



# Coach the coaches: expert advice

## Key considerations for your role as an improvement coach



**The Falls and Fragility Fracture Audit Programme (FFFAP) improvement collaborative is a course designed to support small multidisciplinary teams (participating in the FFFAP audits) through a chosen improvement project with coaching, opportunities to network and share learning.**

Our coaches leading the learning sessions and coaching calls include FFFAP clinical leads, clinical fellows, and members of our audit advisory boards, with a range of improvement experience. To help support the coaches in their roles, we organised a session with experienced improvement advocates and leaders to share their own experiences and key learning. We collated their comments and developed this document of key considerations for people who are coaching teams through an improvement project.

### What is your role as a coach?

Broadly, your role is to provide support so your teams can create clear steps to improve based on the workbook. You will need to evaluate the team's progress and provide feedback on their performance.

#### General tips

- > Keep the language simple. No acronyms, use the term 'improvement' rather than 'quality improvement (QI)' or 'QI'.
- > Keep the energy positive, if teams are struggling, make the next step easy and achievable.
- > Keep the team together, make sure every member of the team feels included, for example ask a team member to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of a team decision.

### Preparatory work before a session

- > Take 15 minutes to prepare for the call, it makes a lot of difference.
- > Know who is expected on the call, their name and role.
- > Know their current performance using the audit data:
  - > How to use the NHFD run charts
  - > How to use the NHFD benchmark tables
  - > How to use the FLS-DB run charts
  - > How to export your data in the FLS-DB
  - > Compare local NAIF healthcare providers' performance against others using the KPI charts
- > Review the team's learning from the previous session or progress within their workbook to draft a rough agenda on what needs to be covered in the call; share the agenda with the team beforehand.
- > Know how you are going to take notes from the meeting.



## Introductions

- > Introduce yourself: name, role and experience of improvement.
- > Ask the team members to briefly introduce themselves: name and role.
- > If fewer people turn up use it as an opportunity to build relationships with those present, so they can be enthused and motivate the other team members to come next time.
- > Offer to record the sessions or send meeting notes for those unable to attend.
- > Ensure everyone knows how to use the platform functions, eg mute/ chat box.
- > Confirm when the call will end.

## Setting ground rules

- > Keep it brief.
- > Confidentiality and trust.
- > Respect everyone's voice and opinion.
- > Run the meeting to time.
- > Cameras off or on.

## Managing the discussion

- > Ask if there is anything else to add to the agenda.
- > Review the last team actions.
- > Use the silence to allow others time to think and reflect to the team; consider using the chat box to post ideas/questions.
- > Ensure the conversation is inclusive.
- > Try to flatten the hierarchy and create an environment where all team members can contribute.
- > Create an environment where it's ok to fail or suggest something that turns out to be unworkable. As a coach, share openly when you make a bad call as this creates an environment where it is ok to fail but not ok to not learn from the failure.

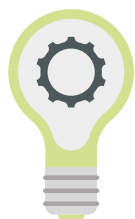
- > Keep a tally of who has and has not contributed. Always check-in that the patients on the team have been involved and enabled to co-produce the next step, eg sense check ideas by asking 'what would the patient understand?'
- > Be ok with team members having nothing to add.
- > Offer a time for team members to reflect on a decision as some may need time to reflect. Do not rush the team's decision making, every team works to a different tempo.
- > Celebrate learning all the way through, eg the small steps, barriers overcome, the team coming together and learning.

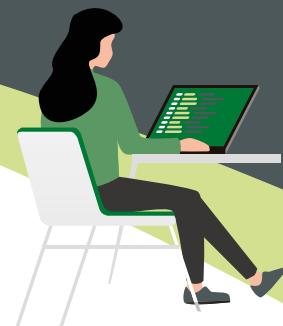
## Challenging the teams

- > Remind teams that this process is data-driven for patient benefit. Be comfortable challenging teams if the decisions do not match the data
- > Break down big steps into small but transformative steps for this week, month, quarter, and year.
- > Ask the team to describe their definition or measure of 'good enough' is? Use the SMART framework for this.
- > Ask the team to list their likely top risks and the potential mitigations.

## Closing the coaching session

- > Summarise the key points, actions, responsibilities, and timelines.
- > Check if the team want minutes for the meeting.
- > If relevant, arrange a time for the next call.
- > After the meeting, spend 5 minutes reviewing your notes from the meeting and create a draft agenda for the next call.





## How to deal with...

### Over ambitious plans

Check whether the improvement be delivered within existing resources, do you have the influence to make the change, can it be broken down into smaller parts?

### Silent team members

Ask a team member to consider the advantages and disadvantages of a team decision, avoid making them directly decide or closed questions.

### Team members who take over

Ask the team to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed approach. Use time as your friend, 'We only have 10 minutes left, can we hear from others in the team?' and feel able to gently refer to the ground rules of listening and respecting all points of view.

### Teams that seem to be struggling to attend or achieve

If fewer people turn up use it as an opportunity to build relationships with the team that did turn up, so they can be enthused and motivate the other team members to come next time. Check in with the team if the membership needs to change.

### Questions you don't know the answer to

Remember your role is to bring out the solutions from the team. The team know their local setting the best. Ensure everyone in the team has had a chance to respond. You can give suggestions from your experience, but you really want to hear what they think. Sometimes there is a specific question or challenge that you don't know the answer to, say you will ask the improvement team and get back to them.

## FFFAP coaching learning exchange

There will be regular virtual opportunities for the coaching team to come together and ask questions/ share learning with other coaches and mentors in the programme.

## Helpful resources

Recommended guidance and resources available on improvement:

- 1 [Institute for Healthcare Improvement \(IHI\)](#): the IHI offers a range of improvement resources including how to improve, measures and improvement stories.
- 2 [FutureLearn](#): FutureLearn has a variety of free training courses including quality improvement.
- 3 [Patient and Carer Panel \(PCP\)](#): the FFFAP PCP is a valuable resource for a range of experiences, knowledge, and contributions towards developing projects which are focused around improving the patient pathway and experience.
- 4 [Overcoming common barriers to change](#): this document is a useful resource to reference and gain a deeper understanding of the common barriers teams face when implementing an improvement project.
- 5 FFFAP improvement repositories: there are a variety of improvement stories available across [NHFD](#), [NAIF](#) and [FLS-DB](#) based around improving key performance indicators.

## Virtual platforms to facilitate calls

Connecting with teams virtually is now common practice, and there are a number of resources you may consider to support your facilitation:

- 1 [Microsoft Teams](#) can not only host calls but also facilitate group work with post-it notes and a shared whiteboard.
- 2 [Slido](#) can be used to engage your participants with live polls, Q&As and word clouds.
- 3 [Padlet](#) can be used by coaches and teams to post notes on a common page.
- 4 [Poll](#) everywhere supports live online polling, surveys, Q&As, quizzes and word clouds.

We are always keen to learn about new ways of working, please do get in touch with us at [FFFAP](#) if you have any further advice, resources, or virtual platforms.