
Local Quality Assurance Resource Manual

Chapter 3

Local Quality Assurance Committees



NOTE: This Resource Manual is a product of the Research and Evaluation contract between the University of Oregon's Educational and Community Supports unit within the College of Education and the Department of Human Services, Seniors and People with Disabilities, State of Oregon (Agreement # 108857, Amendment 1). This chapter presents some of the quality assurance program requirements, as well as items that are not specifically required but offered as suggestions or examples. All CDDPs must remember that their role is to implement a Quality Assurance program that supports the State's current Quality Assurance Plan. The Resource Manual includes requirements for Quality Assurance Programs that are current as of June 2005. Because Administrative Rules and Contract requirements change, CDDPs should always check for and apply more current rules and contracts developed after the publication of this workbook.

Local Quality Assurance Committees

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LOCAL QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEES

Objective: Provide an overview of the purpose, role, and requirements for the Local Quality Assurance Committee.

Requirements: The Local Quality Assurance Committee is required by the Oregon Administrative Rule for CDDPs.

This excerpt from the CDDP rule is current as of May 2005. Be sure to check the DHS website for any changes and updates. That website is:

<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/spd/alpha.htm>

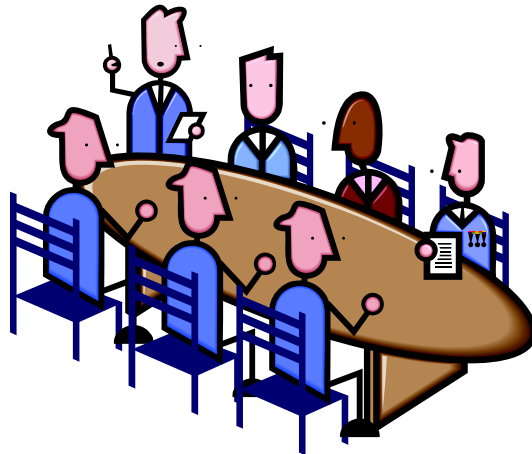
411-320-40 Community Developmental Disability Program (08/03/04)

(e) *Local quality assurance committee. The CDDP will utilize a committee of stakeholders to assist in the development and review of local quality assurance plans and activities.*

(Sections deleted)

(C) *Activities of the committee will include:*

- (i) *Providing review and comment on CDDP plans for local QA plan activities;*
- (ii) *Providing review and comment on data gathering instruments and methods; and*
- (iii) *Providing review and comment on the results of information gathered by the CDDP and the effectiveness of corrective actions.*



Guidelines and Suggestions

QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Assign Responsibilities. The CDDP and its Quality Assurance Committee provide important support to the overall implementation of the State's Quality Plan. Each CDDP may design the relationship with its QA Committee according to local policy around a range of activities, including:
 - Reviewing and providing input to the local Annual Quality Plan.
 - Conducting consumer satisfaction surveys and focus groups according to local plan or upon request of SPD.
 - Analyzing the summarized results of the consumer satisfaction probes, and the CDDP's abuse, licensing and SERT databases and quality improvement plan.
 - Providing review and comment on CDDP plans for Local QA Plan activities.
 - Providing review and comment on the results of information gathered by the CDDP and the effectiveness of corrective actions.

2. Develop a Mission or Purpose Statement for your local committee—whether it be a freestanding QA Committee or a part of a larger committee role. This will help with keeping the committee focused, and also when you need to recruit new members.



Sample Mission Statement

“Identify and Recommend System Improvements”

The mission of the Lane County QA Committee is to identify and recommend opportunities for improvement in systems related to the health, safety and quality of life of individuals with developmental disabilities in Lane County.

The mission is accomplished by providing review and comment on:

- Plans for quality assurance activities
- Data gathering instruments and methods
- Results of information gathered by the Lane County Developmental Disabilities Services office and the effectiveness of corrective actions
- Periodic consumer input



2. Develop a “Charter” that Defines the Specific Role of the Committee. Similar to, but much less formal than by-laws, a Charter defines the scope, boundaries, and logistics related to the QA Committee. It also will help the committee feel their work is important.

Sections of the Charter might include:

Purpose
Membership
Leadership
Responsibilities
Boundaries
Resources
Logistics

...or other areas that will help to clarify the committee’s work.

