The Importance of Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q) for PA’s Department of Public Welfare (DPW), Office of Developmental Programs (ODP)

OVERVIEW - THE ODP IM4Q PROGRAM

Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q) gathers, analyzes, and reports on information to improve satisfaction and everyday lives of individuals receiving intellectual disability (ID) services through the PA Office of Developmental Programs (ODP). ODP provides funds through Administrative Entities (AE) to contract non-profit entities NOT providing direct service/supports to people with ID to do IM4Q. The focus on living issues such as choice, inclusion, and rights allow highlighted practices for individuals wherever they are living and working.

Local IM4Q programs conduct face-to-face interviews with selected people receiving services from ODP and a telephone interview with a family member, friend, or guardian. Considerations are provided to supports coordination organizations (SCOs) within each AE for follow-up action, and data are recorded for system-wide quality improvement.

Each local IM4Q program has a governing board comprised of people with disabilities and families. A coordinator selects teams of people with disabilities, family members, and others to conduct the interviews using a statewide interview instrument.

The IM4Q Program enters collected data into the ODP Home and Community Services Information System (HCSIS), along with data collected for the National Core Indicators (NCI). A report is sent to the AE with specific considerations to improve the person’s life. The AE works with the SCO to address considerations with a provider agency and/or family/guardian and the local IM4Q program informs of what changes have been executed. The IM4Q data are also analyzed, and statewide and AE reports are produced and made public.

The Deputy Secretary of the ODP appoints an IM4Q Statewide Steering Committee that independently reviews State reports and makes recommendations to improve IM4Q practices, policies, and services.

THE IMPORTANCE OF IM4Q

1. Consumer, Family, and Citizen Involvement

Unique input from consumers/family:
The ONLY INDEPENDENT source of information from families/consumers gathered by ODP, offering valuable input about ODP service.

2011-2012: 6960 consumer surveys
2500 family surveys
Since 2000: 78,000 consumer surveys
30,000 family surveys

Employment:
IM4Q programs employ people with disabilities.

2011 - 578 people worked in IM4Q
251-people with disabilities
260-family members
130- other PA residents

IM4Q Board Member Participation:
51% people with disabilities/family members

2011 - 246 people on IM4Q Boards
107 people with disabilities
102 family members
65 other PA residents

Active participation in decision-making:
The IM4Q monitors (family members/consumers) report on consumer and family member data, actively participating in AE and state level partnerships in decision-making.
Help ODP Policy Changes: Data has led ODP to policy changes for system improvement.

Examples. Many people interviewed...:

Did not have a way to communicate. Outcome: ODP Communication Bulletin. AEs directed to emphasize communication training and regularly review consumer’s access to technology.

Did not have a valid form of identification. Outcome: ODP issued a memorandum that all people served in the ODP system are required to have identification cards.

Were unable to vote. Outcome: Supports coordinators now inquire about voting and registration.

Had mail opened without permission. Outcome: ODP memorandum to providers stating a person’s privacy with regard to receiving mail must be protected.

Support the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Waiver Assurances: ODP uses IM4Q to support waiver assurances with regard to health and safety, to both support the minimum requirements and to address major quality improvement issues.

Make Data Comparisons: Using NCI data, ODP compares quality of life indicators at the national, state, regional, and county levels with NCI reports issued by the Human Services Research Institute and the data included in IM4Q Statewide Summaries created by the Institute on Disabilities at Temple.

Improve ODP System: AE MH/ID Boards, AE Quality Councils and provider agencies use IM4Q to improve practices, leading to improved services and quality of life for people with ID.

Improve Provider Services: Providers use data to analyze and improve their practices with regard to quality improvement.

Analyze Trends: 13+ years of IM4Q data are used by ODP Quality Management system for trend analysis, looking for patterns of performance to improve service.

Plan by ODP and AEs: ODP uses IM4Q for yearly planning; AEs are required by ODP to use IM4Q in quality management plans and in executing change locally. The IM4Q Statewide Steering Committee (ODP advisory body), uses reports developed by HSRI and the Institute on Disabilities for policy/practice recommendations.

Usability of IM4Q Data: Used to evaluate ODP service system; information on populations such as people residing in personal care homes, youth in transition, employment, habilitation, and life-sharing; AEs gather data on local concerns.

Major Concerns are Discovered/Addressed: IM4Q acts as an independent safeguard for ODP by addressing any real or perceived incidents endangering the well-being of interviewees.

Impact on the Consumer Interviewed: People’s lives improve when written considerations go to AE which works with the Supports Coordination Organization sharing with provider/family to work toward change in the person’s life.

Significance of Participating in the National Core Indicators (NCI) Project: PA has participated in NCI since 1998. 39 states and DC participate. Federal government to use data in benchmarking state practices.

IM4Q is a recognized program of distinction. For a list of published articles, book chapters and conference presentations on IM4Q, visit: www.disabilities.temple.edu/programs/im4q/

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