



Volume 1, Issue 15

September/October 2010

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Bringing Them to the Table

An important component of the Continuous Quality Improvement process is making certain that we have members serving on our CQI teams that are representative of our clients, resource parents, community partners, and contract agencies.

Under the new COA PQI Standards there is a real push in assuring that these stakeholders and partners are brought to the table in order to engage them in the solving some of the issues the Department may face. The State CQI Team is in process of identifying a contract provider, resource parent, and post-custody youth to join that team.

The Office of Performance and Quality Improvement is also encouraging regions and facilities to bring these individuals to the table. The information they can provide has proven to be of great value.

While we do surveys on an annual basis to gage our stakeholder and partner's satisfaction with the services we offer, engaging them into a full quality improvement process is our goal. This will allow us to use the knowledge they possess to do some real work around improving the effectiveness of what we do with the children and families that we work with on a day-to-day basis.

Several regions already have Cross Functional Teams that are made up of contract providers and Department staff members. However, many of these teams have become information sharing sessions, and less about working through actual issues in a true CQI fashion. While information sharing is a very important piece of what we do, these meetings are not considered actual CQI meetings unless data is being reviewed with goals and action steps being developed.

If you have any questions about bringing stakeholders and partners to the CQI table for your region or facility, please contact your local CQI Coordinator.



A Real Ice on the Sidewalk Story

The Northeast Region had a very snowy and icy winter season. This snow and ice contributed to a number of work related injuries.

The region had reviewed this issue in one of their CQI Teams. A question was brought up as to who was actually responsible for clear-

ing the sidewalks and parking lots of snow and ice. What the region discovered was that it was not in the contract of the building owner to clean the sidewalks and parking lots of snow and ice.

The referral was then sent to the State CQI Team for a response. What the State

CQI Team discovered was that as of the current budget year it is the responsibility of the company who has the janitorial contract for that building to clean the sidewalks of any snow or ice. It is then the responsibility of the Department of General Services to remove any snow or ice
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*“All change is not
growth, as all
movement is not
forward.”*

- Ellen Glasgow -



Social Worker's Corner

Social Work is a profession, not merely a vocation. One of the reasons social work is a profession is we have our own Code of Ethics, just as physicians, attorneys and other professionals do.

According to the National Association of Social Worker's (NASW) Code of Ethics all Social Workers have an ethical responsibility to our profession. We meet that ethical responsibility by maintaining the integrity of the profession and conduct evaluation and research in order to assure that we are working as effectively as possible with the children and families we serve.

One of the primary ways you as a Social Worker can meet the ethical responsibility to our profession is to actively participate in the agency's CQI process.

The NASW Code of Ethics discusses how we should work toward the promotion and maintenance of high standards of practice. There are three ways that DCS strives to meet these high standards.

The first way we do this is by using the CQI process. CQI teams meet on a regular basis and utilize data that we have collected to determine if we are meeting the standards we need to meet, or not. If we are not, then the team's role is to brainstorm ideas around how to improve our practice, set improvement goals, and action steps on how to meet those goals.

There are many forms of data available out there for teams to utilize. The Department has many different kinds of reports on performance available to teams through their local CQI Coordinators. These reports often come from TFACTS (formerly TNKids), Chapin-Hall re-

ports, and Quality Service Review data.

We also have data available to us from the numerous surveys that the Department conducts each year. These surveys are a great way to gage the satisfaction of our stakeholders with the services we provide and how those services are delivered.

A second way that we evaluate the work that we do is by conducting on-going reviews. The Department conducts Case Process Reviews. These reviews are meant to determine compliance in meeting the documentation required to meet standards and to determine the quality of the visitation between the FSW and the child and family.

The Department also conducts the Quality Review Tool in order to determine the over all quality of the case work that is being done with each family.

Quality Service Reviews, Title IV-E audits, and Child and Family Service Reviews are just a few other reviews that we use to make certain that we are meeting the standards of our profession.

Finally, accreditation is a way to demonstrate that we are meeting a very high level of practice standards. The Tennessee Department of Children's Services is one of the few state child welfare systems in the nation to be fully accredited by the Council on Accreditation. The standards that the Department has to meet in order to maintain accreditation sets us above and apart from other child welfare agencies.

It takes a lot of hard work to maintain accreditation, conduct numerous reviews, and keep a CQI program running effectively. However, this is an important piece of what we do as a Department to assure that we meet high standards on a daily basis. We do this, because it is the right thing to do.

A Real Ice on the Sidewalk Story (continued)

from the parking lots of buildings. The only exception to this is for the new Knox County DCS office. In Knox County it was built in to the building owner's contract that he be responsible for removing all snow and ice from the parking lot and driveway to the building.

So, this is one time when an "ice on the sidewalk" CQI referral was very appropriate, as this issue was tied to the number of employee accident reports filed for the region during that quarter, and was beginning to be a risk management issue. The State CQI Team would like to thank everyone who assisted in getting this issue resolved.

