## Develop Your Quality Improvement (QI) Project Into

<table>
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<tr>
<th>An Abstract</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>A Poster</th>
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### What is an abstract?

An abstract is a brief written summary of your QI project. It provides an overview of your process and highlights the important points of your results.

Conferences typically call for abstracts to be:
- given in an oral presentation
- included in conference proceedings
- turned into a poster

### What is a poster?

A poster is a visual presentation of your QI project, usually prepared for exhibition at a conference.

An abstract can provide a good starting outline for your poster, but the poster should make good use of visual elements, and should not simply reproduce your abstract at poster size.

### Why should I submit an abstract?

An abstract allows you to:
- shed light on solutions to problems others may be having
- share your knowledge and experience so that others may benefit
- improve CV care
- get credit for your work

### Why should I submit a poster?

A poster provides all the same benefits as an abstract, with the added advantages of
- visually displaying your information for greater clarity
- networking and discussing your project with other attendees

### Tools

#### Choosing an abstract topic
- Outlining your content
- Tips for the writing process
- Submission preparation
- Conferences to consider
- Resources and References

#### Designing your Poster
- Poster Examples
- Presenting Your Poster
- Submission preparation
- Conferences to consider
- Resources and References

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Use these steps to choose the right project for your abstract:

- Review what QI projects you have completed in the past.

- Ask questions like the following to evaluate your projects:
  - Did you develop a unique educational approach to participant education?
  - Did you implement an innovative approach to data documentation or collection?
  - Where you able to demonstrate clear outcomes, changes, or improvement?
  - Did you make any changes to your program?
  - What did you differently that improved quality at your institution?

- Keep in mind the best project to choose is one that
  - makes an original and important contribution to quality assessment and the improvement of cardiovascular care.
  - has a clear conclusion substantiated by your data.
  - contains significant information and lessons from which others in the field can learn and feasibly apply.
| Title | The title should clearly reflect the contents of your project and/or your conclusion statement. |
| Problem Statement or Scientific Question | Define the problem or scientific question your project investigated. |
| Background/Project Intent | Use 2-3 sentences to ground the reader in your project and capture their interest. |
|   | - Why you did this project? What is the history of the project? What was your intent or goal for the project? |
|   | - You might also include external motivation, such as poor/outlier results on national measure, changes in payer reimbursement, reduced volumes, etc. |
| Methodology | Describe the steps of your work and provide a road map for your project. |
|   | - Explain your process in a way that makes the study reproducible. |
|   |   - What was unique? What did you do differently? |
|   |   - What were the tools, techniques, and strategies used? |
|   | - First write down each steps, then fill in detail, e.g., |
|   |   - Formed multi-disciplinary committee to study ... |
|   |   - Studied population in NCDR registry ... |
|   |   - Developed plan to ... |
|   |   - Implemented plan to... |
| Results | Summarize your results in 1-2 paragraphs. |
|   | - Present data that indicates your project made a difference by including |
|   |   - before and after results |
|   |   - data source, date ranges, n, % change |
|   |   - statistical measures (if you have them) |
|   |   - information in charts, graphs, and tables, if converting to a poster |
| Conclusion | Use 2-3 sentences to discuss the implications of your project. |
|   | - Refer to the statement of intent and summarize your project. |
|   | - Explain how your project solves a problem and could benefit others. |
|   | - Discuss any reservations and future prospects. |

Common Pitfalls to Avoid
- Not providing enough detail for reader comprehension, e.g., poor methodology or weak discussion section
- Including too much unrelated background or information
- Presenting inadequate results that do not support the conclusion
- Lack of originality in project topic, methodology, or outcomes

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Adapted from: “How to Develop and Submit NCDR Poster Abstract” American College of Cardiology: Fine, S.; Kordish, C.; Miller, T.; Verschelden, K.; Casey, P.E.
Tips for the Writing Process

Writing a good abstract is a skill that takes practice.

- Read other manuscripts and abstracts.
  - Check if the conference you’re submitting to posts previous abstract submissions.
  - Search on the web for articles with abstracts on the topic of your project or on other topics you’re familiar with.

- Use writing skills resources.
  - Check if the conference has a preferred style manual.
  - Search online for free style references, and make use of the many spelling and grammar tools already built into Microsoft programs.
  - A few generally applicable writing tips:
    - Use active voice instead of passive voice.
      e.g.: “We studied 15 patients with ARDs” is much better than “Fifteen patients with ARDs were studied.”
    - Always first define any initials.
      e.g. Registry Site Manager (RSM)
    - Write only one thought per sentence.
    - Eliminate unnecessary words.
    - Ensure that verb tenses are consistent and correct.

