

## Case Study 1

**Work with your group to design a randomized evaluation of the following program:**

*Imagine that you work for a nonprofit healthcare delivery system that wants to test the use of small financial incentives for first-time primary care visits for a complex needs population. This organization offers a full spectrum of medical and social services for people with complex needs covered under Medicaid and for those “dually eligible” for both Medicaid and Medicare (Duals), but have encountered difficulty getting Duals to attend an initial primary care visit.*

*They plan to provide a small financial incentive of \$15 for a dual-eligible patient’s first primary care visit. This organization serves 14,000 people in total and 10,000 Duals. At this point, the organization only has the budget to provide financial incentives to 5,000 people.*

### **Part 1: Forming the research question**

- 1) What is the issue?
  
  
  
  
  
- 2) What is the intervention you will study?
  
  
  
  
  
- 3) What outcomes could you measure? Which outcomes do you care about most?
  
  
  
  
  
- 4) Who is your study population?
  
  
  
  
  
- 5) Taking these together, what is your research question? Typically, RCT research questions take the form of, “What is the impact of [intervention] on [primary outcome] among [the study population]?”

### **Part 2: Diving into research design**

- 1) In order to study this program, how would you suggest the organization allocates the intervention?
  
  
  
  
  
- 2) Who is the treatment group? Who represents the counterfactual?

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3) Assuming implementation is successful, why will we be confident in the results?

### Part 3: Getting into the details

1) What data sources may contain data on your primary outcomes of interest (see Part 1, Q3 above)?

2) What process metrics do you want to measure to make sure the intervention is implemented as planned? What would you measure to make sure program implementation is successful? How would you know if the program implementation was not successful?

3) What is your sample size? How many people are in the treatment group? The comparison group?

4) Whose buy-in do you need to get to run an evaluation? Who are the stakeholders? How will you communicate to them about the goals of the evaluation and get all involved on the same page?

### Part 4: Creating a plan for sharing results and scaling impact

Next steps would involve working with an evaluator or researcher and:

- (i) having conversations about feasibility (political feasibility based on stakeholder input and study feasibility based on sample size and design considerations)
- (ii) determining the appropriate research design (e.g. randomization protocol and consent process)
- (iii) getting IRB approval
- (iv) piloting to ensure the RCT runs smoothly
- (v) implementing the study and
- (vi) sharing results to generate policy impact.

Let's say the program is successful. Who do you want to share results with? What are potential routes to policy impact?