NaRCAD

National Resource Center
for Academic Detailing

Field Testing Key Messages

A reference guide to ensure your messages are clear, relevant, and realistic.

The Importance of Impactful Key Messages

Action-based key messages are a "key" component of supporting and encouraging sustainable clinician behavior change. In order for detailers to work effectively with clinicians to produce these clinical behavior changes, key messages must be clear, concise, direct, measurable and relevant to the clinician's work. Messages that are difficult to understand and require clarification will take time away from discussing the evidence and lessen the impact of academic detailing sessions.

Examples of Strong Key Messages

1. Take a sexual history to identify patients who might benefit from PrEP.

2. Use non-opioid treatment as the first line for acute or chronic pain.

3. Use supportive language when patients disclose trauma/ACEs, reflecting gratitude for sharing in difficult conversations.

Field Testing Key Messages to Predict Clinician Response

Field testing your key messages provides an opportunity for your program to understand how clinicians may respond. Field testing allows for stakeholders to review and provide feedback on what you've created, including whether messages you have crafted are clear, relevant, and realistic for clinicians to consider adapting. Detailers, clinicians, and subject matter experts are valuable sources of insight for your materials development process.

Field Testing Process

I. Selecting Your Field Testers

Selecting a group of as many as 10 diverse field testers with different backgrounds and clinical knowledge allows for varied and nuanced feedback.

a. ***Academic detailers*** should have relevant experience and/or relevant clinical backgrounds that would be beneficial for reviewing key messages.

b. ***Clinicians or subject matter experts*** should have relevant clinical backgrounds and preferably prior experience in receiving academic detailing visits.

II. Developing Field Testing Questions

The questions that you ask field testers should include the following assessment areas:

a. **Clarity** – Does the key message make sense? Is it too long or too short?
b. **Relevance** – Is the key message relevant to the clinical work of the provider?
c. **Likelihood of Adoption** – How likely would a provider be to implement this key message's actionable request in their work?
d. **Any Additional Feedback**

III. Conducting the Field Testing

It is recommended that you use a field-testing worksheet to streamline the feedback from field testers. Please see the examples at the end of this document of an **e-mail template requesting field testing feedback** and the **field-testing worksheet**. You may choose to send multiple iterations of key message drafts to your field testers. Depending on the field testing, compensation may be warranted.

IV. Compiling Field-Testing Responses

After receiving completed field-testing worksheets, data should be compiled on each key message. This will allow for you to identify common themes from the feedback as you start the key message revision process. This can be done in a spreadsheet or a table to keep feedback organized.

V. Creation of a Field Test Summary Report

Feedback may vary across your field testers and it is useful for those responsible for materials development to see a holistic summary of their responses. Creating a report can also be useful when presenting information to leadership.

Field Testing Examples and Templates

E-Mail Template for Requesting Field Test Feedback

Use this email template to explain your project and obtain feedback from field testers.

Hi [Field Tester Name],

I hope you're doing well! Our team is working on a project to develop an academic detailing curriculum focused on teaching clinicians about [information about your academic detailing project] and how to use that information to help their patients.

We're looking to receive informal feedback from our colleagues on the key messages that we've created. Please take about 10-15 minutes to provide your feedback to the questions within the worksheet attached and send back to [staff member] at [staff member e-mail address] by [deadline]. If you believe someone else on your team is better suited to help with this, please let me know!

As always, we appreciate your support.

My best,

[Staff Member]

Example of Key Message Field Test Worksheet

Repeat this worksheet template for every key message you have. The following uses NaRCAD's Adverse Childhood Experiences materials as an example.

Thank you for participating in field testing for our [Academic Detailing Project Name] campaign. Please provide your feedback on each key message below and send back to [staff member's e-mail address] by [deadline].

Key Message 1: Use supportive language when patients disclose trauma/ACEs, reflecting gratitude for sharing in difficult conversations.

- Is the wording of this key message clear? If no, why not?

- Is this key message relevant to front line clinicians in primary care? If no, why not?

- Would most clinicians be likely to adopt this key message? If no, why not?

- Feedback on message (wording changes for clarity, outstanding questions, etc.):