

Best Practices for Conducting a Retrospective Review

INTRODUCTION

One way to introduce the 7-1-7 target to stakeholders is by conducting a retrospective review – reviewing a small number of recent events against the 7-1-7 target. A retrospective review demonstrates the 7-1-7 review process to stakeholders by illustrating how the 7-1-7 target can be used to evaluate system performance, identify bottlenecks, and propose remedial actions.

Objectives of a retrospective review include:

1. Sensitizing a broad group of stakeholders to the 7-1-7 target
2. Identifying real-world bottlenecks and remedial actions that can immediately begin to improve system performance, thereby demonstrating the value of 7-1-7 as a performance improvement tool
3. Build a consensus around next steps for 7-1-7 implementation, ideally beginning to apply the 7-1-7 approach to future events for performance improvement.

This brief document provides guidance and recommendations for the conduct of a retrospective review based on lessons learned from prior implementation. In the sections below, we provide guidance and recommendations on:

1. Event selection
2. Compiling retrospective data
3. Conducting a retrospective review event
4. Written dissemination of retrospective review results

+ EVENT SELECTION

We recommend including at most five events when conducting a retrospective review. Including a larger number of events delays implementation, and reviewing only a few events is required to demonstrate the 7-1-7 approach to stakeholders. When selecting events for inclusion, we recommend the following considerations:

- Prioritize recent events – data will be easier to locate and results will be more relevant
- Select a variety of event types to engage a broader group of stakeholder (e.g., respiratory, waterborne, viral hemorrhagic fever, animal health)
- Prioritize event types that have been identified as high priority (via STAR or other risk assessments)
- Prioritize event types that are common
- Prioritize events for which an After Action Review has not been done, as there will be greater opportunities to learn from events that have not already been reviewed.

COMPILING RETROSPECTIVE DATA

A small team of individuals should be identified to lead the retrospective review. This activity should ideally include staff from the teams/units responsible for emergency preparedness and response. For each selected event, the team should compile available 7-1-7 data (this can be done using the 7-1-7 Assessment Tool – see [step 2.2 of the Implementation Toolkit](#) for additional details).

Consider reviewing the following data sources when compiling data for the retrospective review:

- Available rapid response team reports
- Data in surveillance or event management systems
- Presentations or meeting minutes from Emergency Operation Center or other response meetings
- Available email communications from rapid response teams or other response coordinators
- Completed Intra or After Action Reviews

Teams may find that some event information cannot be located. This is okay – one of the most important findings from some retrospective reviews has been the lack of available information and the need to routinely capturing and archiving these important data in a structured format.

CONDUCTING A RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW WORKSHOP

A retrospective review event is ideally an in-person event that includes a broad group of stakeholders with different possible roles for 7-1-7 implementation: Coordination, Capture of 7-1-7 Data, Performance Improvement, National Planning, and Communication and Advocacy. The Stakeholder Mapping Tool can be used to identify stakeholders.

A retrospective review workshop should include the following agenda items:

1. Brief opening introductory remarks from a senior 7-1-7 Champion on the objectives of the retrospective review
2. A brief presentation introducing the 7-1-7 approach, timeliness metrics, and targets.
3. A 10-minute presentation describing each event (see the 7-1-7 Event Review Slide Template) followed by 10 minutes of discussion on the bottlenecks and proposed remedial actions for each event.
4. A session where attendees can review the proposed list of remedial actions and identify those actions that should be initiated immediately and those actions that should be prioritized for financing in the next annual planning cycle.
5. A session where attendees discuss their feedback on the experience of applying the 7-1-7 approach, and their interest in using the 7-1-7 approach for future public health events.
6. A brief session with closing remarks from the senior 7-1-7 champion, summarizing key results and next steps.

This retrospective review workshop can be done as either a half-day or full-day event. A full-day event will allow for a more participatory approach to the workshop – for example providing participants more time to discuss bottlenecks, propose remedial actions, and vote on which remedial actions should be prioritized for implementation.

→ DISSEMINATE RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW WORKSHOP RESULTS IN A POLICY BRIEF

After the workshop, develop a 2-3 page policy brief that contains:

1. A summary box on the first page highlighting the key findings and priority actions that emerged from the workshop
2. A brief background section that describes:
 - the 7-1-7 target and timeliness metrics, so someone unfamiliar with 7-1-7 can understand the content of the brief
 - the date of the workshop and stakeholders who participated
3. Findings
 - the 7-1-7 timeliness metrics for each event
 - a prioritized list of bottlenecks that were identified
4. Recommendations
 - Both immediate and longer-term remedial actions agreed upon for prioritization at the workshop
 - Any next steps agreed upon for further implementation of the 7-1-7 approach