

## Improvement Cycles

### A. Description of Implementation Framework

Improvement Cycles:

Improvement Cycles help us solve problems, improve practices, and create ‘hospitable’ environments for new ways of work. Improvement Cycles support the purposeful process of change. A common framework for purposeful change is the Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycle or PDSA Cycle.

- Plan
  - Detailing the specific objectives and processes for the work
- Do
  - Implement the plan as intended
- Study
  - Analyze data about the process and outcomes achieved
- Act
  - Make changes to the next iteration to improve the process and/or outcomes

The Cycle begins again with a reformulated plan to take the next steps to further improve the current process or to ‘codify’ the success. It is the repeated nature and clarity of the process that makes it an effective continuous improvement strategy. It is ‘changing on purpose’ by using the PDSA process so that data inform the ‘next right steps’. There are four types of PDSA Cycles in Applied Implementation Science:

- Rapid-Cycle Problem Solving
  - Address immediate, pressing issues
  - Make quick, incremental improvements
- Usability Testing
  - Limited initial use of the intervention to quickly discover what works and what does not
- Practice-Policy Communication Cycles
  - Practice informed policy
  - Policy enabled practice
- Transformation Zone
  - Implementation in a manageable slice that represents all levels of the system

### B. SSIP Application of Implementation Framework

Phase 1: Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity

Phase 1: Theory of Action

Phase 2: Evaluation Plan

Phase 3: Multi-Year Plan

## C. Discussion Questions

1. What needs to be considered by the SEA/LA for adoption and use of improvement cycles (i.e., PDSA) in each of their targeted systems (i.e., TA and PD) for improvement?
2. What will the state need to do (consider infrastructures and practices) to consistently apply improvement cycles in monitoring implementation and progress of SSIP improvement activities?
3. What should the state plan for in preparation of applying usability testing in the implementation of the best practices identified in the SSIP?
4. What should be considered and planned for regarding the application of practice-policy communication practices to the implementation of the SSIP to continually improve the quality of:
  - a. implementation?
  - b. the selected evidence-based practice(s)?
  - c. the system?