

## Adult learning: some basics

### Planning Basics

1. Start with an **educational needs assessment** –
  - a. What is a needs assessment?
    - i. A systematic process of gathering information and using it to determine the educational interventions to *close the gap* between *what the learners* in your target audience **know and do vs. what the learner should know and do.**
  - b. How do I do a needs assessment? How do I identify the “gap”?
    - i. Start by looking at the existing data for example:
      1. QI data
      2. Morbidity and Mortality Data
      3. Data from Risk Management
      4. Patient chart audits
      5. Data from the specialty society of the members of the target audience
      6. Medical Literature – ask the Baystate librarians for help
      7. Referrals from the primary care providers to our specialists
      8. Data from the Baystate continuing education evaluations particularly look at the answer to “*Do you have questions regarding this topic/subject that are still unanswered?*”
    - ii. You could survey attendees regarding the areas of practice they would like to improve.
    - iii. For additional strategies and data check the needs assessment links in this tool.
2. Develop the **Learner Objectives**
  - a. These are derived from the needs assessment and should be designed to help the participants understand the purpose of the educational activity. The learner objectives help the planning committee members develop an educational program to meet the needs of the target audience .
  - b. The learner objectives are specific and measurable. For tips on how to write learner objectives, see the objectives section of this tool.
3. Select the instructional methods, venue, facilitators
  - a. These choices are made based on what the learner should be able to do as a result of participation in the educational activity. **Consider how to best help the learners meet the learner objectives.**
4. **Outcomes Measures**
  - a. **These are the tools, methods used to assess how effective the educational activity was in improving the knowledge/performance of the participants.** At a minimum, we measure knowledge and performance in practice. Our reach goal is to measure the educational activities effect on improving patient health.
  - b. **Start by using the Baystate standard evaluation form.**
  - c. Talk to the Continuing education staff members about strategies to measure outcomes beyond knowledge/performance

