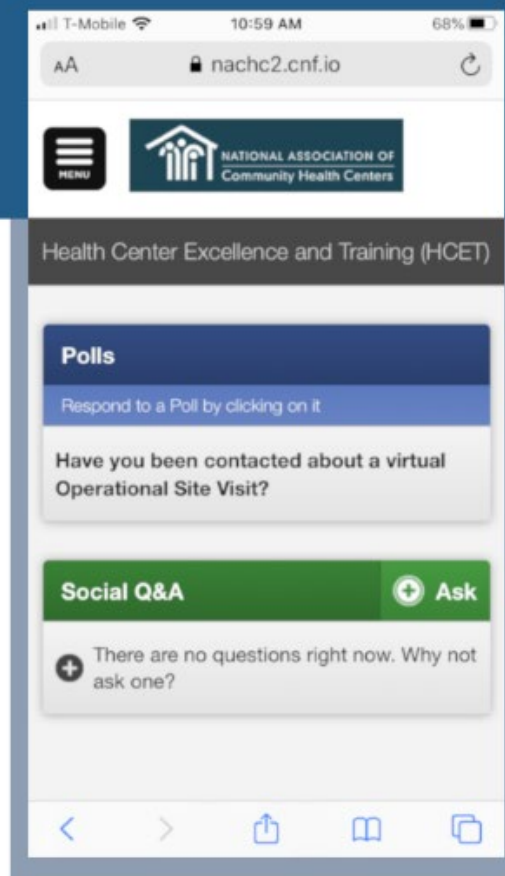


# How to Use Digitell Polls: Staff



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
Community Health Centers

## How to Utilize Polls Effectively in Digitell: For Staff

Polling is the most significant means to be interactive in the Digitell player. However, creating effective polling questions requires some foresight and clarity about the purpose of the polls. You may be involved with helping speakers create polling questions for their presentations, as well as creating the polls within Conf.io and embedding them in the final slidedeck. Here are some tips to help create both effective polls and deliver them in the live session.

### Understanding the Purpose of Polls

Adding a poll does not guarantee an increase in participant interaction. You may need to coach a speaker about the nature of their polls. Here are a few ways to make polls more successful:

1. **Avoid asking questions that are too simplistic.** If there's a good possibility that the audience will all answer correctly, the question is too weak to be effective.
2. **Ask questions about facts sparingly.** The suggestion of being tested rubs participants the wrong way. It's better to focus on judgments rather than knowledge of facts.
3. **Use multiple choice questions as "pulse-taking" only if you want to use this as a springboard.** Questions about "how many of you do X" should lead to further discussion about best practices or obstacles or problem-solving. If one gives the impression of simply polling for polling's sake, then the polls lack a clear purpose. This is not a universal rule—obviously one can use these questions as ice-breakers as well. But be clear about *the poll's relation to the presentation's objectives*.
4. **Employ short answer questions as a means for participants to brainstorm.** One of the most effective ways polls have been employed in our trainings is to solicit ideas from the audience—have them create and share objectives, goals, strategies, and solutions, then the speaker can pick out certain ideas for further discussion.

### Understanding the Limitations of Polls

You should be aware of the four types of polls offered by Conf.io:

- Multiple choice / Multiple response
- Short answer
- Numerical Average
- Brainstorming (in beta, so not recommended)

*Conferences i/o* polls have certain limitations you should be aware of:

1. Conf.io does not allow for "ranking" or use of a Likert scale.
2. Overly wordy questions are not very effective, as it takes too long for participants to respond. There are also character limits for questions and answers, **so authors need to be succinct.**
3. There is no way to have an "other" multiple choice response that allows for short answers. **If the speaker wants to explore the "Other" responses, the speaker (or moderator) should ask participants to use the Chat or Social Q&A.**
4. If one selects the box indicating the question has a correct answer, the correct response will be highlighted in the participant's view (giving folks the answer). **Simply have the speaker reinforce the correct answer in her discussion.**

