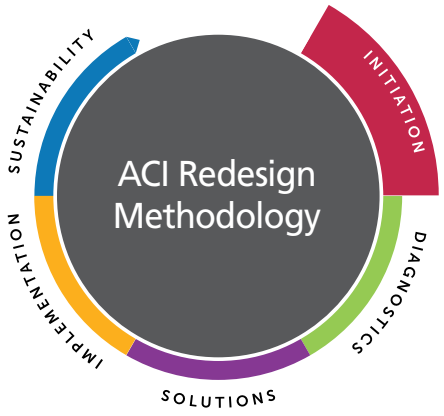
Next Steps

If the project governance is not working after several attempts to bring it on track, senior organisational leaders need to decide whether to delay, re-scope or suspend the project to avoid failure.

ACI_0022 [12/18]

THE TEAM

Initiation



The Team

Effective teamwork directly impacts productivity, outcomes and the success of your project. It also can make your project experience a much more enjoyable one.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. The team members

Consider the fundamental knowledge and skillset your team needs to achieve the desired project outcomes. This can range from skills in data analytics to working knowledge of the service and clinical experience. Appropriate representation within your team is vital for engaging the right stakeholders and to maximise the credibility and effectiveness of your project.

2. Set team rules

It's important that team rules, roles and responsibilities are clear, and ways of working are discussed and agreed upon. This is an important phase, and should not be rushed. Make time to get to know each other, build trust between members and identify individual strengths. Consider developing and signing a team charter and/or agreement, and schedule time over the course of the project to review if it's effective.

3. Keep the team engaged

In high performing teams, each member shares a common goal and is motivated to achieve it. Every team member will have a unique perspective and work pattern. Learn to work to these strengths. Remember to allocate roles and ensure they are understood and responsibility is accepted. Follow up with your project team members and remain alert for signs that they need help or are going off track.

4. Meet and communicate

Regular and effective communication is vital to the success of your project. Ideally, the team should schedule weekly meetings or huddles to track and report progress and plan and allocate next steps. Conflict is normal as new teams come together, but to keep the team working it must be managed and monitored. Sponsors or independent mentors may need to assist if conflict continues.

Considerations and tips

Remember that effective teamwork is crucial to the success of your project – give it the time and attention it needs.

Team dynamics

Consider personality types and strengths within your team and how these affect dynamics. You may need to take a different approach based on members' personality types to get the most out of your team. If managed well, different personalities and strengths can be a benefit.

Tuckman's theory

Teams follow four stages of group development: forming, storming, norming and performing. This model can be used to build a highly productive team and achieve outcomes. For more information, see the link below.

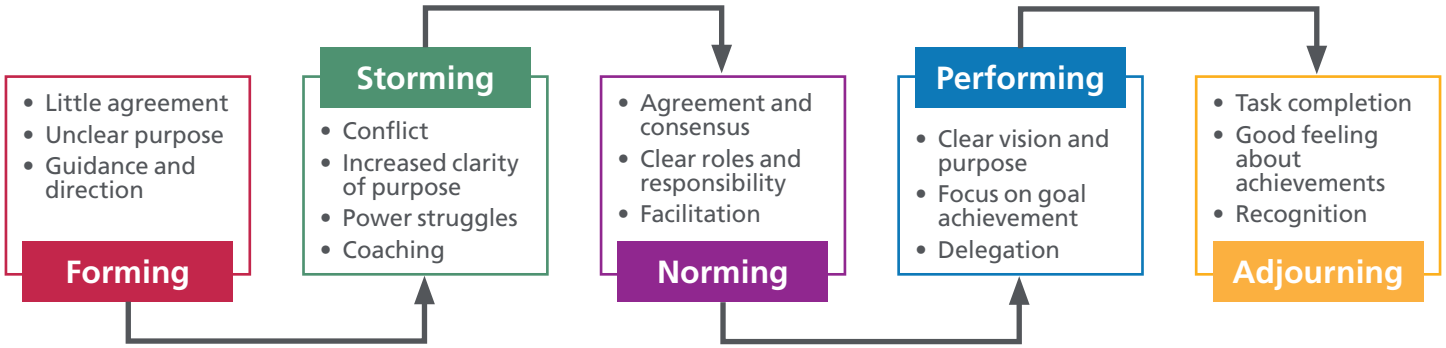
A common mistake

A team agreement is only useful if it is followed, don't let it disappear. Make the time to check in with the team to review the agreement, update it as needed and keep each other on track with what was agreed.