- Ask others to review your drafts.
  - Good sources of review include
    - a mentor or someone who has previously had posters and abstracts accepted.
    - physicians and researchers at your institution. They can provide detailed edits and insight into best practices.
    - members of your project team. They can fill in key points and catch gaps in your story.
    - someone outside the project. They can make sure those unfamiliar with your work can still follow your story line.
  - Make sure to have someone review your draft after each round of revisions; fresh eyes are important on each draft.
  - Remember to give reviewers a firm deadline by which you need feedback returned.

- Practice!
  - Like any form of writing, producing good abstracts takes experience and practice.
    - Don’t be afraid to ask for help.
    - Make use of all the resources available to you.
    - Remember, the more times you go through the process, the easier it will get.

Adapted from: “How to Develop and Submit NCDR Poster Abstract” American College of Cardiology: Fine, S.; Kordish, C.; Miller, T.; Verschelden, K.; Casey, P.E.
### Getting Started

- **Check to see if you institution had a standard template they use for poster submissions.**

### Decide on your poster size.

Consider:
- maximum size allowed by the conference.
- maximum size your software can produce (e.g. PowerPoint maximum page size is 56” x 56”).
- maximum size your printing service can produce.

### Decide on your poster orientation.

- Check if the conference requires posters to be either vertical or horizontal.
- Consider which orientation allows for the best arrangement of your content.

### General Tips

**Overall**

Make your poster noticeable and approachable.

- Check that title/subject line is readable from 10 feet away.
- Center a statement, photograph, or diagram to create a focal point.
- Organize sections in a clear, logical flow from introduction to conclusion.
- Include blank space between each section and image.
- Include acknowledgments, your name, and your institutional affiliation.

**Text**

Keep it concise.

- Focus on major findings—do not try to include everything you know.
- Use bulleted lists instead of paragraphs where possible.
- Text should be concise enough to be read in less than 10 minutes.
- Font size should be readable from several feet away.

**Graphs and Figures**

Present graphics that are self-explanatory.

- Include a title or caption with each figure. Include data labels in graphs.
- Check that all titles and labels are in a font readable from several feet away.
- Provide proper attribution for each image. This depends on whether they are in the public domain, copyrighted, for purchase, etc.

**Color and Background**

Use it for a purpose.

- Use color to highlight key points, associate like information, and outline and separate different sections. Do not let color compete with, distract from, or overwhelm your information.
- Keep background colors solid and muted. Avoid overly bright colors or graphics.

See [Resources Section](#) for more detailed design tips, poster examples, and templates.

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Adapted from:

- “Effective Poster Design for Academic Conferences” Louisiana State University: Eggart, M.L
To help attract viewers and conversation, think of your poster as an “open house” for your project.

☐ To attract traffic, bring a bowl of wrapped candy and place it next to your poster.

☐ Wear a nametag that links you to your poster.

☐ Bring handouts that summarize the poster. These allow viewers to take the main points with them.

☐ Provide contact information for follow-up questions, potential funders, etc.

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“Effective Poster Design for Academic Conferences” Louisiana State University: Eggart, M.L
Submit!

Conferences to Consider For Submission

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tr>
<td>NCDR</td>
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Adapted from:
Main References

“How to Develop and Submit NCDR Poster Abstract”

“How Effective Poster Design for Academic Conferences”
Louisiana State University: Eggart, M.L

Additional Resources

Abstract and Poster Design Examples
See companion PowerPoint deck.

Abstract Help
• Summer Institute on Evidence-Based Practice Award-Winning Abstracts and Posters: University of Texas
  http://www.acestar.uthscsa.edu/2013AbstractsWinnersList.asp
• How To Write A Quality Abstract For Publication or Presentation: Unite for Sight
  http://www.uniteforsight.org/global-health-university/abstracts-research
• How to write a good abstract for a scientific paper or conference presentation: Indian Journal of Psychiatry
  http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3136027/

Poster Design Help
• Past Poster Titles accepted to National Cardiovascular Data Registry Conference (NCDR)
• Posters accepted to 25th Annual Institute for Healthcare Improvement Conference: IHI
  http://www.ihi.org/education/IHIOpenSchool/resources/Pages/Posterboards/default.aspx
• Better Posters: A Resource for improving poster presentations
  http://betterposters.blogspot.com/
• How to Create a Research Poster: Poster Basics (NYU)
  http://guides.nyu.edu/c.php?g=276826&p=1846154
• Preparing and Presenting Effective Research Posters: Indian Journal of Psychiatry
  http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1955747/

Poster Templates
• Free poster templates, design and printing help
  http://www.posterpresentations.com/index.html