

VA QUERI SERVICE DIRECTED PROJECTS: PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA¹

Adequacy of Response to Previous Reviewer Comments

- Did the applicant address the issues raised by the reviewers of the concept paper or previously reviewed full proposal (if this is a resubmission)?

Project Goal(s) and Questions/Hypotheses

- Is the project's overall goal(s) described in light of the quality enhancement (QE) or performance problem(s) the project is targeting?
- If the project aims to address an intervening barrier or factor *contributing* to the quality problem (but not *directly causing* the quality problem), does the proposal explain how the project will contribute to the solution of the overarching quality problem, and why a direct solution is not possible?

Background of Context

- Does the proposal provide an adequate literature review and evidence-based clinical recommendations/guidelines or other foundations supporting the hypothesized effectiveness of the proposed quality improvement approach?
- Is there an adequate description of current practices, determinants, barriers and facilitators?

Significance

- Does the proposal adequately describe the clinical/quality issue(s) to be addressed, including as appropriate data on the clinical condition's/problem's prevalence/incidence, mortality/morbidity, quality of life consequences, economic consequences, or other significant considerations.
- Is the proposed work grounded in theoretical and empirical evidence on organizational change and/or provider behavior?
- Is the project aimed at creating a learning organization focused on the translation of research into practice?

Methods

- Is an overall conceptual framework for the approach provided, citing specific sources and justifying the selection of the source(s) and framework for the specific quality problem and intervention approach planned?
- Are the design and methods appropriate given the stated project goals?
- Does the work involve a clearly articulated process or formative evaluation?
- If an intervention is being implemented, is it adequately described (e.g., are components specified, is it apparent who will administer the intervention and to whom it is targeted) and justified?
- Is the overall research design, including issues such as the experimental unit (facility, clinic, team, clinician, or patient) and other major design features justified?
- Are the variables, measures and data collection methods/plans adequately described?
- Impact (summative) evaluation: overall plan?

¹ The most critical points are in **bold**.

- Are plans for identifying and recruiting all relevant participants, including clinicians, other staff (managers, support staff), patients, patient family members or caregivers, etc., discussed and any human subjects issues addressed?
- Is an Economic Analysis appropriate to VA decision makers (e.g., cost consequences, as opposed to traditional cost-effectiveness) included?

Adequacy of Evidence-Base Supporting Implementation at This Time

- Does the proposal clearly demonstrate the existence of an adequate evidence-base, in the form of published research and/or guidelines, to warrant Implementation at this time?
- Are there known or potential risks to patients if implementation is delayed?
- Is it clear that implementation is not being rushed (therein creating potential patient risk)?
- Is there a critical level of need and/or urgency for implementation at this time?
- Does the implementation plan appear to target a viable system or organization (e.g., it may only be feasible to implement an intervention at a single unit – with VISN2 support – as a *step* toward implementing VAMC- and/or VISN-wide)?
- Is there sufficient supplemental evidence to support implementation if a substantial body of effectiveness data has not as yet been published (e.g., cumulative efficacy data, practical/clinical evidence, etc.)?

Involvement of Key Stakeholders

- Is there evidence of commitment, including tangible resources, at all necessary levels (e.g., provider, unit, facility, VISN)?

Contribution to the Veterans Health Administration

- Does the proposed work have the clear potential to improve the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of health care in VA and the health status of veterans?
- Does the proposed work hold the promise of rapid clinical and organizational improvement?
- Is there evidence that the activities planned for implementation would be sustainable beyond the life of the proposed project?
- Is there potential for expansion throughout VHA if the implementation is successful at the level proposed within the scope of the project (e.g., if implementation is to take place within a single unit, is there potential for expansion throughout on or more VISN(s))?

Evaluation Plan

- Does the proposal include a well-structured evaluation plan?
- Will spread and rollout (i.e., to other sites, clinics, VISNs) be tracked?

Dissemination/Implementation Plan

- Evaluate how and when research results will be disseminated and implemented

² VA's decentralized, clinical delivery networks that are organized by regions with the US.