Effective team meetings

Prepare well and ensure each meeting has a clearly defined purpose. Ensure each agenda item is discussed and a decision and/or an action is documented, with individual or team responsibility and timeframes clearly allocated and accepted.

Tuckman's Theory



BW Tuckman, 1977

Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Building Effective Teams (39831483)
Team work: Personalities and Flexible Team Interactions (39966579)
Redesign Initiation (202464923): Introduction to Project Initiation

Tuckman's Theory – www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_86.htm

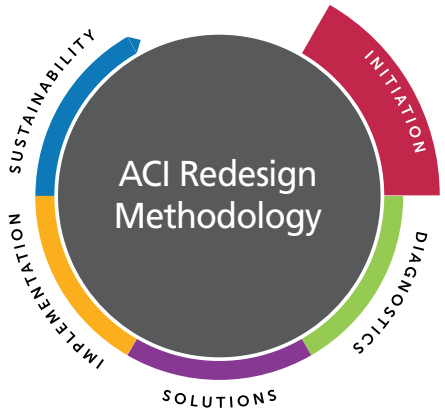
Next Steps

Now that you've taken the time to know your teammates and establish your ways of working as a team, do the same with your stakeholders. Start considering frames of reference and how to build an effective strategy for stakeholder engagement.

ACI_0022 [12/18]

RESOURCES

Initiation



Resources

When you start your project, you need to consider what resources are required. Generally, resources fall into three categories; people, money and material goods.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1.Plan realistically

Traditionally, the resources required for a project are underestimated. Additional resources may be required due to project delays or unanticipated expenses (such as the need to purchase something not included in the initial budget). Good project planning, scoping and scheduling will help you and your sponsor identify the resource requirements and determine how they will be used throughout the project to enable you to deliver the required outcomes.

2. Human resources

Factor in the project team members' time and capacity; include potential travel expenses required to complete the project. Be aware of their skill sets, the time they have available, and their competing commitments. This may be challenging if the staff do not report to you. If you are setting up a new team, familiarise yourself with their strengths and skills so you can identify the support they need to complete their part of the project.

3. Maintain a budget

Every project will incur costs, either directly or indirectly. Even if it's just you on the project, your wage should be considered a project expense. You may not have the authority to sign off on expenses, but you need to be mindful of the project budget and monitor to avoid additional expenses where possible.

See the Project budget factsheet for more information.

4. Material resources

Material goods are not always obvious when planning your project, but you should consider what may be required. Examples include software licences (e.g. Basecamp, a collaborative web space or survey tools for your project diagnostic), hardware and other equipment (e.g. cabling for computers/ monitors, laptop, data projector, internet dongle), and venue or catering for events and workshops.

Considerations and tips

A lack of resources can be problematic for your project. It's always best to ask for the things you are likely to need at the beginning of a project, rather than having to go back and ask for additional resources.

Dealing with unknowns

It is unlikely that you will be able to predict everything that will be required when developing your initial project plan, because you will not know all the details. Concentrate on what is known, build in decision points with cost estimates and monitor them closely.

Estimating project resources

This is a skill that improves with experience. If you are new to project management, seek advice from people with more experience. For instance, other project leads or redesign leaders in your organisation would be an excellent source of information.