A Day in the Life of a CQI Coordinator

What does a CQI Coordinator do?

- A CQI Coordinator is a lifeline to your region.
- A CQI Coordinator is responsible for working with the management teams in each region around making performance improvements.
- A CQI Coordinator is responsible for assuring that all new employees are trained on CQI and that existing employees complete their annual CQI computer based training.
- A CQI Coordinator must make certain that the CQI teams in their region are meeting and documenting those meetings.
- A CQI Coordinator is responsible for making certain that all action steps and referrals are tracked.
- A CQI Coordinator is responsible for assuring that each region has the data it needs to make informed decisions.
- A CQI Coordinator has to assure that CQI teams are reviewing satisfaction surveys and

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Case Process Reviews

There have been a number of changes to our Case Process Review (CPR) instruments over the past few months. However, these changes were necessary in order to assure that all needed information was being tracked.

One of the new pieces of the CPR was the addition of quality visitation questions. These questions each came with an interpretive guide. These questions were added as a way to gage the quality of visitation between the FSW and the child and family. It is very important that the supervisors who complete the CPR instrument follow the interpretive guide when answering these questions.

The data collected from these visitation questions will be utilized by the Office of Performance and Quality Improvement to provide information to ACF ("the Feds") around the quality of our visits. DCS already meets the standards for the number of visitations, however,

the quality of those visits was found to be lacking during our last Child and Family Service Review (CFSR).

The Department, as well as most other states, is currently working on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) with ACF in order to make improvements on our areas of need. ACF has agreed that these questions from our CPR instrument will gage our progress in improving the quality of these visits.

Please remember that we will no longer be doing retroactive CPRs. It is now an expectation that supervisors complete their CPRs within the time frame allotted to them. It is the responsibility of the senior leadership in each region to assure that these are completed timely.

If you have any questions about CPRs please contact your local CQI Coordinator for assistance.

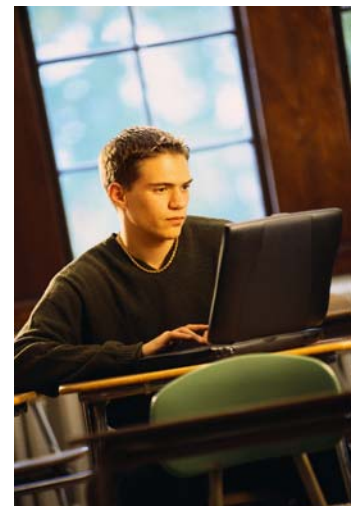
"Education should prepare our minds to use its own powers of reason and conception rather than filling it with accumulated misconceptions of the past."

- Bryant H. McGill -

COA Maintenance on Accreditation by Shirley Crawford

Each January, the department will send a MOA report to the Council on Accreditation. One of the items required in that report is a CQI project. This year, the State Level CQI Team selected 'Risk Management' as the CQI improvement project. As part of the preliminary work, PQI and Internal Audit staff reviewed with each central office division their risk matrix and reeducated staff on the pur-

pose of the risk matrix and how it can be used as a management tool. In addition to the central office review, Internal Audit staff will have visited each region to discuss their regional risk matrix by the end of October. There will be certain risk items extracted from each divisional matrix to use as a part of the improvement project.





“Today more than ever before, life must be characterized by a sense of Universal responsibility, not only nation to nation and human to human, but also human to other forms of life.”

- Dali Lama -



“Nonviolence means avoiding not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. You not only refuse to shoot a man, but you refuse to hate him.”

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Placement Quality Team *by Larry D. Post*

The Placement Quality Team System (PQTS) consists of a hierarchy of three zones: Green, Yellow and Red, with the Green Zones being the lowest level of the system. Each zone has one or two cross-functional teams that have representatives from the regions, multiple program and monitoring divisions from Central Office. The team members include a variety of personnel with different areas of expertise and experience to allow for informed decisions. Teams on each level review private provider contract performance data as another means to insure the safety and well-being of children and youth while they are in custody. The teams also review permanency data to determine how private providers are assisting children and youth with obtaining a permanent home.

Green Zone Teams

CAP Review, Approval & Follow-up Team. (CRAFT)

Team members review and either approve or request revisions to CAPs required in response to PAR reports and the Red/Yellow Zone Teams. This team has developed new protocol based on the Department’s Private Provider Score Card. Private Providers will be scored on the timeliness of their submission of corrective action plans when findings are reported by PAR. Private providers will also be scored on how well they implement their corrective action plans.

The SIU/Individual Resource Home Review Team.

Team members review and monitor closed SIU Unfounded reports but with concerns of Indicated investigations regarding specific resource homes (from both the department and contract private provider agencies). The Child Placement and Private Providers (CPPP) and/or Foster Care/Adoption staffs who are members of the Green Zone Team work directly with the regions to provide assistance to either resource parents or private contract providers. Regional members hold the responsibility for making decisions about resource homes with Central Office oversight when concerns about safety remain. Central Office is responsible for tracking trends per agency and resource home while providing feedback on regional plans.

