

# Step 7: Monitor, Evaluate and Improve

Ongoing evaluation is an integral part of any quality care initiative. It helps to clearly define your desired outcomes at the outset and decide how and when you'll measure success. By collecting baseline data of your current practice and then continuing to monitor results you can assess and adjust your program as needed.

Thinking in advance about how you will measure success is important. Below are some suggestions for monitoring, evaluating and setting goals to continually improve.

## Set objectives

Be clear about what you want to achieve from the outset.

You may decide to rollout screening and/or integration in stages, or you may have to adapt practice over time to adjust to changes in your workplace infrastructure, for example, the need to screen remotely, integration with incoming electronic medical record systems. Setting clear objectives and parameters now, will help you to realise your progress and avoid potential scope creep.

## Establish your baseline

To monitor progress against current practice, consider what your baseline measures might be. This could include for example, current screening rates overall, across cultural groups and/or the current client availability.

## Identify your KPIs

Once you have established your objectives, how will you measure whether they have been achieved? Setting key performance indicators (KPIs) provides an infrastructure against which to measure and fully realise your progress.

Examples of KPIs might include: 1) Referral pathways will be established prior to the commencement of training. 2) All staff will be trained in the use of iCOPE and be aware of referral pathway processes by (date). 3) iCOPE will be officially launched (date). 4) Over 90% of client attending clinic A will be screened using the iCOPE Platform.

Once you have identified your KPIs and targets, consider *who, how and when* they will be monitored and reported. Here members of your working group can report back on specific objectives across the reported time periods so that progress and challenges are shared. This also provides the impetus for the group to report, identify and fix any issues that may be impeding KPIs being achieved, whilst also allowing the group to celebrate the wins.

## What about measuring satisfaction?

You may want to take your monitoring and evaluation one step further, and evaluate the overall success of the program for internal and/or external evaluation and publication. This may include reporting client satisfaction.

### The experience of team members

Some organisations have undertaken satisfaction surveys to ascertain staff views about their experience and its impact upon their practice. The use of rating scales combined with a couple of open-ended questions can be a great way to monitor and evaluate progress. In designing your surveys, remember that health professionals are time poor so your survey needs to be brief and ideally only take 2-3 minutes of their time. By including some open-ended questions (non-mandatory) this gives those who want to say more the opportunity to express their views without compromising response rates.

### The experience of your clients

Similarly, customer satisfaction surveys can also provide you with valuable insights about the experience of iCOPE with your clients/patients. Again this may include obtaining a mix of quantitative data (eg. rating scales) and qualitative data (open comments) to capture the essence of their experiences.

Undertaking such surveys are invaluable. They can provide unique insights and suggestions for refining processes. Sometimes even the smallest changes identified from the frontline can have the biggest impact.

### Bringing it all together

The iCOPE system is also collecting screening data in real time. Those granted access can download screening data (excel format) at any point to analyse and inform reporting.

This data provides invaluable clinical information about your clients (e.g. their EPDS scores, the presence of various risk factors), the different languages the screens were conducted in, and the time taken to undertake each screen can also be calculated.

Please contact the team at COPE if you would like further assistance with monitoring and evaluation - [icope@cope.org.au](mailto:icope@cope.org.au)