IntegratedEthics: Ethical Leadership Improvement Project Checklist

This rapid assessment offers questions for IE Program Officers/ VISN Senior Leads or Ethical Leadership Coordinators to consider when planning and implementing their EL improvement projects. Its purpose is to help ensure that the project is meeting the National Center for Ethics in Health Care’s EL program metric, as well as adequately addressing the identified ethics quality gap (“Improvement Opportunity”). Its use is optional, but can help ensure that:

- Resources will be devoted to ethical leadership activities that will prove meaningful to the facility or VISN.
- Project Improvement Opportunity, Goal, and Strategy are aligned.
- Improvement will demonstrate measurable project impact and value.
- The project team has considered the resources that will be required to sustain and spread project activities.

Instructions:
Please read the questions below, and consider whether they describe the current features and goals of your project. If yes, check the corresponding box. If no, revise or expand your project to ensure that it addresses these areas.

Project Selection and Planning:

- Does the project fall under NCEHC’s definition of an “ethical leadership project,” that is, an activity that engages leaders in some way to create a more ethical environment and culture?
- Does the project have adequate leadership engagement to ensure that it will have an impact on the organization’s ethical environment and culture? (i.e., leaders are involved in prioritizing among potential projects, selecting, chartering, designing, or introducing the project)
- Was your improvement opportunity identified by examining one or more quantitative (e.g., IE Staff Survey [IESS]) or qualitative (e.g., focus group) data sources?
- Have you clearly articulated how the improvement opportunity is negatively impacting your facility or VISN?
- Does your improvement goal clearly articulate the desired outcome — the “what” or result desired, as opposed to the “how” or strategy for reaching the goal?
- Will the goal, if met, wholly or partially solve the problem articulated in the improvement opportunity?

Project Implementation:

- Is your strategy for addressing the problem comprehensive in that it includes various activities, such as policy development, education, leadership participation, process standardization, and monitoring?
- Have you clearly laid out your procedures for implementing the strategy?
- Does your plan clearly articulate who will be responsible for implementation and monitoring?
- Does your plan engage stakeholders in planning, implementation and evaluation?
- Is your strategy, if properly executed, likely to meet the project goal(s)?
Project Evaluation:
- Do you have a plan for measuring improvement?
- Do your methods involve collecting data from sources other than the IESS or attendance counts at educational sessions? (e.g., satisfaction surveys, focus groups, pre- and post-tests)
- Will you have any results (including incremental results) to report during this fiscal year?

Project Sustainability:
- Do you have an action plan (including well-defined steps) for sustaining and spreading project activities over the long term, if successful?
- Do you know what future resources (people, time, funding) you will need to perform this work?
- Going forward, what is your facility/VISN leaders’ level of commitment to this project? How will they be involved?
- How will you monitor progress?