

Quality Framework Overview

Purpose: To promote a culture of continuous quality improvement in public health units.

Background: In 2005, the OCCHA Board of Directors established a standing committee of the OCCHA Board, the CQI Committee. The purpose of this committee is to improve OCCHA's ability to encourage and facilitate organizational excellence and ongoing quality of practice (i.e., CQI) in public health. The Committee's objectives are:

- ✓ To develop a framework to encourage and support continuous quality improvement in public health;
- ✓ To support the review and revision of accreditation standards to incorporate and/or expand the concepts of continuous quality improvement;
- ✓ To provide leadership, direction and support to the Public Health CQI Advisory Group, and
- ✓ To facilitate information-sharing on CQI initiatives and the activities of the OCCHA CQI Committee

In support of OCCHA's CQI initiatives, OCCHA also established a Public Health CQI Advisory Group. Membership on this group is open to all public health units in Ontario. Currently, 19 of the 36 health units have appointed a representative to this group. The primary focus of this group has been the development of a quality framework for public health in support of population health. OCCHA, through a CQI Task Force and the Advisory Group conducted a review of continuous quality initiatives and definitions. This information was considered during the development process. The OCCHA quality framework for public health is based on the concept of a continuous improvement cycle and is linked to the OCCHA accreditation standards.

What is the Quality Framework?

The OCCHA Quality Framework for Public Health Units includes three quality focus areas which form the foundation for continuous quality improvement initiatives and which facilitate achievement of the six quality components and various elements within. The quality components and elements provide a systems perspective for understanding organizational performance and identifying areas for improvement. It is intent of the CQI Advisory Group and the OCCHA CQI Committee to develop processes/mechanisms to facilitate health units' implementation of this quality framework in support of continuous quality improvement.

The OCCHA Board of Directors has developed quality concepts for the three focus areas in support of continuous quality improvement. There is a linkage between all three focus areas, and results of processes/activities developed in support of the quality concepts identified inform not only each other (i.e., the other focus areas) but the quality components and elements within the framework as well.

Community Focus:

The purpose of a community focus is to collaborate with community partners increase community capacity. A health unit with strong community focus values the following concepts:

- 1) Exchanging information, knowledge and skills with community partners to facilitate informed decision-making.
- 2) Supporting community partners in identifying and meeting local health needs.
- 3) Ensuring that community partners are aware of health issues and determinants of health.
- 4) Advocating for the health of the community.
- 5) Responding to community needs (e.g., partners, the public, families and individuals).
- 6) Engaging the community in planning and implementation.

Integration Focus:

The purpose of an integration focus is to create an environment in which all members of the agency work together to achieve agency goals and objectives. A health unit with a strong integration focus values the following:

- 1) Facilitating and supporting governing body members in acquiring the relevant knowledge and understanding in order to make informed decisions in support of agency goals and objectives.
- 2) Ensuring that staff have the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding to achieve agency goals and objectives.

Results Focus:

The purpose of a results focus is to improve/enhance the agency in meeting or exceeding community/public health needs. A health unit with a strong results focus values the following:

- 1) Setting expectations.
- 2) Providing programs and services.
- 3) Priority-setting, coordinating and evaluating of resource management.
- 4) Ongoing monitoring of programs and services.
- 5) Evaluating the effectiveness of programs and services.
- 6) Demonstrating continuous quality improvement processes to enhance/improve the services provided.

Quality Components/Foci: Leadership
 Organizational Capacity
 Workforce
 Partnerships and Collaboration
 Programs
 Communication

Quality Elements within Components/Foci:

Leadership: Strategic Directions; Governance; Agency Management
Organizational Capacity: Organizational Structure; Resource Management and Records Management
Workforce: Staffing; Training/Education/Skills and Performance Evaluation
Partnerships and Collaboration: Collaboration
Programs: Research and Knowledge Exchange; Planning and Implementation; Health Promotion; Health Protection and Disease Prevention; Monitoring and Evaluation; Emergency Preparedness and Risk Management
Communication: Internal Communication; External Communication

OCCHA Standards and their Relationship to Quality Components

LEADERSHIP		
Element/Standard	Content	Definition
Strategic Directions	Strategic plan, mission, goals and objectives	Values and priorities which provide the foundation to guide public health units, programs and staff in program and service delivery.
Governance	Board of Health structure and function, polices and procedures and by-laws.	The stewardship*, leadership, control, and direction of public health units (i.e., Boards of Health.) *Stewardship is the active oversight of a public health unit's governance and mission by a board of health and includes such components as accountability and transparency, orientation and continuing education of board members, fiscal responsibility, appropriate board structures and succession planning.
Agency Management	The day-to-day management of public health programs and the role of the general administrative body.	The capacity of public health units to deliver public health programs and services. This includes the structure, mechanisms and processes to support the activities of the health unit.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY		
Element/ Standard	Content	Definition
Organizational Structure	Organizational Structure – agency and program	The foundation of the agency, including reporting relationships and lines of communication.
Resource Management	Human Resource policies and procedures, physical and financial resource planning and management (including budget development and approval).	The demonstrated capacity of the agency to plan and direct the physical, financial and human resources of the agency.
Records Management	Policies and procedures for records management.	Formal agency processes for records management, including creation, maintenance, access and disposal.
WORFORCE		
Element/ Standard	Content	Definition
Staffing	Staffing qualifications and competencies	The human resources required to achieve the goals and objectives of the agency.
Training/ Education/Skills.	Human resource development and continuing education	Strategies used to strengthen staff, student and volunteers' knowledge, effectiveness, efficiency, competency and proficiency in meeting agency goals and objectives.
Performance Evaluation	Human resources ongoing evaluation.	Processes and tools used to measure progress toward staff, student and volunteer identified agency and individual objectives.
PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION		
Element/ Standard	Content	Definition
Collaboration	Fostering partnerships, collaboration and sharing best evidence.	The ability to work jointly with others in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public health strategies.
PROGRAMS		
Element/ Standard	Content	Definition
Research and Knowledge Exchange	Research policies, activities and knowledge exchange.	As defined by agency policy and applicable legislative components (e.g., PHIPA).
Planning/ Implementation	Operational planning, needs assessment, evidence	The establishment of strategies/methods for the provision of public health

	informed decision making, community health status and program policies and procedures.	programs and services and to guide the agency towards achievement of stated goals and objectives.
Health Promotion	Education and skills development, supportive environments and healthy policy.	Strategies developed and implemented to enable and facilitate the improved health of the public.
Health Protection and Disease Prevention	Clinical services, case management, inspections and collaboration with community partners.	Those programs and services provided for the protection of health and the prevention of disease.
Monitoring/Evaluation	Ongoing surveillance, analysis and evaluation, review of operational plans, community/client input and reporting.	Strategies/tools used to measure and report progress towards the achievement of goals and objectives and to inform future planning.
Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Risk Management	Infectious/communicable disease reporting, emergency response planning, coordination with external agencies and communication, consultation and assistance.	Formal processes for public health emergency preparedness and risk management.
COMMUNICATION		
Element/Standard	Content	Definitions
Internal Communication	Policies and procedures for communication.	The processes and mechanisms to ensure communication between the governing body, the general administrative body and program and service staff members.
External Communication	Systematic communication to the public, regular communication with governments and community agencies and communication channels.	The processes by which information is provided to and exchanged between the public health unit and the community as a whole, including its various partners, clients and the public.

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