

A Brief Overview of Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement for Public Health

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Presentation Objectives

- 1) Define the terms QA and QI.
- 2) Relate QA, Accreditation and QI to one another.
- 3) Provide the “big picture” of quality.
- 4) Clear-up misconceptions.
- 5) Discuss embracing a “culture of quality” in Public Health
- 6) Answer remaining questions.

QA: The First Big Hurdle



Defining Quality Assurance (QA)

A way to warrant that predefined standards are met. QA is the first step toward quality improvement.

QA in a Healthcare Context

- Utilization review;
- Risk management;
- Infection control;
- Safety program;
- Credentialing;
- Peer review;

QA in Broader Context

- **Quality control;**
- **Privacy;**
- **Customer satisfaction;**
- **Employee satisfaction;**
- **Accreditation.**

Defining Assessment/Accreditation

- **An assessment/accreditation program is one that uses an identified set of standards or metrics to review the performance of state and/or local public health departments.**

Accreditation (Michigan)

- **Standards (Minimum Program Requirements)**
- **Indicators (Way to meet Requirements)**
- **Corrective Plan of Action (Way to meet Requirements)**
- **Self-Assessment (Practice/assess to see if meeting Requirements)**

The Simple Fact Is:

- **Measuring and monitoring performance is essential to demonstrating the effectiveness of, and retaining funding for, your program; not to mention providing the best service possible.**

Informal QA: What have you already done?

- Reviewing program processes;
- Identifying performance measures;
- Monitoring outcomes;
- Reporting outcomes;
- Surveying participants;
- Surveying staff or forming work groups

Moving from Monitoring (QA) to
Improvement (QI).

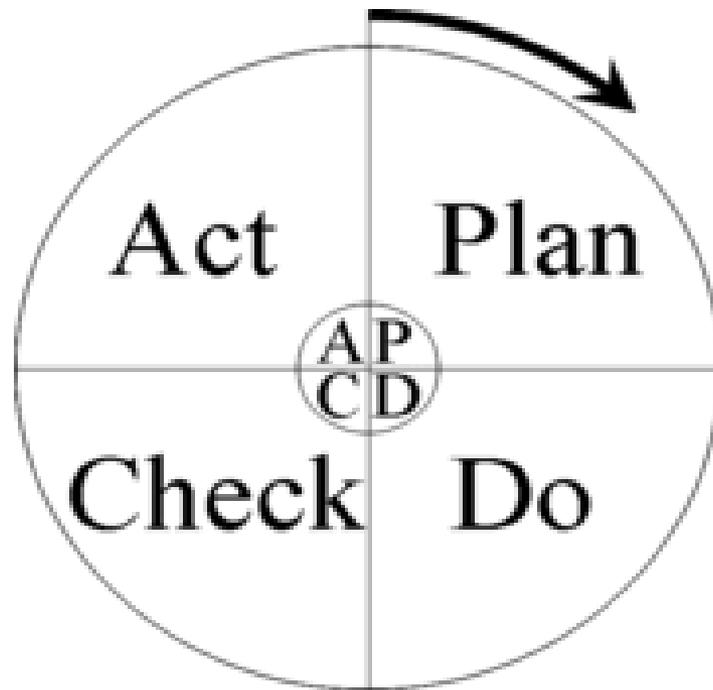
Defining Quality Improvement (QI)

- **A continuous process to review, critique, and implement positive change to achieve quality improvement in public health policies, programs or infrastructure.**

How does QI differ from QA?

- QI moves beyond quality assurance, relies on data-driven decision making, and is used to make a process or system better.
- QI requires the systematic use of improvement models or tools, such as the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) model.
- QI may also refer to a range of practices geared toward improving performance.

QI Processes Are All Variations of the Same Basic Steps



Choose the Simplest Approach that will Meet Program Needs

- **PDCA/PDSA**
- **Proven in many contexts;**
- **Front line staff have significant input;**
- **Many tools are available and inexpensive.**

The QI Tool Bag

- Root cause analysis;
- Flow chart;
- Pareto chart;
- Fishbone diagram.
- Logic diagram

Don't Forget About Improvement

- You use QI to hypothesize the process changes that will result in improvement;

QA and CQI Belong Together



How do QA and QI relate to one another?

- QA and Accreditation is about defining standards (measures) and monitoring performance.
- QI is about using measures to plan and test improvements in a program or process.

The Most Common Misconceptions

- QA/QI is just another way to assess my work performance
- I'm too busy to add QA and/or QI to my duties.
- I don't know anything about QA or QI, so I can't participate.

Embracing a “Culture of Quality” in Public Health: What Can I Do?

- **Recognize the value of QA/QI;**
- **Buy into the necessity of change to achieve improvement;**
- **Work as a team to improve the program;**

Embracing a “Culture of Quality” in Public Health: What Can Management Do?

- Recognize untapped expertise among existing team members;
- Invest resources to learn and accomplish improvements;
- Integrate Quality into your Mission
- Recognize while management usually leads accreditation efforts, line staff usually make QI happen
- Celebrate accomplishments in a public manner

Accreditation and Quality Improvement are on the same path ²³



Accreditation and Quality Improvement Together

- **Have similar goals where**
- **Accreditation defines measures and monitors performance and**
- **QI uses the measures to plan and test improvements**
- **Combined there are greater benefits**
- **Moves us toward systemic change**
- **Leads us to a Culture of Quality**

Why Quality Improvement?

- **Public Health often slow to adopt improvements**
- **Cpt James Landcaster in 1601 proved Vitamin C prevented scurvy**
- **British preventive policy on scurvy adopted 264 years later**
- **Provides a set of proven, reliable, and repeatable steps that anyone can use to make improvement**

Objectives for MLC Going Forward

- Support the voluntary application of QI techniques in Michigan's accreditation program
- Learn from each other how to apply QI methods and techniques
- Produce improvements, documents and tools that will serve as resources to advance QI efforts for Michigan's LHDs
- Support Michigan's and the national accreditation programs inclusion of a voluntary QI component

Any Questions?

