

The New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement (BOLQI) are responsible for quality assurance and the oversight of state quality improvement processes which include monitoring, data and research, program improvement, training and policy development.

Through the DCYF BOLQI, the agencies have embarked on a process of applying the five disciplines of a learning organization including; systems thinking, shared visioning, mental models, team learning, and personal mastery. These disciplines provide the platform on which the organization's dynamic cycle of continuous quality improvement is based. The key component of performance measurement and accountability in the NH DCYF field services is the Case Practice Review (CPR) process. The ACF CFSR framework and the On-Site Review Instrument (OSRI) drive New Hampshire CPR's. CPR's identify organizational and staff strengths, as well as areas needing improvement in each District Office by focusing on outcomes for children and families in the areas of safety, permanency and well being. Additionally, NH BOLQI integrates an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach into the pre/on-site/and post CPR activities to support an organizational learning cycle.

The Case Practice Review Process:

Once a District Office is selected as a CPR site, BOLQI begins the process by randomly selecting a sample of ten to thirty cases divided proportionally between Child Protective Service (70 +/- %) and Juvenile Justice Service (30 +/- %). In-home and placement cases are reviewed for both CPS/JJS.

After cases are selected and preparations are completed, the case review and quality assurance teams travel to the District Office to begin the five day on-site review component. The reviews extend beyond the information available in Bridges information system and the case file to include interviews of staff, family members, providers, and children/youth, if age appropriate.

Reviewers are paired in teams, which include experienced DCYF staff from across the state that volunteer to participate and have received both training and coaching in the CPR process. Additionally, at least one community stakeholder is recruited to participate as a reviewer at each CPR.

A focus group of key stakeholders, representative of the types of organizations and individuals who are an integral part of the community support system for CPS/JJS youth and families, is held during the review week. The purpose of the focus group is to collect information to examine systemic factors that may be impacting the quality of services for that particular District Office catchment area. Issues discussed at these focus groups include areas such as prevention, in-home services, effective reunification/permanency, supporting independent living efforts, adoption, and effectiveness of caseworker interactions.

At the end of the week long on-site review, BOLQI shares initial statistical and thematic results with DCYF supervisors, field administrators, case practice and quality assurance reviewers in a closing two hour session. These sessions include an opportunity for reflective feedback and discussion with staff to validate CPR initial findings and support transparency in practice assessment.

New Hampshire has a well-established Quality Assurance (QA) process utilized during the CPR's that includes BOLQI staff and CPS/JJS Field Administrators. The QA process is similar to the federal CFSR QA process in that it ensures the tool is completed correctly, the outcomes are rated accurately, and all sources of information are cited to support the rating. The CPR QA process also incorporates a practice component whereby a CPS and JJS Field Administrator reviews the completed OSRI for each of their respective cases to identify practice issues and trends that will require further attention by the Supervisors and may be utilized to help inform the Practice Improvement Initiative (PII).

An Exit Conference is held the week following the CPR. BOLQI staff share the preliminary data and results from the review with all District Office staff. Just like the CFSR, the CPR captures both strengths and challenges in field practice. In order to facilitate continuous quality improvement and address specific areas of improvement identified in each District Office, BOLQI assists the supervisors with the development of the Practice Improvement Initiative (PII). Administration from both Divisions works with District Office staff to support the PII efforts and monitor improvement initiatives.

The PII is a substantive change to New Hampshire's previous quality improvement process. The design for the PII flows from themes developed in the agency Practice Model, and creates a process for organizational change that parallels the process used with families. The PII process draws upon several methodologies and philosophies already in use within the agency, including Appreciative Inquiry, and the Breakthrough Series PDSA model, to create a design model that values and includes staff at all levels, parents, youth, providers, and community partners in developing plans with the District Offices for improved outcomes.

Following the Case Practice Review, quality improvement staff meet with District Office CPS and JJS staff to discuss and analyze the review results, and begin to design the PII process. The design of this process is customized for each District Office based upon its size, dynamics, and results of the review, within the overarching AI/PDSA framework. The CPR results are explored with the PII group and ideas for change are generated through a focus on the strengths and successes of the office.

The powerpoint slide included is a visual example of a PII process focused on a specific area needing improvement that may be identified in a District Office. This provides an example of how the Appreciative Inquiry framework is used to generate planning for change in a specific area.

In addition to the CPR/PII process as the cornerstone of continuous quality improvement, New Hampshire also engages a variety of internal team review processes at both local and state levels. They reviews typically focus on specific practice areas and cases, and include Permanency Planning Teams, Assessment Review Teams, and Critical Case Reviews.

As New Hampshire continues it's journey of implementation and evaluation of a Practice Model based on Solution-Based Casework, assessment of the use of those strategies in practice is being integrated into our existing quality improvement processes. Beginning in the fall of 2012, New Hampshire will have integrated a 33 item SBC CQI tool to assess fidelity to the Solution-Based Casework model in cases reviewed during Case Practice Reviews. This review will occur in addition to the existing reviews using the OSRI described above. A draft of the 33 CQI items is attached.

Additionally, to support the implementation of Solution-Based Casework, a certification process is underway that will result in all field supervisors and staff being certified in the use of SBC by August 1, 2012. This certification is occurring in five phases, each with advancing expectations in worker and supervisor knowledge, application and skill development.

Certification requirements for supervisors and coaches include successful achievement of the following: post-training knowledge check, participation in monthly coaching sessions, observation of clinical case consultations, supervisory sessions and review of case documentation to assess for SBC driven case supervision. Field Administrators use the SBC Case Consultation guide (attached) to assess skills.

Certification requirements for staff include successful achievement of the following: a post-training knowledge check, participation in clinical case consultation sessions, case presentations in case consultation sessions, checks of case documentation, and supervisor review using the SBC Performance Review tool for workers (attached).

The New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth & Families Bureau of Organizational Learning & Quality Improvement is in the process of completing a complete CQI Process manual, which will focus primarily on the above processes, as well as a broader context for them within NH's overall CQI activities.