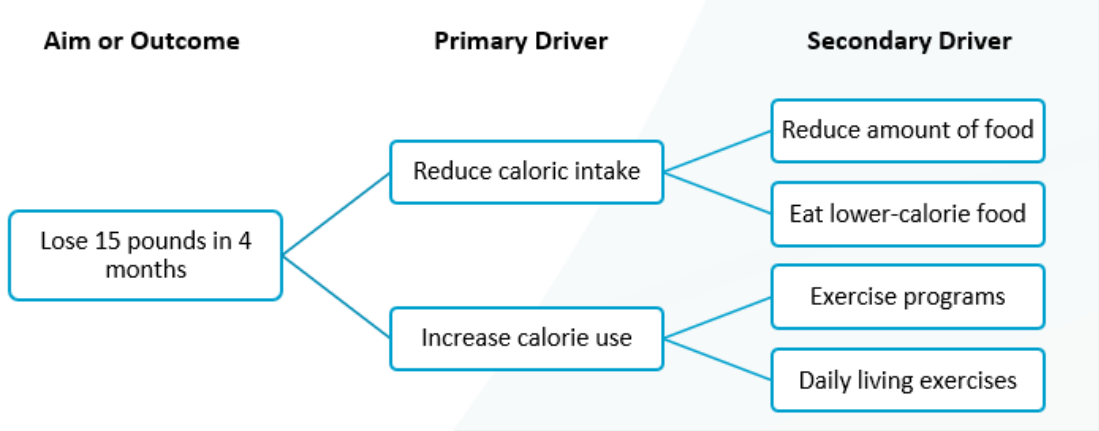
Driver Diagram – Instruction

Why would I use this tool?

A Driver Diagram helps translate a high-level improvement goal into a logical set of related goals and sub-projects. The tool helps organize change concepts and ideas as a team answers the question "what changes can we make that will result in an improvement?" Driver Diagrams are used to test theories about cause and effect and are meant to be updated throughout the project.

When would I use a Tree Diagram instead of Driver Diagram?

A Tree Diagram is employed when answering the question: "what are we trying to accomplish?" A Tree Diagram can help break the problem, plan, or opportunity down into a manageable size. On the other hand, a Driver Diagram is used to answer the question: "what changes can we make that will result in improvement?" and helps a team identify categories of change as well as the specific changes that can be made to bring about quality improvement. An example of a Driver Diagram:



Driver diagrams explained

Aim or Outcome: Driver Diagrams start with a clearly defined and measurable goal. To help define the improvement goal, teams can refer to Ontario Health's Fishbone Diagram instruction sheet.

Primary Drivers: The overall aim is linked to those factors that are believed to have a direct impact. For example, in order to lose weight, we need to reduce caloric intake and increase effective caloric use. These are referred to as primary drivers because they drive the achievement of your main outcome.

Secondary Drivers: To have an effect on primary drivers, we need to carry out clearly defined actions, namely: reduce the amount of food, eat lower calorie food, join an exercise program, and increase our daily living activities (i.e., take the stairs instead of the elevator).

Ontario Health

Quality Improvement Steps

How do I use this tool?

1) Convene a meeting with the improvement team and content matter experts
2) Start by identifying a clearly defined goal
3) Brainstorm "What changes can we make that will result in an improvement?"
4) Cluster the ideas together to see if any groups of ideas represent a common driver
5) Expand the groups to see if new drivers come to mind
6) Logically link together the groups into a driver diagram format
7) Decide which drivers and interventions you want to measure and add those to the diagram