Data Trending, Analysis Team. (DTAT)

The DTAT is a newly developed PQTS team which is responsible for aggregating and trending Incident Report and SIU Closed Unfounded but with concerns data. Staff from the Office of PQI pull Data from the Department’s SIR System and the Monthly SIU Report. PQI staff trend and complete an analysis of data which is then reported to Program and Monitoring divisions. Further detail reviews of IRs and SIU closed investigations can also be conducted whenever concerning trends are noted by PQI or Program staff.

The Yellow Zone Team (YZT)

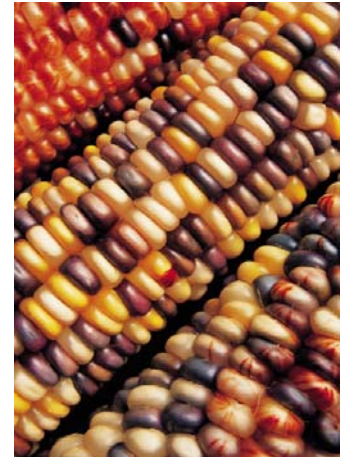
Membership of the YZT includes both regional and Central Office staff. This team reviews referrals from the regions, Central Office, and the community in regards to contract private providers’ performance levels based on the Safety, Well-being, Permanency and Infrastructure domains. Information from the various monitoring divisions, SIU, the SIR System, IA and concerns reported by regions and the community are synthesized and reported by PPPM staff. The YZT reviews the syntheses to determine the level of concern regarding a contracted private provider and what form of action should be taken by the Department. The YZT can recommend to the Red Zone Team that administrative action be taken against the contract private provider if the members believe they are warranted. The administrative actions can consist of one or more of the following: requiring the

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A Day in the Life of a CQI Coordinator *(continued)*

planning improvement goals from those surveys.

- A CQI Coordinator has to assure that their region is meeting the COA PQI Standards.
- A CQI Coordinator must coach and provide feedback to CQI Teams within their regions as to the quality of their meetings.
- A CQI Coordinator must assure that their region is meeting all of the CQI requirements identified in the DCS Performance Improvement Plan, Brian A. Settlement Agreement, and under COA.
- A CQI Coordinator must be the lead person for the Case Process Review program within their region.
- A CQI Coordinator must maintain the COA PQI Notebook for their region, which shows the proof that all COA PQI Standards are being met.
- A CQI Coordinator serves on the State CQI Team.
- A CQI Coordinator must assure that Resource Parents, Cross Functional Team members and anyone else who asks from training on the CQI process is trained in a timely fashion.
- A CQI Coordinator must provide feedback on all CQI team minutes and Team Meeting Minutes books for their region.
- A CQI Coordinator must participate in all Central Office CQI trainings that are offered each year.
- A CQI Coordinator must develop a Regional CQI Plan each year.
- A CQI Coordinator must read, and provided training on, and assure that their region is following the annual DCS CQI Manual and annual Case Process Review Manual.
- A CQI Coordinator must make certain that QSR data is reviewed and utilized in their region.
- A CQI Coordinator serves as the liaison between their region and the Office of Performance and Quality Improvement.
- A CQI Coordinator must have a good understanding of the QSR, PIP, and COA.
- And, the list goes on



“Errors in using inadequate data are much less than using no data at all.”

- Charles Babbage -

Placement Quality Team *(Continued)*

agency to be under corrective action (requires a CAP from the agency), suspension of admissions, removal of children and youth placed with the agency while corrective action is underway or fundamental changes in the contract with DCS if concerns are repeat or of such a nature that the safety and well-being of children and youth can not be maintained. This team does not implement the administrative actions.

Red Zone Team (RZT)

Referrals to the Red Zone team are made when the Yellow Zone team determines an agency's problems are of such severity or are systematic in nature that DCS actions are urgently needed. The Red Zone is the only level in the PQTS authorized to approve immediate administrative actions regarding admissions freezes, the removal of children from an agency or the cessation of a contract, or the reversal of such actions. The Commissioner sits on the Red Zone and must sign off on any of these administrative actions.



DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Putting the Pieces Together

A PUBLICATION OF THE
OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE AND
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

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October Is ...

Adopt a Shelter Dog Month

World Blindness Acceptance Month

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Emotional Wellness Month

Gay and Lesbian History Month

Global Diversity Awareness Month

Head Start Awareness Month

National Depression Education & Awareness Month

National Downs Syndrome Month

Vegetarian Month

National Diversity Day—October 1

Intergeneration Day—October 3

Improve Your Office Day—October 4

Child Health Day—October 4

National German-American Day—October 6

World Mental Health Day—October 10

Native American's Day—October 11

Evaluate Your Life Day—October 19

Make a Difference Day—October 23

Lung Health Day—October 24

National Forgiveness Day—October 30

National UNICEF Day—October 31

