WHAT IS A SMART AIM STATEMENT?

A SMART aim statement is an explicit statement which describes what a successful project is expected to achieve. ‘SMART’ is an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Applicable, Realistic, and Timely.

EXAMPLE SMART AIM STATEMENT:

‘To reduce central line infections in St. John's Ward by 90% by 31 August 2014’

HOW CAN YOU CREATE A SMART AIM STATEMENT?

By following the acronym you can create a SMART aim statement.

CREATE A SMART AIM STATEMENT

SPECIFIC

The aim statement needs to be precise and concise with a single focus. It needs to be clear to all staff working towards it. It needs to specify the issue it is focusing on, the area this issue is in, the measure of how much it will be improved by and the timeframe it is being improved upon.

TOPIC – CENTRAL LINE INFECTIONS  AREA – ST. JOHN’S WARD  MEASURE – BY 90%  TIMEFRAME – BY 31 AUGUST 2014

MEASURABLE

The aim statement needs to be able to be measured and that the measurement is easily understood by the staff working towards the aim. The measurement needs to be able to be compared against the aim statement in percentage/numerical/frequency/rate terms. You need to be able to answer ‘How will I know a change has occurred?’

‘We have reduced central line infections in St. John's ward by 30%; therefore we are improving but have not yet reached our aim of 90%’

ACTIONABLE

The aim statement requires the staff working towards the aim to make an action towards an improvement. It is not enough to just study or evaluate the data, an action needs to happen.

Staff has to have a willingness to create a solution for this Aim Statement.

REALISTIC

The aim statement needs to be within the control or influence of the staff working towards it. It needs to be possible for the staff to action improvements towards it and that there is a strong chance they will be successful in achieving it.

TIMELY

It is not enough to put a specific timeframe on the aim statement. It is very important that the timeframe creates urgency while still allowing sufficient time for staff to achieve it.