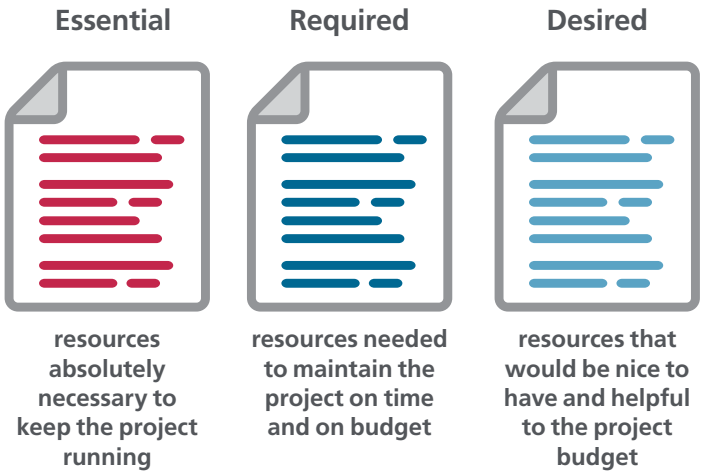
Free up resources not needed

It's important to remind sponsors and managers who are committing the resources that your project timeline has an endpoint, and resources will not be required after a certain point. It will earn you respect if you free up resources if and when you don't need them, so they can be allocated to the next project.

Schedule and prioritise resources

Resources can be scarce in the health environment. It may be worthwhile to prioritise your resources with the sponsor or steering group. That way, if a decision to reduce resources is made, the high priority activities may be better protected.

Prioritise resources



Be realistic

Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Introduction to Project Initiation

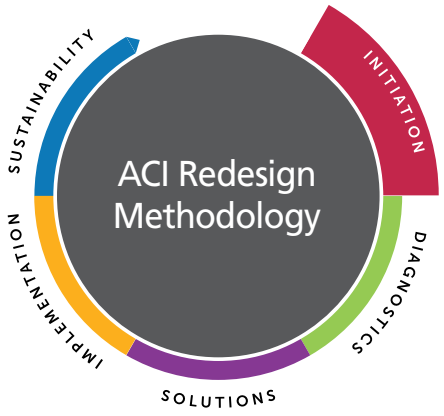
Next Steps

Resources of all types are important to get your project implemented successfully. Put effort into identifying the types of resources you need and request them in advance to ensure that they are ready when you need them.

ACI_0022 [12/18]

PROJECT BUDGET

Initiation



Project budget

Every project will incur costs, either directly or indirectly, through use of time and resources that may have been used for other work. As a project manager you need to be mindful of recording and monitoring the budget.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Build a project budget

You will need to identify the cost of the project to have it approved. Sometimes this is a formal process, with costs identified through a business case, or you may have received a grant for a particular project. In other cases, a less formal process may exist. Once the budget is approved, the team can begin to identify activities, milestones and resources, and align these to the budget and project timeline.

2. Make it realistic

If you are new to project budgeting, then ask for some help to build a realistic budget. A good starting point is to look at other projects and how they have been budgeted in your organisation. Usually budgets include common elements, such as labour costs, material costs, venue hire, catering and travel. This will provide you with a solid baseline upon which to deliver a project budget.

3. Be prepared to change

The initial project estimate is just that – an estimate. As the project progresses it is common to adjust budget projections. For example, during the diagnostic phase a larger number of consultations requiring travel may be requested by the sponsor that was not considered in the initial budget build. These changes must be clearly recorded to demonstrate the impact on your project budget.

4. Monitor the budget

The project budget is a living part of your project. The project manager is responsible to keep track and should review with your team, stakeholders and sponsor on a regular basis. Keeping sponsors and managers updated on the project budget builds trust and credibility between project managers and sponsors.

Considerations and tips

The ability of a project manager to deliver a project on time and on budget is highly regarded, especially as health services must demonstrate responsible financial management for expenditure of public funds.

The sponsors' frame of reference

Understanding what needs to be delivered from the sponsors' frame of reference is extremely important to achieving project success. Understanding this will allow the project team to better identify the resources and deliverables, and budget accordingly.

Consider project contingencies

Projects that will demonstrate a strong return on investment make sense. Your planning or finance team may be able to help you quantify the monetary outcome expected from achieving your project objectives, which you can balance against the expected project costs.

