Using a Quality Council to Advance Performance Management and Quality Improvement

Q&A Session

You did address this earlier in your talk and showed us how you are measuring performance management, but are you using any other metrics like customer satisfaction surveys for evaluating performance management?

Stacy Wenzl: Yes; we have a rigorous customer satisfaction system in place, so those resources are offered through our data center. In our agency, we do have strong data support, we have survey processes, and we have a standard set of customer service questions that we require all programs to offer. I think the requirement is that all programs will do a customer assessment annually or at minimum every 2 years. Because we standardize a set of questions and it goes through our data center, we are able to aggregate all that information and look at the agency-wide picture of customer satisfaction because we have those standard data elements. So as an agency, we can look at it and say that timeliness is an issue, for example. We do look at customer service measures, but I don't believe these are part of the indicators we provide to the public. However, I think it would be a great idea to provide that because we do have that information.

Grace Gorenflo: I would like to add that there is a discussion thread about customer satisfaction surveys on the PHQIX Community Forum, and I would encourage you to look at that. One of the resources you'll see is from the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, and I would encourage everyone to remember that customers are also internal. When you are engaged in quality improvement (QI), sometimes you are doing QI for your internal customers—your own staff.

Does a Quality Council member participate in each of your projects, or are programs expected to learn methods through training?

Stacy Wenzl: We are kind of in a transition period, so what we have done is assigned a quality council member as a coach who is there to be a conduit to provide technical assistance and link to other staff who have more extensive training as needed. The idea is that we empower staff to be able to implement projects on their own. By and large, every project has identified a lead who is the content expert in the program, but we assign a quality council coach to help them. The coach would be a representative in their division who has more direct linkage to technical assistance and training through the quality council. We are building that model, so it's a little bit of both.

Does the Spokane Regional Health District post your performance dashboard on your website, or are the data used for staff viewing only?

Stacy Wenzl: On our website (www.srhd.org), there is a link to our main data sources and our main data set (Spokane Counts), and the performance measures are linked to Spokane Counts. So it's a little bit buried and not up front to the public, but it is publicly available.

Do you have a reference for the graphic on QI Council focus on slide 28?

Stacy Wenzl: I believe we developed this internally, and it was adapted from the socioecological model, if people are familiar with that. So it looks at how you'll get work done from individual, to policy, to community. Each of these areas is a level of the model that we address, whether it's individual skill building or culture development.

Can you share the video that was viewed?

Stacy Wenzl: There is not a link to the video, so I'll have to get approval to disseminate it.

How long did it take to reach your current level of QI?

Stacy Wenzl: The quality council started in 2007, but our first emphasis on quality started in 2002 with standards, so well over a decade. This is not a quick process or a quick journey. Maybe some organizations can make it happen faster, but I still feel we have opportunities to grow and improve. Think of it as a journey and a learning opportunity the whole way.

Grace Gorenflo: I would emphasize that it really does take time. To be where Spokane Regional Health District is really requires a culture shift. On Stacy's slide where she talks about the steps to evolving, she discusses changing culture. Along those lines, I would recommend the National Association of County and City Health Officials' Roadmap to a Culture of QI, so that's another resource when you think about this. It does take time, but it's achievable.