The purpose of the study was to examine factors related to client satisfaction in the Prentiss County WIC clinic and identify potential barriers to participation through a six-month project initiated by the Mississippi State Department of Health and the Community Practice for Public Health Improvement (COPPHI). The study examined clinic wait times, clinic environment, staff attitudes towards clients, quality of care, client satisfaction, and client service practices in the WIC clinic from the perspective of WIC participants.

Baseline Needs Assessment- Plan

The team developed a plan to improve client satisfaction by streamlining and reorganizing the WIC clinic processes to make it more user-friendly and as efficient as possible. The goals of the project were to:

- Identify strengths and best practices
- Identify areas of weakness for improvement
- Establish baseline and track goals over time

TEAM CHARTER:

- Participation rates remained relatively low in Prentiss County compared to other counties in the same district (76%).
- The quality improvement (QI) team included a QI coordinator, chief nurse, district nutritionist, district administrator, warehouse clerk and a senior epidemiologist as members of the team.
- Target population was low-income pregnant and postpartum women and children (age 0 to 5) at risk of inadequate nutrition.
- QI tools and techniques used included brainstorming, force-field analysis, cause-effect diagram, process flow chart, dashboard for audit/feedback, client satisfaction surveys, and Gantt chart.

AIM:

- To increase the percentage of “satisfied” clients from a baseline of 37% to 55% in response to overall satisfaction from 3 months from the last intervention.
- 60% at 4 months.
- 75% at 6 months.

Baseline Needs Assessment- Results

The results of the 40 needs assessments were analyzed. In general, participants were appreciative of the WIC clinic's current efforts and care, and they gave a favorable evaluation in their pre-survey responses. However, the respondents cited that the staff attitudes and behaviors had an impact on their overall “client satisfaction”. This desire for “client satisfaction” was uniformly present in the majority of the clients surveyed.

Project Goals

- Develop an Improvement Theory
- Conduct a needs assessment survey was conducted during the spring of 2013.
- To increase the percentage of “satisfied” clients from a baseline of 37% to 55% in response to overall satisfaction from 3 months from the last intervention.
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Methods

Plan (P):

- Two focus groups were conducted with WIC clinic staff to explore the areas of improvement.
- The overall flow of the WIC clinic and pre-intervention client satisfaction survey were reviewed and discussed. The project team brainstormed possible causes for low customer satisfaction.
- One area that district administrators have communicated as an area of frustration is lack of full staffing causing increased wait times in the WIC clinic. The pre-intervention survey revealed bad attitudes and disrespectful employees as causes leading to poor client satisfaction.
- Identify Potential Solutions

- Provide training to WIC clinic staff on the use of new electronic SIPR system to reduce wait times.
- Develop “courtesy phrases” for WIC clinic staff to use when clients visit the clinic.
- Reassign staff responsibilities.

Conclusions

The WIC clinic QI intervention in Prentiss County is essential because it provided a framework for evaluating and changing the areas that need improvement. Specifically, staff participated to use “courtesy phrases” that demonstrated the value of public health interventions. This support ensures sustainability of the various motivations of employees, coupled with awareness for the need to promote the waiting environment with consistent messaging and integrated activities. The QI process will give us a better understanding of what interventions and strategies actually improve customer satisfaction.

Contact Information

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