

Certificate Program in Patient Safety and Quality

2025-2026 Improvement Project Selection, Scoping, and Mentorship Guidelines

Learning through implementing a mentored improvement project is equally as important as the didactic curriculum and part of what makes this program so fun and rewarding. To make this possible, participants are expected to bring their own improvement project to work on throughout the 8-month course. You may work in a small group (ideally no more than 8 people) or with other people outside the program. Additionally, participants are responsible for identifying a project mentor(s) and making sure the mentor understands and agrees to the modest time commitment. Please address the following project scope in your registration.

- **Outcome:** The project should have a clear deliverable. At the time of registration, it is fine to explain a general goal, which you will refine in the early stages of the program.
- **Timing:** The project should be achievable in the timeline below and allow for enough flexibility to make meaningful contributions to the product and outcomes:
 - Assessment and planning in Fall 2025;
 - Begin implementation in Winter 2025;
 - Have time to complete at least one PDCA cycle after implementation.
- **Measures:** The project should allow measurement of success over time. Ideally, measures should require as little manual audit as possible and allow charting of progress over time (run or control charts).
- **Support:** Ideally, your project should have local and institutional support both conceptually and operationally. The most successful projects align with institutional priorities and often use existing data sources.
 - The project should have buy-in from local/institutional leadership.
 - Ideally, projects should help units work towards institutional goals.
 - Consider asking clinic or unit leaders what QI projects they'd like help with.
- **Mentorship:** Each project should have a committed mentor or team of mentors who have time to share their expertise and experience with the group. If you have a team of mentors, please identify one lead mentor for the purposes of this program, so we know where to direct communication. Many different types of people can serve as a mentor! Sometimes, mentors are clinical leaders in the area where the project is occurring. Another rich source of mentors are past graduates of the Certificate Program – there should be dozens at your organization and they are listed on the Center website.

Please review these expectations with your potential mentor(s):

- Mentors should commit to meet with their mentee or mentee group at least once a month between October 2025 and May 2026 to guide the project. This time is outside of the scheduled day-long Certificate Program sessions.
- The first day-long session on Friday, October 10, 2025 is a “Quality Improvement Basics” which gives participants the chance to apply QI tools to their own projects or a representative project. We ask mentors to participate for a minimum of approximately 2 hours on this day either in-person or on Zoom to advise on content related to proposed interventions and driver diagrams. We will also have group facilitators present to guide the participants through activities throughout the day. If a mentor would like to also act as a facilitator for this whole day, we would definitely welcome it! We will contact mentors directly about plans for this day.
- Mentors should plan to attend the poster session on the afternoon of the last Certificate Program day-long session, Friday, May 15, 2026.
- Mentors are welcome, though not expected, to join for any additional parts of the day-long sessions throughout the course.
- In the past, mentors attended project work time during Certificate Program day-long sessions in December through April. We are no longer asking mentors for that commitment, instead we expect

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mentors to meet monthly outside of these daylong sessions at mutually convenient times for mentor and mentees.

If you are having trouble deciding on a project for the course or want advice identifying an appropriate mentor, please email pcqscert@uw.edu **before** you submit your registration and one of our course faculty will provide guidance.