SMART and CLEAR checklist

**Specific**

Be specific about what you want to accomplish. Think about this as the mission statement for your goal.

*Ask yourself: Why are you aiming for this goal? Who needs to be involved to achieve the goal? What are you trying to accomplish – don’t be afraid to get very detailed? When do you intend to achieve the goal – set a time-frame. Where are you doing it? Which things are required or stand in the way of achieving the goal?*

**Measurable**

How will you determine that you have achieved the goal? This makes a goal more tangible because it provides a way to measure progress. Data collection efforts needed to measure a goal can be included in that goal’s action plan.

*Ask yourself: What are the sources of information to measure to determine whether a goal has been achieved. What are the specific tasks to be accomplished along the way to the goal? What are the key milestones that when added up will result in the completion of your main goal?*

**Achievable**

What you can do to make the goal attainable and does it require developing new skills and changing attitudes. The goal is meant to inspire motivation, not discouragement.

*Ask yourself: How will the goal be accomplished? Do you/your team/your staff have the tools and skills needed? If not, consider what is required to attain them?*

**Relevant**

Relevance refers to focusing on something that makes sense with the broader national/provincial goals. Your own team may be able to launch a new programme, but if it does not fit in with broader goals, it will not be relevant, and is likely to become isolated and fail to scale up.

*Ask yourself: Is the goal aligned with national and general health policy.*

**Timely**

If it lacks realistic timing, it is not likely to succeed. Providing a target date for deliverables is really important. If the goal will take X months/years to complete, it is useful to define what should be achieved at key time-points on the way. Providing time constraints also creates a sense of urgency.

*Ask yourself: What can be accomplished within each time period? When must the milestones be achieved?*

**Collaborative**

Team/stakeholders will work together to achieve goals. Goals must involve a collaborative network of stakeholders who share the vision that drives momentum and stimulates the completion of the task.

*Ask yourself: With whom? Who is onboard? Who supports the goal? Who is the goal serving? Who are the stakeholders? Who will benefit? Who in power do you need on your team? Which employees and colleagues can help? Who do you need above you? Who do you need below you? Who do you need alongside you? Why do these collaborators matter?*

**Limited**

Goals must be focused and therefore limited in both their scope and duration.

*Ask yourself: When do you start? When will you complete? What are the geographical limits? What organizational and personal limits exist? Are you being realistic? How will I know when the goal is complete? What should not be done in order to achieve this goal?*

**Emotional**

Goals should make a sincere and undeniable emotional connection to your core and the core of health care staff *–* tapping into an energy and passion that you can feel.

*Ask yourself: How does this goal serve my purpose and needs? Am I fully dedicated to this goal’s outcome? How will this goal affect the emotions of the people I manage; the people who manage me; my teammates? Does it feed their needs and purposes? How will this goal affect their personal goals and career plans?*

**Appreciable**

Large goals must be broken down into smaller goals so they can be accomplished more quickly and easily for long-term gain. The must be actionable. Dream big; act small; work hard.

*Ask yourself: What is the next, smallest, most-obvious action? What key performance indicators can I use for metrics? What key milestones exist in the achievement of this goal? Can they be tracked? What other goals will be accomplished on the road to accomplishing this goal?*

**Refinable**

Set goals with a clear objective, but as new situations or information arise, give yourself permission to refine and modify them.

*Ask yourself: What information can I anticipate changing? What (beyond my control) could cause the above not to occur? Would a change in path mean a change in my highest goals? What matters most? What is most likely to go wrong? How will you adapt to the best-case scenario, worst-case scenario and most-likely scenario?*