VA QUERI SERVICE DIRECTED PROJECTS: PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA

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 pace 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

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