



# IMPROVING QUALITY DMAS

## A GUIDE FOR VIRGINIA'S PERSONAL CARE PROVIDERS

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### Commitment to Quality

The goals of every business are to grow and prosper while providing the best services possible. The challenges of providing routine care and meeting the needs of regulations become easier when systems designed to enhance quality are in place. Unmet needs and challenges faced by recipients and providers are reduced to a more manageable size, thus increasing recipient satisfaction with services provided and quality of life.

A commitment to quality will help make your business competitive, maximize your resources, and raise customer and employee satisfaction. No matter the size of the business you operate, quality assurance strategies are simple to use. The cost of making changes should be related to agency processes and how staff members perform tasks, not finances. Within this brochure you will find helpful hints on how to implement strategies to help enhance your agency's services.

### Continuous Quality Improvement

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) is a simple way to begin your agency's quality improvement plan. It is a systematic and ongoing process intended to improve the quality of your business.

To start the process, set aside time with your RN and administrative staff to talk about the strengths and challenges of providing services. Then systematically

- ◆ **Identify** unmet needs or challenges
- ◆ **Plan** for changes
- ◆ **Implement** the changes
- ◆ **Check** what happened
- ◆ **Act** by accepting successful changes and abandoning poor strategies
- ◆ **Repeat** – continue to incorporate successful changes into your QI plan

For more information on the Deming Cycle by W. Edwards Deming go to <http://www.hci.com.au/hcisite2/toolkit/pdcaycl.htm>

**The Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Quality Framework** serves as a common frame of reference for all parties who have a stake in the quality of services and supports for people with disabilities. It focuses attention on critical dimensions of service delivery and the desired outcomes of the four functions of quality management: design, discovery, remedy and improvement. For more information go to <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicaid/waivers/frameworkmatrix.asp>



# PROVIDER CAPACITY AND CAPABILITIES

## STAFFING

### *Aide Retention*

Retain the best staff available

- ◆ use a 90 day probation period for new hires
- ◆ implement annual performance reviews
- ◆ provide staff with an orientation to Medicaid services
- ◆ provide an agency policy and procedures information session
- ◆ value staff members and acknowledge the work they perform
- ◆ create a reward system for quality work completed
- ◆ utilize training through the VA Geriatric Education Center <http://www.sahp.vcu.edu/gerontology>

### *Aide Placement*

When determining aide placement

- ◆ assign aides to recipients within their own community
- ◆ consider the aide's family schedule, including child care needs
- ◆ be sensitive to how receptive the recipient will be to the aide
- ◆ match male aides to male recipients whenever possible

### *Training Corner*

Provide trainings that

- ◆ accommodate the aide's busy schedule
- ◆ can be completed off site or online
- ◆ increase knowledge about recipient needs and providing care
- ◆ inform staff about services the agency provides

## DOCUMENTATION

### *Writing Standards*

Require staff to

- ◆ write original comments that fully describe the recipient's emotional, physical, and medical health, not the same summary note each week
- ◆ write concrete observations, not personal opinion
- ◆ sign documentation; do not use photo-copied signatures in notes

### *Chart it*

Create a chart that

- ◆ meets *your* agency and nursing needs
- ◆ meets Medicaid requirements
- ◆ is kept in an order that is easy to find, read, and understand

### *Checks and Balances*

Create a system of checks and balances to assure documentation is accurate

- ◆ match timesheet hours against aide record
- ◆ match aide record against staffing coordinator notes
- ◆ match staffing coordinator notes against timesheet
- ◆ aide record notes should reflect plan of care
- ◆ RN supervisory notes address recipient concerns and meet requirements
- ◆ updated plan of care reflects recent aide comments, recipient comments, and RN supervisory notes



# PARTICIPANT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## RECIPIENT RIGHTS

- ◆ Review the concepts of confidentiality and rights and responsibilities with the recipient *each year*
  - ▶ have recipient sign the rights and responsibilities form
  - ▶ give recipient a copy of the form
  - ▶ place original signed form in chart
- ◆ Address the recipient by his or her preferred name
- ◆ Use words, expressions, and gestures that are respectful
- ◆ Ask the recipient about his or her preferences
- ◆ Include the recipient in planning services
  - ▶ have recipient sign plan of care every 6 months
  - ▶ using the recipient's words, write his or her goals for services on plan of care
  - ▶ document goal achievements – why or why not they were met

### *Nursing Notes*

Use a recipient-friendly approach to home care

- ◆ wear street clothes instead of scrubs
- ◆ ask the recipient how he or she feels instead of relying on nursing assessments
- ◆ think of the recipient as a person, not a patient
- ◆ encourage the recipient to speak for him or herself

### *Discussions for Staff, Recipients, and Family Caregivers*

Initiate discussion about

- ◆ the difference between being a professional helper and a friend
- ◆ expectations of work provided by staff
- ◆ how personal care is delivered
- ◆ the recipient's right to direct services
- ◆ the role of guardians and primary caregivers in providing services
- ◆ advance directives

## PARTICIPANT SAFEGUARDS

### SAFETY FIRST

#### *Be Prepared*

Keep emergency contact information in the recipient chart and at the recipient's home for easy access during an emergency

Create a *written* plan of action for the recipient and the aide in case of health crisis or a natural disaster

Maintain an agency incident/accident report book that allows you to

- ◆ record each event reported by staff
- ◆ record action taken
- ◆ record recommendations for preventing incident in the future including staff training
- ◆ review incidents, responses, and ideas on how to prevent future incidents with staff during supervision

Help recipients and caregivers create a realistic "back up plan" in case the aide is unable to provide services



## PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES AND SATISFACTION

### QUALITY COUNTS

Use outcome measures that indicate the quality of services such as number of

- ◆ days recipient is maintained in home
- ◆ shifts recipient does not receive services
- ◆ incidents and accidents reported during shifts
- ◆ types of complaints received and how they were resolved

Ask the recipient and the primary care provider what they think about the services

- ◆ conduct confidential annual recipient satisfaction survey and use results to modify your program as needed
- ◆ discuss satisfaction during routine home visits
- ◆ add a recipient satisfaction statement to the nursing note

### 11 Steps to Improving Recipient Satisfaction

1. Treat the recipient as a person
2. Respect the recipient's right to direct his or her care
3. Listen to the recipient's concerns
4. Provide services as scheduled
5. Send same aide to home each time
6. Provide substitute aides when regular aide is unavailable
7. Provide recipient with agency phone number
8. Return calls from recipient within 24 hours
9. Call recipient about aide cancellation well before expected arrival time
10. Help recipient connect to other needed services
11. Remain sensitive to changing needs over time

## JOIN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Become an active member of a professional home care association. Share your experiences and learn how others manage challenges and resolve problems.

### Virginia Association for Home Care

8001 Franklin Farms Dr., Suite 110  
Richmond, VA 23229  
1-800-755-8636  
[www.vahc.org](http://www.vahc.org)

### Virginia Association of Personal Care Providers

PO Box 17793  
Richmond, VA 23226  
1-804-225-4222  
[www.vapcp.org](http://www.vapcp.org)

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