PDSA REFLECTION GUIDE
Identifying a Testable Change Idea

This guide is intended to help you reflect on a potential change idea prior to testing it in a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle. The prompts below offer considerations to guide you in refining your change idea so that it is specific and amenable to testing, preparing you to learn through disciplined inquiry.

REFLECT

Describe the change idea you intend to test in a PDSA cycle. How will it help you achieve a goal you have in your context?

What will it look like to test this change idea? (Consider the people involved, resources needed, timing, etc.)

EVALUATE

Using the prompts below, consider how well your change idea addresses the characteristics of a testable change idea.

Is the change idea **clear, specific and narrow in scope**?

- Change targets specific process, norm, or structure
- Change idea relies on a tangible artifact/product that can be refined and easily shared (protocol, template, tool, etc.)
- Avoids pitfalls 1 & 2: Is a change idea not concept; not focused on doing more of the same

Is the change idea **grounded in evidence** or clearly **connected to a theory,** leading to a compelling belief that it will lead to improvement?

- The goal of test (or overall outcome to be improved) is clear
- Link between change idea and goal is clear
- There is strong belief or evidence that change will lead to improvement

Is it **feasible** (i.e., capacity, time, and resources) to test the change idea now?

- Change can be tested quickly (e.g., impact can be seen within a week)
- Change can be tested cheaply (requires minimal additional resources)
- Change is within your locus of control (not reliant on external stakeholders, can take place in own team or practice)
- Change idea appropriately balances considerations for expected benefit vs. effort required

Which of the considerations for identifying a testable change idea above will likely be the most challenging for you to address? Why?

DECIDE

Determine your next steps based on your responses above and/or feedback from others.

How might you refine or adjust your change idea to make it more 1) clear, specific and narrow in scope, 2) grounded in evidence or connected to a theory, or 3) feasible to test?

Describe your new or improved change idea below.