Quality Improvement and Building a Quality Culture:

Questions to Ask:

The Office for People With Developmental Disabilities continues to support system change through a variety of quality initiatives. These initiatives are the cornerstone of OPWDD and service provider efforts to enhance the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and ensure individuals are achieving valued outcomes through person-centered planning, choice, access and community inclusion.

Many of the initiatives involve looking at the funding and delivery of services through a different lens:

- **Agency Quality Performance:** How do we comprehensively assess provider quality?
- **Home and Community Based Settings Standards:**How do we rethink outcomes and supports for individuals, including person-centered planning, as well as physical environment and communities in which these supports are provided?
- **Direct Support Professional Core Competencies and Code of Ethics:** How do we enhance tools and training for direct support staff who are the foundation of service delivery for individuals?
- **Transformation Agenda:**How we reevaluate, assess and change the system to enhance employment and self-direction opportunities, housing and residential supports, increase coordination in service delivery and increase flexibility and responsiveness?

The purpose of this toolkit resource is to:

- Establish how a QI Plan and the planning process are integral to creating a culture of quality and system change to ensure the delivery of high quality services and quality of care
- Provide steps to developing a QI Plan
- Identify components of an effective QI Plan
- Provide examples of QI in practice

To promote the delivery of high quality services, agencies should consider the following[1]:

- **Leadership:** Is there a process to hold employees accountable for QI? Are adequate resources dedicated to building a quality culture? Do leaders have a clear vision of what a quality culture means for the organization currently and in the future? Do leaders engage in data drive decision making? Has leadership adopted organizational policies and plans that support a culture of quality?
- **Employee Empowerment:**How do employees account for time dedicated to QI? Is QI incorporated into employment position descriptions? Is QI incorporated into the employee performance appraisal process? Do employees have the ability to make and/or have input into process improvements? Is there a process for employees to formally recommend and/or initiate QI projects?
- **Person-Centered Planning and Outcomes:**Is there a mechanism to assess satisfactionand whether valued outcomes are beingachieved among individual's being served? Is data from the person-centered planning process used for process improvements? Are the needs of individuals appropriately considered during decision making?
- **Teambuilding and Collaboration** Is there a mechanism for effective communication and information sharing across and within teams? Is there a process to monitor team performance?
- **QI Infrastructure:** Are specific staff assigned for monitoring QI initiatives? How is progress being measured? Are QI strategies and initiatives aligned across the organization? How is data being collected and analyzed to determine performance and identify trends?

- **Continuous Quality Improvement:** Do employees question, on an ongoing basis, how processes can be improved and identify those areas for improvement? Once a QI project is adopted and implemented, is there a process to evaluate whether it was successful? If a project does not yield expected results, is there further examination into the cause and steps taken to address? Are QI principals incorporated into daily activities for identifying issues, addressing the concerns and evaluating progress?

Therefore, quality not only needs to be a part of agency culture, but requires support from all levels of the organization, resources and training.

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[1] Adapted from "Roadmap to Culture of Quality Improvement," available at http://qiroadmap.org/change-management/