See the following pages for a sample QA Committee Charter.



Sample Quality Assurance Committee Charter

Purpose: The purpose of the Oak County Local QA Committee is to assist in the development and review of local quality assurance plans and activities.

Membership: The committee is composed of at least eight members representing the following groups:

- Self-advocates
- Service providers
- Advocates
- Family members of individuals with developmental disabilities
- Service Coordinators

Selection. Individuals are invited to serve on the Committee by the CDDP Program Manager. The Program Manager may request recommendations for potential participants from existing committee members, CDDP staff members, or others.

Term. Committee members are asked to serve for a minimum 1 year term, which may be extended indefinitely by the CDDP DD Program Manager, in one year increments.

Leadership: The QA Committee will be chaired by the County Quality Assurance (QA) Coordinator. In the absence of the QA Coordinator, s/he may appoint another member to act in his/her place.

Responsibilities: The general responsibilities of a QA Committee are defined by Oregon Administrative Rule for Community Developmental Disability Programs. **(411-320-40)**

- Providing review and comment on CDDP plans for local QA plan activities;
- Providing review and comment on data gathering instruments and methods; and
- Providing review and comment on the results of information gathered by the CDDP and the effectiveness of

corrective actions.
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Sample Quality Assurance Committee Charter (continued)

In addition to those responsibilities, the Oak County QA Committee also will:

- Plan an annual celebration of the accomplishments of service providers and individuals served.

Boundaries: The QA Committee's role is advisory only. Unless specifically delegated by the Program Manager to the Committee, all final decisions rest with employees of the county developmental disabilities program.

Resources: The QA Committee has a budget of \$500 plus the staff time assigned to the committee. Staff time includes:

- QA Coordinator: planning and follow-up to meetings, Committee chair.
- DD Program Manager: attend Committee meetings, advise QA Coordinator in planning and follow-up activities
- Service Coordinator Representative: participate as a committee member
- Support staff: attend meetings, maintain minutes, distribute minutes and meeting announcements to members, prepare documents for distribution.

Other costs that may be paid through the QA Committee include transportation, incentives for participation in focus groups, and child care. Costs for printing, accessible materials, and mailing will be paid through the regular department budget.

Logistics: Meetings will be held every other month on the third Thursday of the month, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Oak County Public Building. Members are responsible for arranging for their own transportation to and from meetings.

Records: The Developmental Disabilities Program will provide support staff to record and distribute minutes, and to maintain records

documenting the work of the committee.

Ground Rules: Hold all information about consumers confidential.

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3. Provide a Clear Position Description of Roles and Responsibilities. Best practice suggests that it is important to have position descriptions for volunteers. Because the QA Committee is largely composed of volunteers, a position description that defines expectations (e.g., attendance at meetings, committee work outside of meetings), roles (e.g., taken from the purpose of the QA Committee in the Team Charter), length of service, and qualifications is important. The position description may be used as part of a recruitment packet, as well as for orienting committee new members.

Sample Volunteer Position Description

Position Title: Member, Quality Assurance Committee

Type of Position: Volunteer

Term: Appointments are for one year, and may be extended on the decision of the Program Manager.

Role: The specific role of a QA committee is defined by Oregon Administrative Rule:

- Provide review and comment on CDDP plans for local QA plan activities;
- Provide review and comment on data gathering instruments and methods; and
- Provide review and comment on the results of information gathered by the CDDP and the effectiveness of corrective actions.

Expectations: 2-5 hours per month of volunteer time, including:

- Attend monthly, 2-hour meetings of the full committee.
- Participate in one subcommittee during the year. Subcommittees usually meet for 2 hours once per month.
- Read materials sent to committee members prior to a meeting.
- Arrive on time for meetings and stay for the full meeting.
- Inform the QA Coordinator in advance if you must miss a meeting.
- Maintain confidentiality related to information received.

The County Program expects that each member of the committee will provide thoughtful consideration and review of each item brought to the committee for consideration.