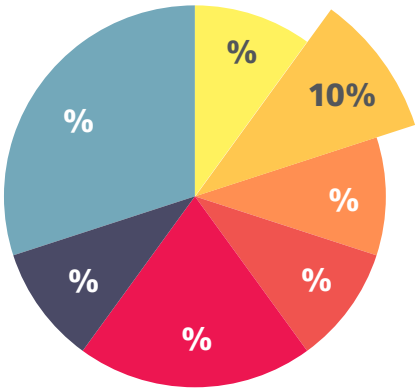
Agree on how to measure

Direct project costs are obvious and easy to estimate and monitor, however indirect costs are more complex. Finance teams and managers can help you establish budget tables with clear measurables to make monitoring easier.

Continually review

If you don't discuss or document the project budget with the steering committees, the project costs can exceed the allocated budget and put your project at risk. It is preferable to declare a 10% overrun in budget when it is identified, rather than wait until the project is 50% over budget.

What's in a budget?



Direct and Indirect costs

Labour cost
- backfill

Materials
- printing, flyers, workshop materials

Travel
- flight, accomodation

Venue hire
- catering

Technology

Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Introduction to Project Initiation
Scoping a project

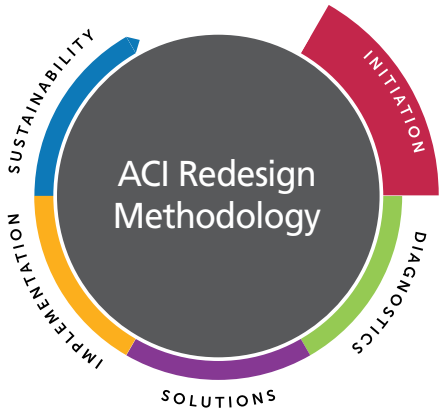
Next Steps

Project budgeting is important for getting your project funded and keeping it running. Allocating time with the correct people to estimate the project costs initially will set your project on the right path to delivering the agreed outcome on budget.

ACI_0022 [12/18]

STAKEHOLDERS

Initiation



Stakeholders

Stakeholders are people who are impacted or have an interest in your project. It's vital to provide opportunities for stakeholders to get involved from the outset. This creates commitment to change and increases the likelihood of success.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Identify stakeholders

Identify key groups of people affected by the project's activities or outcomes. They may be people who make decisions, shape opinions, work in an area that will be affected by the change, or contribute resources (such as staff, space, time and money). Seek advice from sponsors and other project team members to make sure you have identified all relevant stakeholders.

2. Analyse the groups

Analyse stakeholder groups by determining their degree of importance to the project's success. What are their needs? What do you need from them for the project to succeed? How significant is the change for them (how could it impact on them)? How committed are they to the change? This will help identify where you may need to target communication and engagement.

3. Influential individuals

Identify key influential stakeholders so you're able to engage effectively one-on-one. Classify them by stakeholder type, e.g. decision-maker, partner or consumer. Who are your clinical leads or likely champions? What are their roles in the organisation? Consider their awareness level of your project and their previous experience with improvement projects. Anticipate their communication needs (type and frequency) and start to plan accordingly.

4. Initial engagement

Engage stakeholders by assigning an appropriate project team member to establish the relationship. Start the relationship building by discussing expectations about the project's objectives, scope and approach. Ask about their expectations, how they'd like to be involved, what interests them about this change and how they'd like to communicate. This can be done individually or in small groups as appropriate.

Considerations and tips

Not everyone will be receptive to change right away. It's important to understand people will have concerns, even if they perceive it to be a positive change. It is important that you know their concerns.

Frame of reference

Everyone will view the change from their own frame of reference. Don't assume you know how they feel about the change. Consider each stakeholder group and ask what it means for them. How are they impacted? What's in it for them? Asking and listening is the best way to discover this.

Listen

Encourage people to express their concerns through surveys, interviews, and two-way communication. Ask for their input repeatedly throughout the course of the project. Ensure that there is a feedback mechanism when you provide information, so they can voice concerns or offer ideas and support.