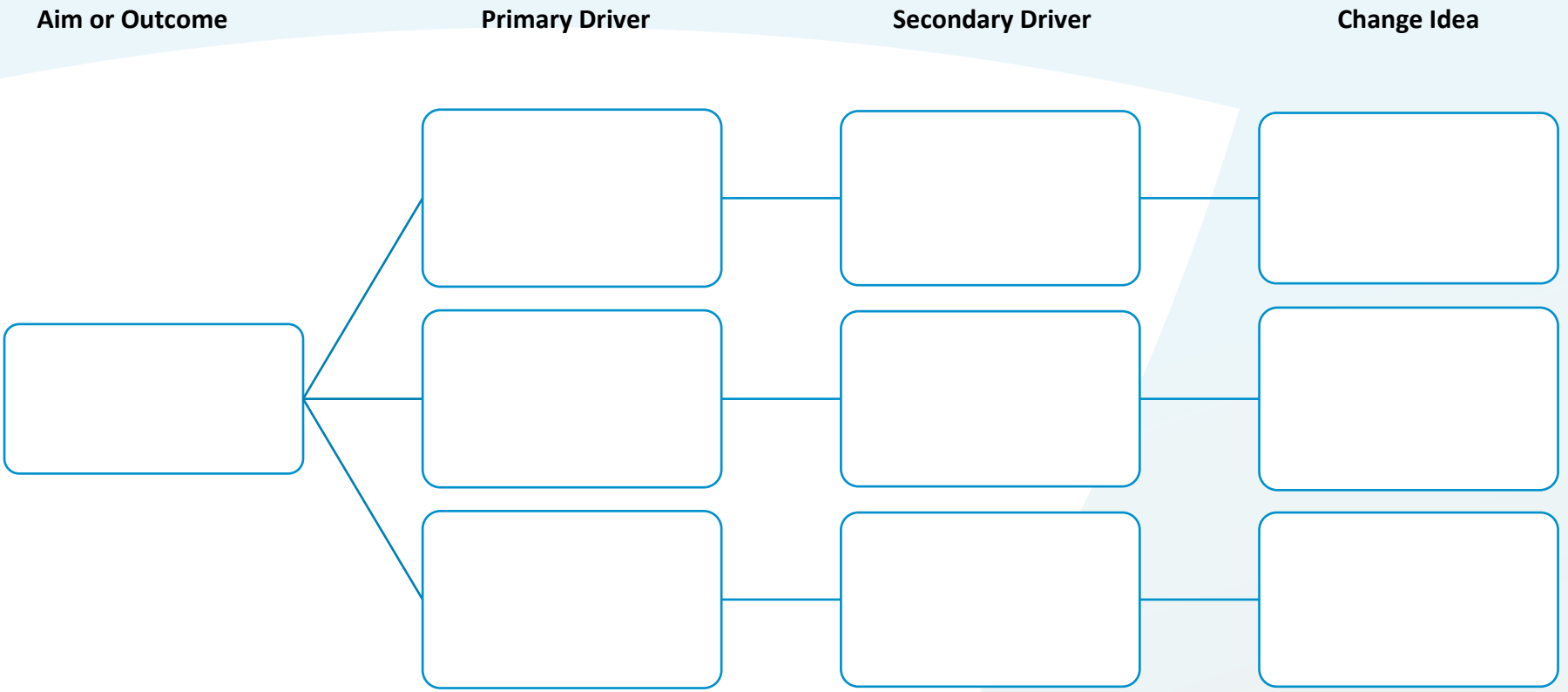
What do I need to use this tool?

Materials	Timing	Setup
• Driver Diagram template • Pen and/or pencil	Driver Diagrams are live tools and will change over time as you make changes to your system.	Before beginning a Driver Diagram, it is important to be clear about the aim/ objective of the improvement project. Complete the tool as a team.

What tips and tricks will be useful in facilitating the use of this tool?

- A Driver Diagram will represent the problem as seen by the group and a way to communicate the change strategy to others
- Work backwards from change concepts if that helps. Please see Ontario Health's *Change Concepts & Ideas* primer
- The drivers in the Driver Diagram should form the foundation of your measurement framework
- Creating a Driver Diagram with a team ensures that all team members understand the goals and how they can contribute to achieving them
- Driver Diagrams will vary from place to place – there is no definitive "right answer" as your situation may be very different from that of other organizations

Driver Diagram Template – Tool



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