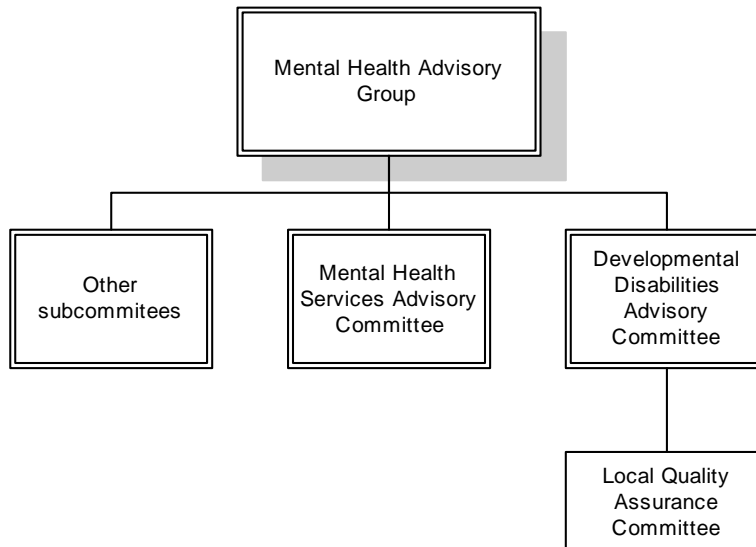
Qualifications: Eligible volunteer members include: Self-advocates, Service providers, Advocates, Family members of individuals with developmental disabilities, and Service Coordinators with an interest in improving the quality of services in Elm County.

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4. Use Term Appointments so that people understand that they are agreeing to serve for a specific period of time. Explain how an appointment may be extended.
 5. Scheduling Meetings. There are some fundamental strategies for any recurring meeting that can help members attend more consistently:
 - Hold meetings at a consistent time and day of the month, e.g. 10-12 on the third Thursday of each month.
 - Schedule meetings a year in advance so that everyone can plan ahead for meetings.
 - Provide committee members with a list of dates, times, and the location of committee meetings for the foreseeable future.
 - Plan ahead for canceling meetings that fall at inconvenient times, e.g., near holidays or during the height of summer vacations.
 - Work with the committee to determine the best time of day for meetings.
 6. Frequency of Meetings. The frequency of meetings largely should be determined by the amount of work the county needs the committee to perform. One way to determine this is to develop a calendar of topics for committee work, estimating the amount of time each topic will require (See the section on Local QA Committee Meetings, for more information on this type of calendar). If the role of the committee can be fulfilled by quarterly meetings, then holding monthly meetings may result in bored members who drop out quickly. However, not meeting often enough leaves committee members feeling that they are unable to accomplish anything or have little connection to the group. There is no specific requirement in the OARs defining the frequency of committee meetings, so counties can make their own decision in this area.
 7. Use an Accessible and Comfortable Location. Make sure the meeting location is accessible, both in terms of physical accessibility and geographic accessibility. Consider whether the DD Program offices really are the most convenient for everyone on the committee.
 8. Help with Transportation. Arrange for transportation or offer mileage reimbursement, if necessary. Encourage members to carpool.
 9. Remind Members of Meeting. Send out the agenda and minutes from the previous meeting as a reminder of each upcoming meeting. This also will give members some help with remembering the previous discussions and a chance to preview the upcoming topics to be better prepared.
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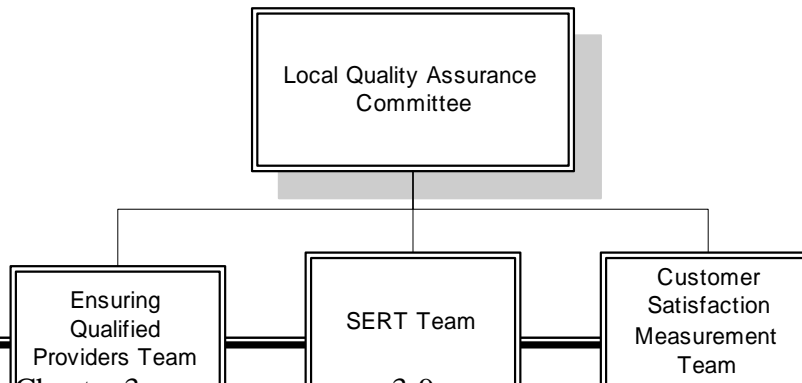
QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

1. Consider different structures for the Quality Assurance Committee. There are many possibilities:

- Form the committee as a subcommittee of the DD Advisory Committee and/or Mental Health Advisory Group. This may add status and recognition at the county level to committee membership.