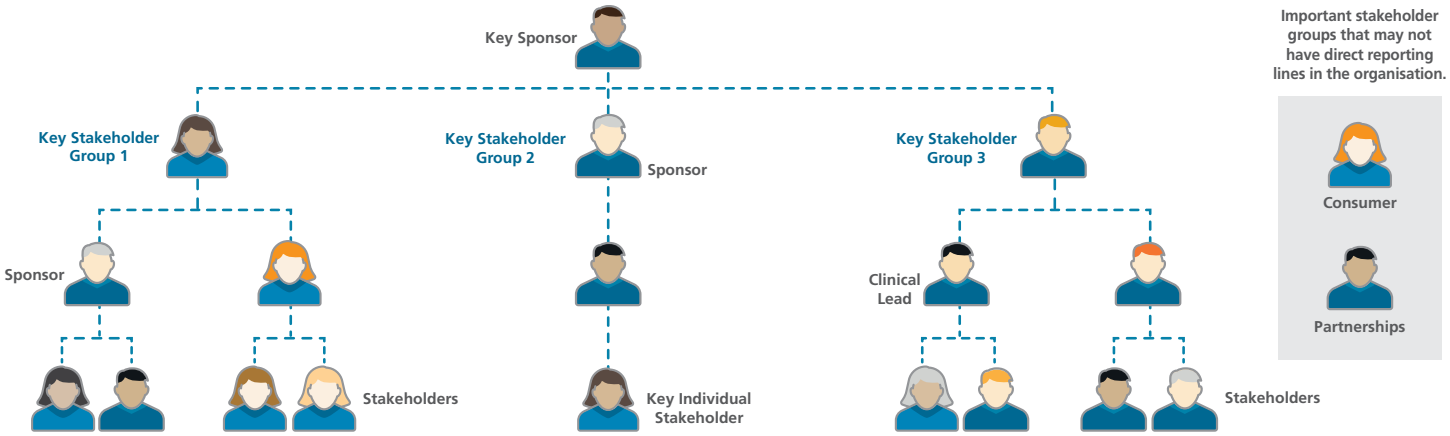
Do it with them, not to them

Your project is unlikely to succeed unless you bring your stakeholders along the journey. Involve them early and often to promote ownership and engagement with the change. Your stakeholders should feel like the change is a collaborative process.

Stakeholder map

Organise your stakeholder groups and people into a map. This will help to easily visualise the reporting lines and how each group is connected to the change. You can add to this map throughout the project and plot things like sponsors, communication needs and champions.

Stakeholder map



Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Introduction to Project Initiation
Accelerated Implementation Methodology (AIM) (213401914)

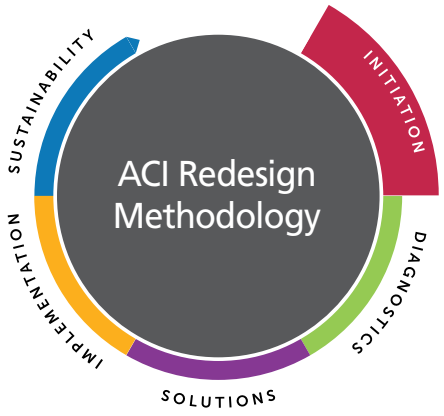
Next Steps

Now that you've initiated contact and introduced your project, it's important to maintain stakeholder relationships and confirm all groups are represented. Pay particular attention to the consumers – after all, these are the people you are doing the change for!

ACI_0022 [12/18]

CONSUMERS

Initiation



Consumers

The best innovation and healthcare improvements can only come from listening to and understanding what matters to people who use the services, sometimes known as consumers.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Partner with consumers

Our vision is for consumers and families to be equal partners in healthcare improvement in NSW. The evidence shows that consumer participation leads to better quality of care, improved health outcomes and more accessible and effective health services. Consumer engagement is the process of incorporating consumer aspirations and needs into decision making, service planning and evaluation. Consumers and community members should be partners in improvement projects.

2. Involve consumers

Sometimes clinicians and managers are reluctant to involve patients and carers, because they think they won't be able to meet consumers' expectations. In reality, consumer input is enlightening and can help staff to think differently. Consumers experience care across the continuum of services, so they can often identify opportunities for improvements in service delivery. Consumers generally understand that healthcare funds need to be spent prudently.

3. Consider potential contributions

The levels of consumer engagement are expressed as a continuum of participation (see diagram).

Some ways to involve consumers along the continuum are:

- Inform – pamphlets, newsletters
- Consult – interviews, surveys
- Collaborate – part of project team
- Co-design – develop and test solutions
- Empower – project lead, decision making authority.