5. The display of the results can be tricky for short answers with “Word Cloud” as the display. We have seen exactly **one group** follow directions to answer only in one word, which is necessary for the Word Cloud to make sense. If a speaker chooses Word Cloud, then the speaker or the moderator **must ensure that participants can respond in one-word** (which is tricky in itself) **and prepare to provide explicit instructions on how they should answer**. Other than a creative display, this type of response does not typically generate actionable results to respond to during a session, and it is recommended to use this type of poll sparingly.
6. **The List display generally works best.** However, the list is cumulative, with new lines appearing with each new answer. One has the option to allow for one response from each, or multiple responses. **Consider limiting short answer responses to one answer, as this will be easier to interpret and discuss.**
7. Some of the display options for short answer are not trustworthy. “Thought Bubbles,” for example, has not appeared in the embedded PPT (though it appears in the moderator’s view). Stick with List as the display option (unless you are willing to spend effort on a Word Cloud).
8. Polls take more much more time in a virtual session than a live raising of hands. Plan for a poll to take a minimum of 02:30 minutes just to read the poll, provide instruction, and obtain results. Short answers will eat up time, and the speaker’s discussion will eat up even more. **Be realistic about how many polls one can fit into a presentation.**

## Creating Your Polls

While speakers create the polls, NACHC staff will create the polls in the *conferences i/o* platform. The best way to open the polls is using an “active content” slide that is embedded in the speaker’s PowerPoint. When the speaker opens that slide in the live session, the polling responses will appear ‘real-time’ within the slidedeck. Participants will answer the polls, and the answers populate on the slide. This allows the speaker to see the results directly. Otherwise a moderator will have to feed the speaker the responses, which can be disruptive (though not impossible).

Here are some suggestions on ways to simplify this process:

1. The speaker should send a session’s polls to NACHC staff by **creating “dummy” slides that shows each polling question**, the choices (if applicable), and an indication of how the speaker wants the results to display. Here is an example:

## Poll Question

- Which of the following best describes your role?
  - Chief Executive Officer
  - Chief Operating Officer
  - Chief Administrative Officer
  - Chief Financial Officer
  - Clinical / Operations Management
  - Quality Improvement
  - Other

Multiple-Choice Poll Question  
Results display in pie chart

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2. **The speaker places the dummy slide in the place where it will appear in the final slide deck.** This will serve as a placeholder for NACHC staff to indicate where to place the actual embedded content slide, which looks like this:

Live Content Slide

When playing as a slideshow, this slide will display live content

Poll: How do you currently measure performance? Enter one word to describe how you measure performance in one or more of these areas: clinical, operational, financial, other.

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NACHC staff will create the polls in Conf.io, embed the live content slides in the PPT, and return the PowerPoint deck to the speaker with the polling slides embedded.

Note: If you (as the staff lead) are creating the polls in Conf.io, you should provide feedback about the polls or the display to the speaker (i.e. if something doesn't seem right, or is not straight forward, ambiguous wording, a mathematical symbol that seems wrong, etc). You may also have to modify polls to make them work (e.g., because of character limits).

3. **The speaker must download the *conferences i/o* add-on to his computer.** The polls will not open unless she has the add-on ***on the computer she will use for the session***. There is a download for both Windows and Mac.  
Here are the links:  
Windows" <https://help.conferences.io/support/solutions/articles/5000714066-getting-started-downloading-and-installing>

4. Mac <https://help.conferences.io/support/solutions/articles/5000693430-installing-and-upgrading-the-conferences-i-o-mac-app>

## Delivering the Polls

The opening of the polls in the live session generally works smoothly. However, the way that the session is set up technologically requires speakers to adjust their delivery.

1. **Have speakers test the polls when you both are in the Digitell tech check.** Always open the polls and see if the content is active. In general, if a poll doesn't open, the PowerPoint add-on is not on the speaker's computer. If polls are working on the moderator's computer, but not the speaker's, the moderator can open the PowerPoint and give the speaker control of her computer screen. This has been an effective way to handle this issue.
2. **Either the speaker or the moderator should provide a brief explanation of how the polls work** (for example, where they are located in the Digitell player). Ideally, the session moderator will do this at the beginning of a session.
3. A speaker should not expect answers to appear immediately (see comment above). There is significant lag time between opening a poll and seeing results (around 30 seconds, on average) that will lead to "dead air" or silence. **Suggest that speakers plan to use that time constructively** by answering questions or reflecting on ideas just presented, or for the moderator to verbally coach participants on where to locate the poll and how to respond.
4. If polls are not appearing to participants, the speaker or moderator should suggest two things:
  - a. **Refresh their player**
  - b. **Request support** (both of these options are located at the bottom of the screen of the Digitell player).
5. If participants are not using the polls (but instead are using chat or Social Q&A), then the moderator or speaker should **reinforce how to use the polls**. The speaker will not be able to see the chat or Social Q&A, and those answers will not show up in the polling results at the end of the session. We have found that participants need to be reminded of how to answer the polling questions. This can also be done by the moderator.
6. If polls do not work (even when manually opened), **ask participants to use the Chat or Social Q&A features**. This is generally enough information for you to proceed. The moderator will provide the speaker with a summary of the results.
7. If on a Mac running Catalina, the session moderator will have to open the polls manually, and verbally **feed the results to the speaker**. In general, this has worked well, but the speaker needs to understand that she is "flying blind" with regards to polls, chat, and Social Q&A.

