

THE IMPORTANCE OF SMART GOALS

S M A R T

SPECIFIC	MEASURABLE	ACHIEVABLE	RELEVANT	TIME-BASED
<p>Is the team's goal specific and narrow for more effective planning?</p> <p>Ask the team: "What exactly do we want to accomplish? Why is this important?"</p>	<p>Is the team's goal and progress measurable?</p> <p>Ask the team: "How will we know when we've achieved it? What metrics will we use?"</p>	<p>Is the team's goal able to be accomplished within a certain time frame?</p> <p>Ask the team: "Is this goal within reach? Do we have what we need to achieve it?"</p>	<p>Does the team's goal align with the organizational values and long-term objectives?</p> <p>Ask the team: "Does this goal matter to us? Does it align with our values or bigger plans?"</p>	<p>Does the team's goal have a realistic but ambitious end date to clarify task prioritization and increase motivation?</p> <p>Ask the team: "When will we accomplish this goal?"</p>

✗ VAGUE GOAL

Reduce patient hospital readmission rates.

✓ SMART GOAL

Reduce 30-day hospital readmission rates for patients discharged with heart failure by 15% by April 2026 through a structured post-discharge follow-up program that includes nurse phone check-ins and medication counseling within 7 days of discharge.

S – Specific

Targets 30-day readmissions for heart failure patients

Clearly defines the population (heart failure patients) and the focus (30-day readmissions).

M – Measurable

15% reduction

Quantifies the improvement to be achieved.

A – Achievable

Nurse-led follow-up and medication counseling are feasible interventions

Specifies realistic and feasible actions that align with typical care transition interventions.

R – Relevant

Aligns with goals to improve care transitions and reduce avoidable readmissions

Heart failure readmissions are a common quality and cost concern, aligning with healthcare priorities and likely organizational goals.

T – Time-based

Completion target of April 2026

Sets a clear deadline for completion.

BENEFITS

1 Clarity and Focus

SMART goals break big ideas into clear, actionable steps. They help eliminate ambiguity, which boosts motivation and direction.

2 Realistic Expectations

SMART goals encourage goals that are actually achievable, avoiding burnout or frustration. They balance ambition with practicality.

3 Time Management

SMART goals encourage time-bound elements to create urgency and prevent procrastination. They help with prioritization and deadline planning.