4. Determine the level of engagement

The level of patient engagement will depend on a number of factors, such as the focus of your project, the time and resources available to undertake the project, and the availability of consumers to dedicate time to the work. Higher levels of engagement require more time and skills from staff and consumers, and can be very rewarding. Infrastructure and clinical service redesign have demonstrated strong benefits from co-design approaches.

Considerations and tips

Getting consumers 'around the table' and embedding their involvement in your project is essential in designing services for those at the centre of our care.

How to get started

Local health district (LHD) community and consumer participation, carer support, and multicultural health units provide direct linkages to consumers and community members who want to be involved in healthcare decision making. Staff in these units can help to involve consumers.

The patient survey

The Bureau of Health Information's NSW Patient Survey Program houses a wealth of validated and detailed patient survey data. It displays information from patients across NSW about their experiences with services in hospitals and other healthcare facilities in an easy to access and read format.

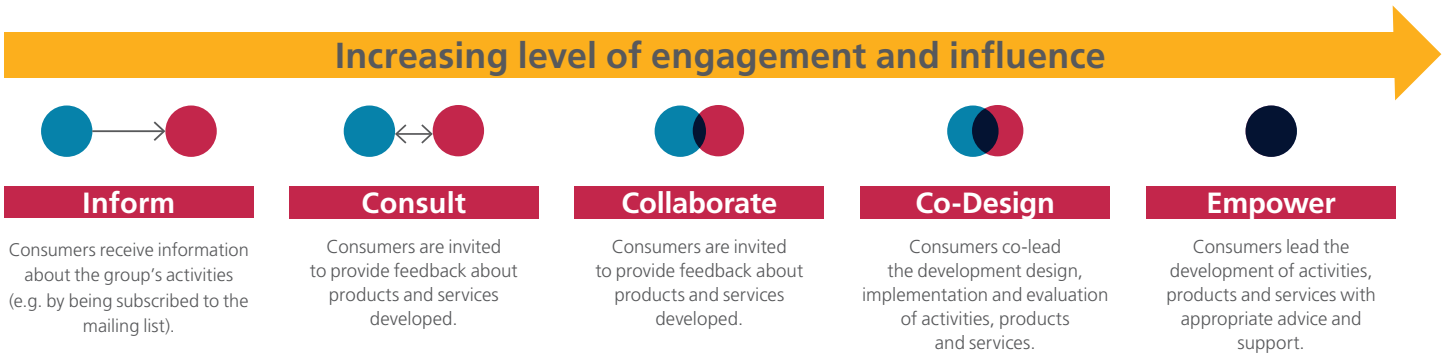
Tools for success

Many LHDs provide staff with tools to gather real-time patient feedback on specific topics. These tools can collate results and provide reports to track issues and results. Guides on how to conduct patient interviews are available here Patient Experience Resources https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/patient-experience

Represent NSW diversity

It is important to consider the true representation of your community when engaging consumers. Develop an inclusive strategy to engage consumers who are culturally and linguistically diverse, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders or LGBTQI.

Further information



International Association for Public Participation

Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Introduction to Project Initiation

Patient Experience Resources – www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/patient-experience

Contact the **ACI Patient Experience and Consumer Engagement (PEACE) team** on aci-peace@health.nsw.gov.au

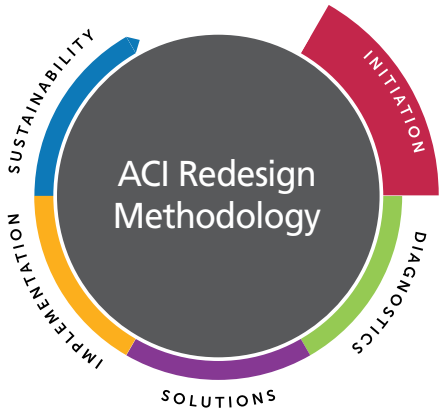
Next Steps

The Agency for Clinical Innovation, Clinical Excellence Commission and local consumer and community participation managers have a range of resources to assist staff to build skills in working with consumers to achieve rewarding results.

