

3 Step-by-Step Quality Management Guide: Nine Critical Steps

Quality management programs can take many shapes and forms and will be most effective if they are individualized to meet the needs of a specific organization. While each program will look different, successful quality management programs have key characteristics that are critical to the efficient functioning of the program. Figure 1 outlines nine steps that can be used to develop and implement a solid quality program.

Regardless of where an organization stands in the development of a quality management program, the nine steps outlined can either serve as a checklist for those with plans already in place or as a stepping stone for those just beginning. While it may take a significant amount of time before all nine steps are achieved, the most important concept is to get started.

Figure 1: Implementing a Quality Management Program

section
3

Implementing A Quality Management Program: Nine Critical Steps

STEP ONE

Confirm Commitment of Leadership & Establish Supportive Organizational Structure

- Establish support of program leadership for Quality Management (QM) and confirm commitment.
- Commit resources to support QM activities.
- Provide education about CQI tools and techniques to all levels of staff, including senior leadership.
- Establish a method to inform all levels of staff, including senior leadership and Board of Directors about QM initiatives.
- Delineate expectations of staff related to QM.
- Delineate specific QM responsibilities of staff.

STEP TWO

Establish Quality Management Plan

- Establish Quality Guidance Team, Steering Committee or utilize existing leadership meetings to oversee the QM program.
- Develop an organizational QM plan which delineates goals and objectives for the QM program.²
- Establish QM priorities.
- Develop a time line or calendar of activities for the year.
- Select a QM approach, such as PDSA or the Chronic Care Model.
- Clarify QM responsibilities of staff.

² A specific QM plan targeted to HIV services should be developed. If the HIV program is part of a larger institution that has an established QM plan, the QM plan should include portions of the HIV-specific plan.

Figure 1 (continued): Implementing a Quality Management Program

section
3

**STEP
THREE**

Determine Performance Measures & Collect Baseline Data

- Based on QM priorities, determine performance measures.
- Develop indicators to measure performance.
- Define measurement population and delineate eligibility criteria.
- Create a data collection plan to include:
 - Sampling strategy
 - Determine method of data collection, i.e. chart abstraction, interviews
- Create data collection tools
 - Create instructions for data collection tools
 - Train personnel who will collect data
 - Conduct pilot test of tool
- Establish process of communicating with staff about measurement process
- Collect data

**STEP
FOUR**

Analyze Data

- Analyze data and review the results.
- Identify areas where additional data is required.
- If historical data are available, compare for trends.
- Display and distribute data to communicate findings and results.
- Identify areas for improvement and select a quality improvement project.

**STEP
FIVE**

Develop Project-Specific CQI Plan

- Establish project-specific QM team that represents all staff integral to the service or issue.
- Identify a team leader or sponsor.
- Delineate specific goals for the team.
- Allocate time and resources for the team.
- Delineate team responsibilities.
- Develop timeline for reporting findings and improvement strategies.

Figure 1 (continued): Implementing a Quality Management Program

STEP SIX *Study and Understand the Process*

- Analyze the root causes.
- Utilize CQI tools and techniques to understand the process, such as flow charts, facilitated brainstorming, cause & effect diagrams, fishbone, etc.
- Document and track progress by using activity logs, issue identification logs, meeting minutes, etc.
- Report progress to senior leadership and staff on a regular, defined basis.

STEP SEVEN *Develop and Implement an Improvement Plan*

- Identify potential solutions to make improvement to the systems of care.
- Recognize quick fixes and longer term solutions.
- Try a small test of change and analyze results.
- Refine improvement plan.
- Develop timeline for implementation of plan.
- Delineate team responsibilities.
- Implement changes.
- Track changes and improvement actions.

STEP EIGHT *Remeasurement*

- Determine interval for remeasurement.
- Remeasure indicator after change has been implemented.
- Look for incremental improvement.
- Communicate results to team, staff and leadership.
- Determine need for and/or level of remeasurement on an ongoing basis.
- Develop a plan for sustained improvement.

STEP NINE *Celebrate Success*

- Communicate results of the project to all levels of the organization, including consumers when appropriate.
- Congratulate team in public forum, i.e. staff meetings, Board of Director meetings.
- Select a new project and begin at Step 3.