## Resources

Promising Practice: During one of our recent virtual training events, a speaker utilized polling to replace an activity she typically did in an in-person training. The results were so positive that she intends to utilize this approach going forward, regardless of training modality (in-person or virtual).

This is how it worked:

1. The speaker reviewed the core content utilizing PPT slides. In this case, she was speaking to setting organizational goals – starting very big picture and then walking participants through the steps to implement.
2. Upon completion of the overview, she got the participants engaged through using an open-ended polling questions.
3. The first question started off with the big picture concept, asking participants to indicate an organizational goal at their own health center – specifically around “access” (utilizing an open-ended polling response).
  - a. The speaker commented on responses as they came in, noted which may or may not be an organizational goal and/or how to improve upon specific responses.
  - b. Once responses were complete (or slowed in the rate they were coming in), the speaker selected one organizational goal from the participant responses to utilize as a sample to move forward with. In this case, “Increase Access for pediatric patients in our service area” was selected as the sample to continue to move the exercise forward.
4. The next polling question walked the participants through the next step of the process, moving the organizational goal to an operational goal, and utilizing an open-ended polling question.
  - a. She repeated the process of commenting on responses as they came in, providing feedback and recommendations, and then selecting one response from the list to use as the example to move into the next step of the process; “Hours of operation to include weekend hours”.
5. This cascading process continued through 3 more steps, ending with potential barriers to the process.

This process kept the participants engaged by putting the process the speaker outlined in the beginning of the event into practice with a real scenario from a health center, utilizing the feedback the participants provided. Even if the participant’s specific example was not selected as the one to move the exercise forward, they were receiving live feedback on their specific responses as the speaker talked through the poll responses when they came in.

NOTE: This process utilized 5 cascading steps and 5 polling questions. This was a very intentional use of polls to let participants practice implementing the content they learned in the session. It was also time consuming – in this instance, the time was well spent with deliberate questions and resulting conversation used as a learning experience. As you are developing your education session, keep the timing in mind as you plan for use of polls; either as stand-alone questions or as a cascading exercise as the one above.

Sample Slides for Cascading Exercise Using Polls:

### Let's Talk Patient Satisfaction and Engagement

- Staffing
- Access
- **Patient Satisfaction and Engagement**
- Staff Satisfaction and Engagement
- Time effective
- Community
- Facility

Think about an **organizational goal** focused on patient satisfaction and engagement. You'll enter your organizational goal on the next slide.

### Let's Talk Patient Satisfaction and Engagement

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Now think about how you would translate the organizational goal we just discussed into an **operational goal**. You'll enter your operational goal on the next slide.


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Slide 1: Set the stage with the first question. Provide feedback on responses provided.

Slide 2: Select one response from the first polling question to ask the second polling question. Provide feedback on responses provided.

### Let's Talk Patient Satisfaction and Engagement

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Now define the **Outcomes/Metric** that will show that your center has met the goals. You'll enter the outcomes on the next slide.

### Let's Talk Patient Satisfaction and Engagement

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What is an **Initiative** that will help you achieve the outcomes that you have identified? You'll enter an initiative on the next slide.


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Slide 3: Select one response from the second Polling question to ask the next question about. Provide feedback on response provided.

Slide 4: Select response from the third polling Question to ask the fourth polling question. Provide feedback on responses.

### Let's Talk Patient Satisfaction and Engagement

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What are some **Barriers** that may stand in the way of achieving your goals? You'll enter a barrier on the next slide.

### Do you have any questions?

- Enter them into the Q&A now.




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Slide 5: Select response from the fourth polling Question to ask this final question about. Provide to responses provided.

Slide 6: Final step: Recap and summarize the full activity to wrap it up. Respond to any feedback remaining Q&A.

Note: There was a Conf.io live content slide with the actual polling question for participants to respond to after each one of the slides above. The speaker reviewed her slide (above) and then advanced to the live polling question for participants to respond to and she could provide feedback. After selecting one response to move the activity forward with – the moderator typed the selected

response in the chat box so that it was a visual reminder of what they would be responding to in the next question. Then the speaker moved forward to the next slide with the next step, explained it, and moved forward to the next live content slide for participants to respond to.