Quality Assurance

QA Programs for Local Health Departments

Objectives of this course are:

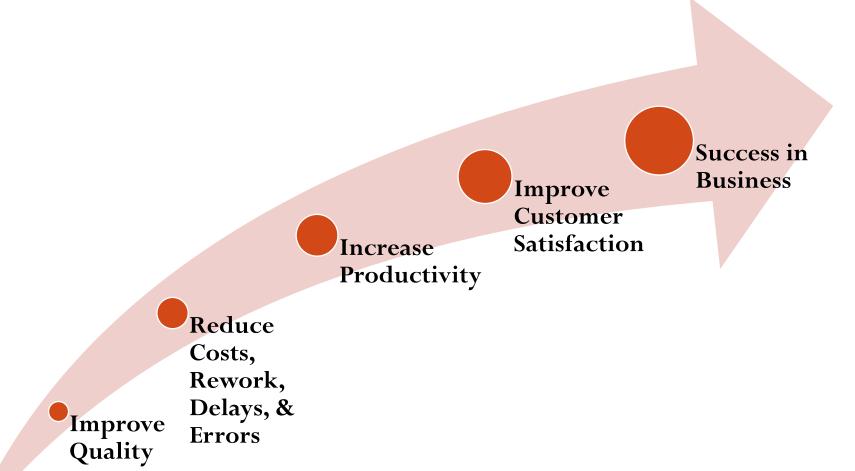
- Define Quality
- Know 6 Main Causes of Poor Quality
- Know 6 Service Quality Dimensions
- Know Characteristics of a Quality Assurance (QA) Program
- Explain Purpose of QA Programs in Health Departments
- Know 8 Developmental Steps of QA Programs
- Explain Importance of Management "Buy-In"
- Know S.M.A.R.T. System for Defining Quality Objectives
- Know 6 Mandatory Procedures for QA Programs

What is Quality?

- Quality has many different definitions
- Definitions range from informal to formal
 - Some informal definitions are:
 - Excellence
 - Adding Value
 - Commitment to Improve
- A formal definition is:

"Quality is the ongoing process of building & sustaining relationships by assessing, anticipating, & fulfilling stated & implied need."

Why quality?



6 Main Causes of Poor Quality

- Man -
 - Lack of motivation, training, skills, interest
- Machine -
 - Lack of capability, maintenance, outdated
- Material -
 - Low grade, unspecified, variation
- Management -
 - Lack of vision, mission, decision making & communication
- Method -
 - Lack of procedures, communication, procedures not followed
- Mother nature -
 - Humidity, temperature, lighting

Further Defining of Quality

- Many definitions are based on different points of view:
 - <u>From a Process point of view</u> Conformance with process standards & specifications
 - <u>From a Product point of view</u> Degree of excellence at an acceptable price
 - <u>From a Cost point of view</u> Best combination between costs & features
 - From a Customer point of view Service &/or product meeting customer needs
 - Fitness for Use = does it do what it is suppose to do?

Health Departments Focus on Services & Customer Satisfaction

• Customer satisfaction is an important part of running a successful business.

- 4 Tips for avoiding customer dissatisfaction are:
 - Be Pro-active
 - Be Responsive
 - Be Honest
 - Be Realistic

6 Service Quality Dimensions

- Timeliness
- Courtesy
- Consistency
- Convenience
- Completeness
- Accuracy
 - These dimensions if implemented wisely will limit customer dissatisfaction.

What is Quality Assurance?

• Quality Assurance (QA) is prevention of quality problems through planned and systematic activities including documentation.

Defining QA Programs

• A Quality Assurance program is a complete system to assure the quality of services &/or products by evaluating performance &/or a service against a standard or specified requirement for customers. It is a way of management.

Quality Management System (QMS)

Quality Management System (QMS) = QA Program

• QMS & QA Program is a formalized system that documents the structure, responsibilities, & procedures required to achieve effective quality management.

