

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) in Children's Mental Health: Challenges and Successes

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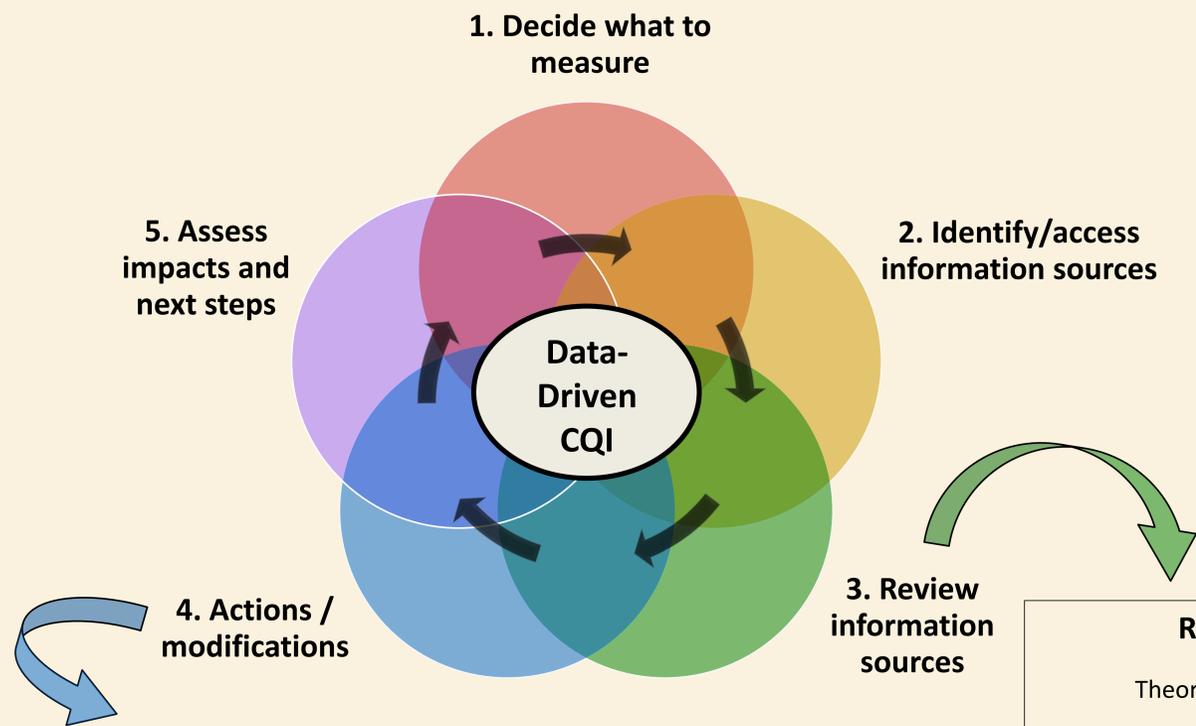
The Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program (CMHI) supports the development of community-based systems of care for children and youth with serious emotional disturbance and their families. The CMHI CQI Initiative Evaluation assessed CQI in 29 funded communities. The evaluation included a survey of key personnel in all 29 communities (116 respondents) and case studies of 5 communities. This poster presents findings from the CQI Initiative Evaluation.

Key Successful Strategies in Each Stage of CQI

- 1. Decide What to Measure**
 - Identify indicators relevant to various constituents
 - Link CQI to strategic plans, logic models, evaluation designs, and specific performance indicators
- 2. Identify / Access Information Sources**
 - Use existing data and collect new data as needed
 - Use various types of data to inform CQI, including quantitative and qualitative data
- 3. Review Information Sources**
 - Focus on identified indicators of interest while also recognizing when additional data may be needed
 - Garner input from varied constituents by presenting data in accessible formats
- 4. Actions / Modifications**
 - Translate findings into actionable recommendations
 - Assign responsibility for following through on recommendations
- 5. Assess Impacts and Next Steps**
 - Develop a plan to implement and assess the impact of any changes made
 - Identify areas for future improvement

MAJOR CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING CQI

- Staff turnover
- Involving decision-makers and other constituents
- Lack of adequate training, time, and resources
- Lack of commitment to CQI
- Identifying and accessing relevant data elements
- Presenting data in user-friendly formats
- Linking findings to specific program improvements
- Assessing the impact of changes



MAJOR SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES FOR CQI

- Formalize the CQI process, in part by identifying goals and defining roles
- Foster buy-in to CQI and engage a wide array of staff and constituents in CQI
- Establish a commitment to CQI
- Provide consistent leadership that understands and emphasizes the importance of CQI
- Provide training to all those involved in CQI
- Integrate CQI into the larger structure of work
- Create and regularly update a CQI plan

