



### Sustainability

Your project will not succeed unless the solutions are sustained long after they are implemented. By considering sustainability early in your project, you can avoid going back to the old way of doing things and make sure your project realises the benefits it was designed to deliver.

### Sustainability

The purpose of this phase is to wrap up the project, embedding long term change into business as usual. This is where you can evaluate and share the benefits you have achieved and spread your project to other areas.

## Key points

### 1. Plan Sustainability

There are helpful models that you can use to build sustainability during the change. The NHS Sustainability Model is a good example, as it highlights three key areas: process, staff and organisation. Using a model can help keep you focused on sustainable approaches and ensure that your time, effort and resources aren't wasted in the long run.

### 2. Establish processes

New processes are put in place to create positive outcomes within the system. A process that has multiple benefits to patients, staff and organisation will generally be more likely to succeed and more sustainable. It is important to ensure that the new process is evidence based and easy to monitor. You can then document and communicate any benefits.

### 3. Involve staff

Staff involvement and attitudes towards the change will greatly affect the sustainability of your project. Keep your key stakeholders involved at all stages – the more they are on board, the more likely they will continue their engagement. The support and endorsement of the change from respected managers and clinical leaders is key to sustainable change.

### 4. Align with organisational goals

Ensure that your initiative fits in with the goals of your organisation. Look at the strategic plan and align the change with current priorities. Does your initiative align with the infrastructure of your organisation? Consider how people's roles, technology, equipment and the organisational structure supports your change and sustains it over the long term.

## Considerations and tips

Sustainability is often considered at the end of a project, but it's best to start planning it at the beginning of the implementation phase. Otherwise, it might be too late to address any problems that could have been solved earlier in the project.

### Governance

Remember to set up sustained ownership and sponsorship at all levels for your initiative. Keep the governance in place until the change is established in business as usual.

### Remove the 'old way'

Ensure there are processes in place to train new staff and refresh others on your initiative. Work with stakeholders and sponsors to make it harder to do things the old way, and easier to do the new way.

### Results

Find opportunities to share and celebrate results, and continue to do this until the change is embedded into business as usual.

### Involve other people

Sustainability is more likely to occur when the project is designed, owned and implemented by a cross-section of people who work together as a team. This provides different perspectives and insights, and ultimately builds a stronger platform for sustainability.

## NHS sustainability model



NHS Sustainability model, NHS Improvement, UK

## Further information

[My Health Learning Log in Form](#) – Redesign Sustainability (202465121): Sustainability and Spread

NHS sustainability model and guide – <https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/Sustainability-model-and-guide/>

## Next steps

Now that you have considered how to build sustainability into your project goals, you may also have to think about non-sustainable processes and how to disinvest in them.