ACI_0022 [12/18]

SCHEDULING

Initiation



Scheduling

A project schedule is an action plan that documents what needs to occur, by who, when and in what order. This will help you stay on track, monitor progress and identify project blocks.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Identify project milestones

Scheduling involves identifying key dates when certain activities and tasks must be done in order to meet your deadlines. Identify project milestones from the start, and then monitor progress against the milestones to stay on track. This allows you to identify risks, delays and barriers and communicate these in a non-biased way to the project team and governance group.

2. Include relevant information

Your schedule should include major tasks (and subtasks), meetings and deliverables, the due date and who is responsible. Include a comment, or a colour key, to indicate if the task is on track, completed or delayed. Schedule milestones in line with anything that could influence the timing of the deliverable. For example, you may need to plan a deadline two weeks earlier to align with internal approval processes or meetings.

Consider the deliverables

Starting with the final deliverable and working backwards is one way to start developing a schedule. Asking yourself, 'What needs to occur in order for that to happen?' will help you identify the subtasks that you need to do to achieve the deliverable on time. This is a good brainstorming activity for the project team, as it gives everyone input about the tasks and timeframes.

4. Define the sequence

Sequencing will help you define the flow of the project and align your resources, so you have what you need, when you need it. In the project schedule, order the tasks in sequence of what needs to be done first, second etc and be realistic about times allocated for each one. Highlight which steps are dependent on others. Sequencing can help you to avoid surprises.

Considerations and tips

You should consistently monitor the progress of your project and assess it against the schedule. Steering committees, project working groups and communications will all be important audiences for the project schedule.

Keep on track with the schedule

An agreed schedule helps you and the team to establish clear actions and responsibilities. Review schedules with the team, discuss any delays, and agree on rescheduled timelines. Escalate major delays to the governance group if they cannot be managed quickly.

Consider external influences

Identify external factors that could influence the project schedule. If you are new to your organisation, it might be helpful to consult with others who have worked in the organisation for a while. Things to consider here include accreditation, staff leave/absences or major conferences.

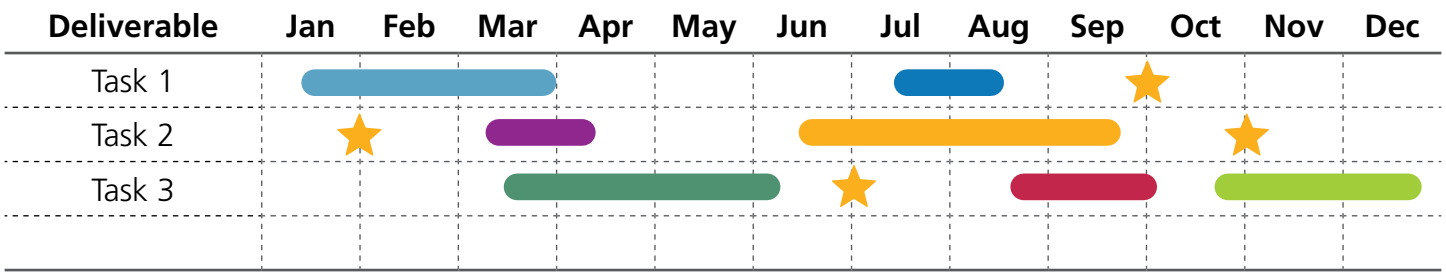
Know the resources required

It's important to estimate the resources required for the project. This not only includes the time required for each task, activity and deliverable, but also the people required to undertake the work. Please refer the Resources fact sheet for more information.

How will we document?

There are several project scheduling programs available. A Gantt chart is an ideal tool that can easily track tasks, times, meetings, etc, for the whole team to keep on track. This should be a `living document', which means it is updated as the project progresses.