- Establish subcommittees of the QA Committee with responsibility to review and report on their specific area of responsibility. For example, one subcommittee could be responsible for developing customer satisfaction measurement instruments and reviewing the results. Another subcommittee could be the SERT team. Another could focus on Qualified Providers. The committees could be developed to each focus on one or more of the six goals (e.g., Protection of Health and Safety, Qualified Providers, Eligibility), or on various pieces of the Annual Quality Plan. However it is divided, the committees can perform parts of the work required of the committee. Organized in this way, the full committee may need to meet less often.



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- Consider the committee to be made up of a core group and a series of special interest groups. Establish the structure so that one or two members of the special interest groups represent their group as members of the full committee. Bring topics geared specifically to each of the special interest groups for discussion. For example, a discussion of the SERT data and system may require a totally different approach in a group of family members, a group of interested community people, or a group of service providers. These special interest groups could be run as focus groups, asking the participants to discuss a question, and bringing the results to the full committee. Such a design would allow a broader number of people to provide review and input related to QA Committee issues, but their work could be focused around topics of greatest interest to them. In addition, it may be easier to run a meeting that supports the special needs of particular groups, such as individuals with disabilities. The focus groups then can serve two functions: including a broader range of people in QA Committee work, and as a strategy for obtaining feedback from stakeholders of the Developmental Disabilities program. (For strategies related to planning and running focus groups, see Chapter 5 on Measuring Customer Satisfaction.)



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- Some counties are using the DD Advisory Committee of the Mental Health Advisory Group as their Local QA Committee. There is no requirement that says that the Local QA Committee must be separate from other committees, as long as it is able to carry out its work related to the local and state quality programs.

GENERAL TIPS

Many of the following tips were provided by QA Coordinators from their experience in working with QA Committees.

- Consider any mistakes that you make as opportunities for learning.
- Provide training from the beginning. Give an overview of program and then at each meeting focus on a different parts of the local system and Quality Program.
- Offer refreshments or provide lunch.
- Have a Question and Answer time after each topic and meeting.
- Send reminder 1 week prior to meeting.
- Make sure the committee both understands they have things to do, and that they do them. For example, ask the committee to develop a consumer satisfaction survey. Hands on concrete tasks are great for maintaining interest and commitment.
- In one county, a committee member called OTAC to get regional training and also developed a letter to the legislature.
- Give frequent feedback to the committee. Let them know what happened to their recommendations from previous meetings.
- Help committee members to stay organized. Provide notebooks for committee members. Organize sections of the notebook for the meeting calendar, agendas, minutes, OARs, and local QA plan. Give them handouts that already have been three-hole punched.
- Include a time for information-sharing on the agenda.
- Ask the committee “What do you want to hear”?



QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Objective: Define who may be members of the county’s QA Committee, and provide suggestions for how to recruit members, and how to maintain their interest.

Requirements: 411-320-40 Community Developmental Disability Program (08/03/04)

(e) *Local quality assurance committee. The CDDP will utilize a committee of stakeholders to assist in the development and review of local quality assurance plans and activities.*

(B) *Committee membership will include persons representing self-advocates, service providers, advocates, family members of individuals with developmental disabilities and Service Coordinators.*

There are no specific requirements for the structure of the Local QA Committee.

Guidelines and Suggestions

MEMBERSHIP

1. Consider using an existing group (e.g., DD Advisory Committee, DD Planning Committee or DD Council) to assume the role of Local QA Committee. This provides experienced, committed members, and reduces the number of separate groups-- Washington, Deschutes, Mid-Columbia are using this strategy.



2. “Promote” the SERT Team. There has been a requirement for SERT review teams for a few years. Some counties have chosen to combine the SERT team function—reviewing trends and patterns in serious incidents—with the broader role of a Local QA Committee. Lane County has shifted the review of SERT incidents to an internal committee, and asked former SERT Team members to become the QA Committee. This provided a core of dedicated and experienced members.

RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS

1. Develop a Recruitment Packet. Pull together a set of materials that describe the role and responsibilities of the Local QA Committee. Include, for example, copies of the mission statement, Team Charter, Position Description, a sample agenda and minutes. Put everything into a brightly colored folder to give to prospective members. They will get the impression that the committee is well-organized and worth their time.

