Quality Improvement Basics

A Culture of Quality

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Objectives

After completing this module, participants will be able to

- Understand the importance of embedding a culture of quality in a health care organization
- Describe success factors for developing and supporting a culture of quality in a health care organization
- Explain the concept of Just Culture and its importance in establishing a culture of quality

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Culture of Quality Success Factors

Leadership Engagement

Systematic Processes

Celebrate Wins

Flexibility

Involving Internal and External Customers

Expectations that Prioritize QI

Fairness and Accountability

Leadership Engagement

- Visible commitment to quality
- Allocation of resources
  - Performance reviews
  - Time
  - Training
- System and process lens
- Accountability

Systematic Process for QI

- Common language and approach to improvement
- Templates can be effective tools to organize multiple projects
- Flow of information is critical

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Flexibility

- Be creative in how you allocate the work – there is no perfect way
- Allow flexibility and engagement of wide variety of staff in project planning and implementation
- Do what makes sense based on your needs and staff capability

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Expectations that Prioritize Quality

- Distributed leadership – quality is everyone's role and responsibility
- Resist temptation to allow direct patient care activities prevent QI work – "Too busy chopping wood to sharpen the axe"
- A commitment to health equity – you can't have quality without equity.

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Fairness and Accountability

- Everyone in the organization feels safe to share mistakes, complaints, concerns, or potential risks
- Why? Because we learn from our mistakes. Mistakes are often a tipoff to something wrong in the way the work is structured
- Need to balance fairness and accountability
- Embrace a Just Culture

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What is 'Just Culture'?

- Reflects what we know of:
  - Socio-technological system design
  - Human free will
  - Human fallibility
- We can:
  - Design safe systems that accommodate humans
  - Manage human choices and behaviors within the system

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Just Culture – Five Behaviors

Human Error	At-risk Behavior	Reckless	Knowledge	Purpose
Unintended conduct: inadvertently doing other than what was intended: a slip, lapse, or mistake	A choice where risk is not recognized, or is mistakenly believed to be justified	Conscious disregard of a substantial and unjustifiable risk of harm	Knowingly causing harm (sometimes justified)	A purpose to cause harm (never justified)
ACCEPT	COACH	DISCIPLINARY SANCTION	DISCIPLINARY SANCTION	DISCIPLINARY SANCTION
Evaluate All Independent of the Actual Outcome				

Source: The Just Culture Company - https://www.justculture.com/

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Involving Internal and External Customers

- Know who your customers are
  - Patients, families, community
  - Payers or other funders
  - Other care providers
  - Staff, coworkers, contract staff
- Involve them in your QI efforts

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Celebrate Wins

- Recognize progress (small steps or lessons learned) and celebrate accomplishments
- Ensure people feel appreciated for their QI efforts
- Keep teams engaged in the work going forward
- Can be simple, but also an opportunity to be creative and have fun

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In Summary

- Organizations committed to quality embed a culture of quality throughout the organization
- Key factors that drive a successful quality culture include:
  - Leadership engagement
  - Systemic processes for QI
  - Flexibility
  - Expectations that prioritize QI
  - Fairness and accountability
  - Meaningfully involving customers
  - Celebrating wins
- A Just Culture creates an environment of psychological safety by placing high importance on accountability, while recognizing the reality of human fallibility

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