Characteristics of a QA Program

- Process Driven
- Pro-Active
- Staff Functions
- Prevent Problems & Defects
- Quality Audit
- Defining Process
- Selection of Tools
- Trainings

QA Programs in Health Departments

• Should strive to promote & protect the health, safety, and well-being of the people being served by providing responsive, independent assessment, and monitoring of human services through respectful relationships.

Or as defined by NC Local Health Department Accreditation, Essential Service #9:

• Local Health Department's (LHD) shall employ a quality assurance & improvement process to assess the effectiveness of services & improve health outcomes.

QA Programs in Health Care Assist with:

- Monitoring & ensuring that mandatory standards & protocols are being met;
- Identifying areas needing improvement;
- Implementing performance improvement plans;
- And, making sure regulations are clearly interpreted & followed.

QA Programs have 8 Main Development Steps

- Learn
- Plan
- Define
- Build
- Launch
- Review
- Assess
- Improve

Step #1: Learn

- **Top Management Buy-In**
- Define Scope
- Conduct Gap Analysis
- Management Review
 - **Lack of top management commitment will cause failure or loss of organizational productivity, profitability, effective work-place efficiency, job satisfaction, employee morale, & continuous product/service improvement**

Importance of Management Buy-In

- Management needs to provide evidence of their commitment to QMS by:
 - Communicating importance of meeting customer & legal requirements;
 - Setting up quality policy & quality objectives;
 - Conducting regular management reviews;
 - & ensuring that required resources are made available.

Step #2: Plan

- Establish an Implementation Team
- Develop Implementation Plan
- Identify Key Processes
- Involve & Communicate with Employees
- Management Review

Step #3: Define

- Define the Quality Policy
- Communicate the Quality Policy
- **Define the Quality Objectives**
- Establish Roles & Responsibilities
- Management Review

Defining Quality Objectives

- Quality Objectives are S.M.A.R.T
- S it must be Specific
- M it must be Measurable
- A it must be Achievable
- R it must be Realistic
- T it must be Time Bound
 Quality Objectives should be set aiming to improve the effectiveness of the QMS

Step #4: Build

- Develop the Quality Manual
- **Develop the Mandatory Procedures**
 - Including Operational Procedures & Auditing Tools
 - Each compliance point should match with a performance standard to serve as benchmarks in audits.
- Select & Train Internal Auditors
- Management Review

6 Mandatory Procedures

- Control of Documents
- Control of Records
- Internal Audit
- Control of Non-Conforming Product
- Corrective Action
- Preventative Action

Step #5: Launch

- Provide Employee System Training
- Implement the Quality System
- Audit the Quality System
- Management Review

Step #6: Review

- Begin Process Auditing
- Implement System Changes
- Refine the System
- Management Review

Step #7: Assess

- Pre-Assessment Audit
- Correct Non-Conformances & Corrective Actions
- Management Review

Step #8: Improve

Maintain & Improve the QMS

Developing a QMS

- Generally takes from 1-9 months depending;
 - On Business Size & Type;
 - How many Protocols & Procedures are documented;
 - How many & what Type of Records are kept;
 - Management commitment;
 - & Resources

FDA Voluntary Retail Standards: Compliance Tool for Standard 4

- 1) Determines & documents the compliance status of each risk factor & intervention through observation & investigation: (i.e., IN compliance, OUT of compliance, Not Observed [NO,] or Not Applicable [NA] is noted on inspection form);
- 2) Completes an inspection report that is clear, legible, concise, & accurately records findings & observations;
- 3) Interprets & applies laws, regulations, policies & procedures correctly;
- 4) Cites the proper local code provisions for CDC-identified risk factors & Food Code interventions;
- 5) Reviews past inspection findings & acts on repeated or unresolved violations;
- 6) Follows through with compliance & enforcement actions;
- 7) Obtains on-site corrective action;
- 8) Discusses & documents discussion of options for implementing food safety systems, when required;
- 9) Confirms that the facility is assigned to the correct risk category & inspection frequency; &
- 10) Files reports and other documentation in a timely manner.

Conclusion

• Quality Management Systems, or Quality Assurance Programs ensure an organization is doing due diligence to maintain compliance, while improving customer service and satisfaction.

References

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