

Essentials of Continuous Quality Improvement

- Know who your customers are
- Understand their wants and needs
- Understand the key process of your work that affects those needs and wants
- Continually improve those processes

Here's a management theory that fits in with principles espoused by Deming:

- By understanding root causes, work processes and the use and interpretation of data we will develop a program focused on patient need and compliment the care delivery system.
- In other words, as Deming says, people aren't bad, systems are bad. Usually the biggest barrier to quality is found to be the system and management. Front-line employees usually get blamed.

Service begins at the first point of contact the phone!

"The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it's the same problem you had last year." John Foster Dulles

Productivity in healthcare can be defined as the relationship between resources, services and quality.

Productivity improvement in healthcare can be defined as the improvement in the relationship between resources and services with quality remaining the same or improving.

Organizations need three kinds of measures: Financial, Operational, and Quality. There are challenges, and most organizational measures are financial. However, financial systems are intentionally backward-focused. They tell you how the organization performed in the past. By the time managers get the information it's out of date! Effective measurement systems must incorporate all 3 components, and focus everyone in the organization on the work that most needs doing.

Why doesn't the free market economy exist in healthcare? Think about this: if the copayment were \$15, \$50, or \$75, which would you purchase a Chevy Cavalier or a Lexus? For many, health care is still perceived to be a free good how does the market regulate a free good???

How should the VALUE equation operate in health care? "After I, as the patient, have made (with my doctor's help) the best Quality decision, shouldn't Service, Access, Convenience, and Cost be part of the final decision? Is this kind of information available in healthcare? HA. Not in my market.

What is the cost of quality? 4 categories:

- Prevention (this is a good cost) do it right the first time
- Appraisal inspection to find errors
- Internal failure fixing errors
- External failures unhappy customers.
- Invest in GOOD quality to drive out the cost of BAD quality. Fix PROCESSES, not just PROBLEMS.

Continuous improvement means you're never there you're always striving for improvement. Shoot for continuous small steps rather than a home run.