

# **Incorporating Quality Assurance and Evaluation Into Every Day Practice**

# Objectives

- Participants will be able to define Quality Assurance and Evaluation
- Participants will understand how to incorporate Quality Assurance into their day to day operations
- Participants will understand evaluation methods
- Participants will understand how to incorporate Evaluation into their day to day operations

# What is Quality Assurance?

# Quality Assurance

Quality assurance (QA) refers the formal and systematic monitoring and reviewing of organizational activities, programmatic activities, and outcomes to:

- improve services
- overcome identified deficiencies in providers or support systems
- carry out follow-up steps or procedures to ensure that actions have been effective and no new problems have been introduced

# Quality Assurance

- What am I/we doing? (eg. facilitating, training, documenting, or research)
- Why is it being done?
- Why is it being done in this way?
- How well is it being done?
- How could I/we improve what is being done?

# Purpose of Quality Assurance

The main purpose of quality assurance is to

- Improve the quality of all aspects of the program
- Produce priorities for action
- Provide clear and concise guidelines for activities and staff development
- Assist in development, not solely or mainly to remedy deficiency.

# Quality Assurance

- Enabling Environment
- Organizing for Quality
- Support functions

# Enabling Environment

Continuous application of QA over time requires a facilitating enabling environment within the organization, which is conducive to initiating, expanding and sustaining QA. The four essential elements that make up such an environment include:

- Policy-A policy environment explicitly recognizes the importance of quality for reaching organizational or system goals, and that provides support, guidance, and reinforcement for QA implementation.

# Enabling Environment

- Leadership-Leadership is critical to help the organization see where it needs to go (vision), to provide strategies for the transition from 'the way we work now' to 'the way we want to work in the future', to promote a learning environment, and to model the desired core values that should characterize the organizational culture.

# Enabling Environment

- Core values-Core organizational values emphasize respect, quality, and continued improvement.
- The creation and acculturation of these core values throughout the organization are critical to ensuring that all staff see their contributions to quality services as important and desire to be part of these efforts.

# Enabling Environment

- Resources for QA-QA cannot be sustained if there are not adequate resources allocated for QA, particularly staff time to be involved in QA efforts, but also resources for capacity building, communication, and other key support functions.

# Support Functions

Three essential elements are needed to support implementation of QA and improved quality of services:

- capacity building
- communication and information
- rewarding quality

# Support Functions

- 'Capacity building' refers to the ongoing process of ensuring that staff have the necessary technical, managerial, and leadership knowledge and skills to carry out their QA responsibilities, and that they know when and how to use these skills best.
- Capacity building encompasses formal QA training, coaching and mentoring, self and peer appraisals, performance improvement, and supervisory activities.

# Support Functions

'Communication and information' for sharing, learning, and advocating QA involves a two-way interaction between organizational staff, target communities, and other stake-holders. Communication and information include:

- recording improvements and changes, and using data to demonstrate results and stories about how these results were achieved
- sharing what has been achieved and how it was done with the organization's staff, the community it serves, and others who might learn from it and become motivated to improve their own services
- using the results for supporting evaluation

# Support Functions

Communication reinforces the notion that QA is everyone's business—that successes should be shared even when things do not go well as planned.

# Support Functions

- 'Rewarding quality' and the efforts made to improve foster both a commitment to quality and a motivation strive for excellence. Providing individual, group, or organizational recognition or rewards reinforces interest QA endeavors and facilitates alignment of staff.

# Organizing for Quality

- Organizing for quality refers to the delineation of responsibilities and accountability for oversight, coordination, and implementation of QA in the organization. Thus, in addition to the essential elements that comprise the enabling environment, and support functions sustainable QA also requires, as an essential element, some kind of 'structure'.
- In this context, structure should not be equated with an organizational chart or reporting hierarchies. There is no single best structure to implement and sustain QA activities.

# Program Evaluation

# What is Program Evaluation?

# What is Program Evaluation?

- The systematic collection of information about activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make:
  - judgments about the program,
  - improve program effectiveness
  - make informed decisions about future programming

# Purpose of Program Evaluation

- To determine if:
  - The program is reaching the appropriate target population.
  - The program is being implemented in the ways specified.
  - The program is effective.
  - The program is costly.
  - The program costs are relative to its effectiveness.

# Benefits of Program Evaluation

- Reflect on progress; see where we're going and where we're coming from
- Influence policy makers and funders
- Build community capacity and engage communities
- Share what works and doesn't work with other communities
- Ensure funding and sustainability
- Strengthen accountability

# Barriers to Program Evaluation

- lack of management support
- lack of resources
- lack of skills in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data
- lack of relevant data
- fear of consequences of the results of the evaluation

# Evaluation Terminology

- Formative Evaluation
- Process Monitoring
- Process Evaluation
- Outcome Monitoring
- Outcome Evaluation
- Impact Evaluation

# Formative Evaluation

**Formative Evaluation:** Collects data describing the needs of the population and the factors that put them at risk. Answers questions such as:

- What can we learn from pre-testing our approach?
- Are the materials we are going to use appropriate?
- How should the intervention be designed or modified to address population needs?

# Process Monitoring

**Process Monitoring:** Collects data describing the characteristics of the population served, the services provided, and the resources used to deliver those services. Answers questions such as:

- What services were delivered? (what are we doing?)
- What population was served? What resources were used?

# Process Evaluation

**Process Evaluation:** Collects more detailed data about how the intervention was delivered, differences between the intended population and the population served, and access to the intervention. Answers the following questions:

- **What services are actually being delivered and to whom?**
- **What was actually done, how, when, for whom, and by who.**

# Outcome Monitoring

**Outcome Monitoring:** Collects data about client outcomes before and after the intervention, such as knowledge, attitudes, skills, or behaviors. Answers the question:

- Did the expected outcomes occur?

# Outcome Evaluation

**Outcome Evaluation:** Collects data about outcomes before and after the intervention for clients as well as with a similar group that did not participate in the intervention being evaluated. Answers the questions:

- **Did the intervention cause the expected outcomes?**
- **More difficult than process evaluation because you must assess the effects of your program.**
- **Entails rigorous evaluation designs.**

# Documenting and Measuring Outcomes

- Documenting refers to describing the outcomes observed through the use of standard and/or customized tools.
- Measuring refers to calculating the extent the outcomes were met through the use of standard and/or customized tools

# Documenting Outcomes: Qualitative Techniques

- Focus Groups
- Key Informant Interviews
- Participant Observation
- Case Studies

# Measuring Outcomes: Quantitative Techniques

- Surveys
  - Face-to-Face
  - Telephone
  - Self-Administered
  
- Existing Agency Records
  - Intake forms
  - Service use forms
  - Group contact forms

# Measuring Outcomes: Customizing Your Data Collection Tools

- Identifying Key Indicators
  - What do you want to measure?
  - What are your definitions?
- Identifying In-House Resources
  - Who can collect the information ?
  - What kind of computer skills are available?
- Identifying Time Frame
  - When will the information be collected?
  - How frequently?

# What is impact evaluation?

Impact Evaluation: Collects data about HIV infection at the jurisdictional, regional, and national levels. Answers the following questions:

- **What were the ultimate effects (i.e., on community health, well-being and functioning)**
- **The short-term effects or benefits of a program.**

# Summary

- Some common forces exist within quality assurance and program evaluation in providing services. Even though these two types of public accountability are developed separately, integrating both methods into the life of the program is essential to success.