# **Step 1: Setting goals**

## **The overarching goal: improving sustainable value**

# In SusQI, the overarching goal of healthcare improvement is to deliver maximum health gain with minimum financial cost and harmful environmental impacts, whilst adding social value at every opportunity. Acknowledging this, you will then be able to set narrower, more specific aims for your project, designed to contribute towards reaching this overarching goal whatever area you work in.

## **Defining the problem**

Defining the problem and your goal for your project is an iterative process.  You may start with a general hunch, or perhaps an external request to tackle a particular problem. You may then move on to further steps which may lead you to change or refine your focus.

* What aspect of healthcare provision will you focus on (e.g. a care pathway, procedure or process step)?
* Can you articulate the “problem” that you will be addressing? What environmental and/or social impact(s) will you target? Why have you chosen these?
* Be thoughtful: when thinking about a “problem” many people actually come up with causes or symptoms of the problem rather than defining the problem itself.

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| **Defining the problem** |   |
| **Background:** Why are we here talking about this problem? How has it come to your attention. |   |
| **Problem statement**: What are we here to fix? What is the specific problem that requires your attention.  |   |
| **Impact:** What are the issues the problem is causing us? |  |
| **Extent:** How far does this problem extend? Is it specific to your setting, or might others benefit from a change? |   |

## **Setting specific goals: Be SMART**

All QI projects require clear aims. The aims should be time-specific and measurable as well as defining the specific target population of patients or staff who will be affected. Having defined the problem, set some achievable aims but return to these and refine them if needed after designing your improvement.

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