Scheduling



Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Project Deliverables and Scheduling
Introduction to project initiation (schedule examples)

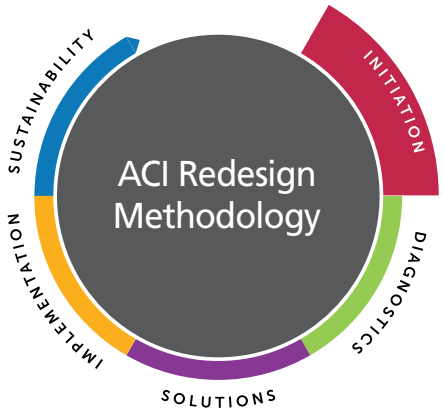
Next Steps

Now that you are set to keep the schedule on track, you need to consider the risks and issues that can negatively impact achieving your deliverables and goals.

ACI_0022 [12/18]

SCOPE

Initiation



Scope

Scope is the boundaries within which the project lies. Its purpose is to create realistic work plans, budgets, schedules and expectations. The scope must be relevant to achieving the project goal.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Set the scope

Setting your scope is an important step to agree on what exactly is involved in the project. This ensures that all of your stakeholders will be clear about what is (and isn't) included in your project. The scope is agreed by the sponsor in consultation with the project team and steering committee. Ensure it is agreed early in the project so it is kept within manageable resources and influence.

2. Scope elements

Use a structure to guide discussion and build agreement about what is in or out of scope. Consider:

- Processes – such as admission, referral, transfer of care, ordering etc.
- Organisation – affected departments, staff, procedures and guidelines
- Technology – consider IT programs, equipment or paper forms and records
- People – the patient demographics
- Physical design – are infrastructure changes in or out?

3. Scope dependencies

Scope is inter-related to time, quality and resources. Adjusting one will affect the others, so the balancing act between these parameters needs to be managed carefully. Agree on the project timeframe, what resources are required (including budget), and the expected quality of the end product (e.g. 100% target vs 80% target). Remember to always monitor the impact of adjusting the scope to ensure time, quality and budget don't suffer.

4. Scope creep

Scope creep occurs when requirements are added to the scope after agreement. This is a common issue in managing projects. For example, you may be expected to change in four areas instead of two, or produce something far larger than originally intended. While sometimes this is necessary, it will introduce the risk of not completing the project to the agreed timeframes or budget. Any changes to scope need to be formally agreed with your sponsor/s.

Considerations and tips

Scope can be hard to manage and poor scope setting often leads to project failure. Be clear about expectations and don't let scope run away from you!

Boundaries

If you are battling with scope creep then consider how this may be managed and achieved. Is there another project team that could take on the extra scope? Is it possible to add resources? Talk with your sponsor and be clear about the risks and options.

Communicate scope

If scope is misunderstood, then your project may seem not to deliver what was expected. Ensure your stakeholders are clear on the scope from the start. Check that they understand the who, what, how and end product of the change. Keep this in your communications throughout the project.

Assumptions

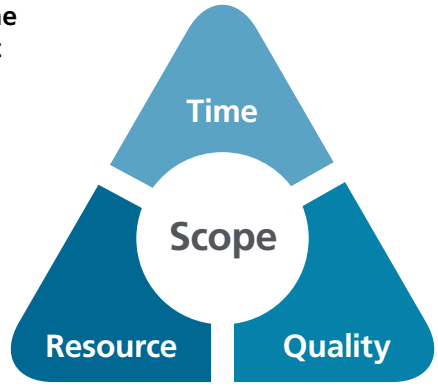
Assumptions are what we believe will be available or happen to complete the project in scope. They may include time given for the team together to work or access to data, etc. Assumptions should be documented, as if they are not met, they may negatively impact the project.

Constraints

Constraints are the factors that limit the scope. Consider resource limitations, funding or time. Constraints can also come from organisational priorities or other projects competing for the resources you need. Being aware of and documenting constraints will ensure that they are transparent.

Scope dependencies

A change in one area will effect the other



Setting the scope

	IN	OUT	Example
Process			Process beginning and end
Organisational			What areas? Staff? Procedures?
Technology			Equipment / IT / Documents
Facilities			Physical design
People			Patient demographics

Further information

My Health Learning Log in Form – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Scoping a Project

Project Management in a Nutshell (40017593)

Next Steps

Once scope is set and agreed upon, embed it into your communication planning and be clear to all stakeholders. Then you can start planning the schedule accordingly and lining up how the project will run.

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