

10 Ways to Improve the Outcomes of Your Quality Improvement (QI) Projects

1. **Set improvement goals.** Use the Nursing Home STAR site at www.nhqi-star.org as a tool for setting targets and giving your team something to shoot for.
2. **Utilize your Quality Measure (QM) Quality Indicator Reports from your Casper Reports.** These are accessed using your MDS submission program and should be given to all staff involved in the MDS completion so they understand how their answers affect your QMs.
3. **When adverse outcomes do occur, do a root cause analysis** to establish where the breakdown in the care process occurred. Using QI tools can help uncover the reasons things go wrong.
4. **Empower staff to solve problems they encounter by asking them, “What do you think we should do?”** They are more likely to follow through with responsibilities when they help create them. Encourage front-line staff to participate in care plan meetings, since they care for and know their residents.
5. **Foster teamwork by not departmentalizing QM responsibility.** QI takes a team approach and various departments cannot solely “own” a QM or others will not be vested in assisting with the improvement process.
6. **All Department Heads and Management need to be visible on the floor.** Let the staff know the team includes everyone and management is aware of what is going on.
7. **Utilize your QI/Quality Assurance meetings to discuss your QMs.** Provide information on measures that are increasing or decreasing and brainstorm on potential problems and solutions.
8. **Improve communication in your building.** This includes communication involved in shift-to-shift reporting and communications between management and staff.
9. **Monitor and share data with staff.** Keeping track of data lets you know if your efforts are moving you in the right direction. Sharing data with staff lets your entire team know what is working well or what is not. Provide staff with STAR graphs quarterly to visualize status.
10. **Allow for consistent caregivers for your residents.** This will allow each staff member to develop a relationship with his or her residents, and promotes a sense of responsibility to those in their care.

Visit The Illinois Foundation for Quality Health Care’s Web site at www.ifqhc.org for resources to assist with your Quality Improvement efforts.



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