

# Define your goal

***Developing a goal provides an opportunity to consider exactly what it is you are seeking to change, which will guide you, keep you focused and motivate the team.***

A good goal:

- captures the benefit to the patient and motivates staff
- sets a date for completion to set a pace for the work
- defines a clear target for the number or percentage for improvement, allowing the team to see the current gap.

## **Making SMART goals**

An effective goal uses elements of the SMART acronym—it is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-limited.

Your SMART goal should be:

- **Specific:** the goal needs to be simple, sensible, and significant
- **Measurable:** you need be able to measure whether or not the goal has been achieved within a specified timeframe
- **Attainable:** goals need to be realistic and attainable, otherwise they will lack meaning
- **Relevant:** goals should be relevant to the overarching business or clinical goals of the practice and the needs of others within the team
- **Time-bound:** a commitment to achieving the goal within a specified timeframe will focus the team's efforts.

### **Example: consider the following goal:**

- We aim to decrease the number of patients who smoke.

This goal is vague, which will make it impossible to evaluate whether it has been achieved.

### **An example of a SMART goal is:**

Decrease the number of patients that smoke by 20% within 12 months.

Your goal will probably incorporate the benefits your clinic will bring to your community. This might include:

- improving access to health services
- responding to and coordinating around patients' needs
- reorienting a service to better respect patients preferences
- providing safe care
- improving the effectiveness of services
- delivery timely care
- providing affordable services
- ensuring improved quality of care.