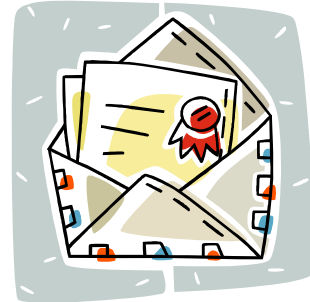
2. Maintain a Continuous Recruitment Effort. Don't wait until you need to fill a position on the committee to begin the recruitment effort. Use everyday strategies, such as:
 - Ask existing members to bring a friend or colleague to a meeting.
 - Ask staff members to recruit self-advocates and family members for committee,
 - Announce when meetings are held and invite interested persons to visit.
 - Advertise in local agency newsletters or the Clarion.
 - Consider who you know who would be a valuable addition to the committee, and “Just ASK”!! Many people would be willing to volunteer, but need to be asked. You'll be surprised how many people will say “Yes!”

3. Recruit members from self-advocacy organizations...such as People First!, Self-Advocates as Leaders, and Partners in Policymaking. Advertise in their newsletters, go to meetings, talk with group leaders for recommendations. Going directly to these organizations will help you to find individuals who are likely to have had training and experience related to working on committees.

4. Do a recruitment presentation or conduct a focus group at a conference or local meeting. There are several conferences in Oregon during the year that include participation of individuals who are interested in issues related to developmental disabilities. For example, try OHSU's Wellness Conference, the Oregon Developmental Disabilities Inservice, The Arc Convention, or the People First Convention. If you can, submit a proposal for a presentation to get on the schedule for the conference, or ask for a “poster session.” Attend local meetings of The Arc, service clubs, or other groups to explain the role of the committee and invite individuals to visit a meeting.



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5. Invite members of the DD Advisory Committee and/or Mental Health Advisory Group to participate. If your QA Committee is a separate group, this will strengthen a valuable link between these groups.
 6. Send a letter to the Executive Director of local agencies asking them to identify a participant. The Executive Director may have too many commitments to become a good, active committee member. However, they know who in their agencies have the energy and interest to take on this role.
 7. Invite existing committee members to participate in the recruitment effort. Everyone on the committee has a network of friends and colleagues. Use these networks to help to find people with an interest and skill to offer.



MAINTAINING INTEREST OF MEMBERS

1. Visual Record. Do not assume that everyone is at the same reading level. Outline the agenda and record the discussion and conclusions onto newsprint using colorful pens and images.
2. Small Group Discussion is Vital. Allow time to use small groups during the meeting so members can talk with one another about their questions or the meaning of some information that is being presented before sharing with the full group.

People who are hesitant to talk in front of the full committee may be valuable contributors in small groups.

3. Involve Members in Presenting Information to the Full Group. Ask committee members to join work groups and be responsible for bringing information back to the full group. Be prepared to allow time and staff to facilitate these work groups. Use a work group to prepare committee members for a full group meeting by disseminating materials and the agenda well in advance and request a specific task to be completed. If members with disabilities have personal assistants working with



them, ensure that the assistants have information about the meetings so they may support the individual's participation as well as offer insight themselves.

4. Use Posters. Present information in a concrete and relevant manner using colorful posters that summarize the highlights of the meeting or of a specific issue. Be clear and brief with more detailed information in a handout or via presentation.

5. Do Something. It is important that committee members feel that they are accomplishing something, making a contribution to their community, by



means of their participation on the QA Committee. Recruit their full involvement in planning annual focus group meetings and consumer satisfaction surveys. If meetings consist of primarily presenting information to committee members, their interest and attendance will quickly wane. However, if the committee is responsible to establish policy, develop

procedures, or plan events, they are more likely to feel that their time is being well-used. Be clear about which decisions can be made by the committee, and which are reserved for CDDP personnel.

6. Have Some Fun!! Make sure that committee meetings include fun as well as hard work. Start and end every meeting with a joke. Ask members to bring in “Quality-focused” cartoons. Give members opportunities to move around during the meeting—even stretching their legs will help with their ability to focus on the work at hand.

7. Offer Refreshments. Food and beverages always help groups to feel better about attending a meeting. Offer at least ice water, or coffee and tea, to help people feel comfortable. Cookies or healthy fruit and vegetable snacks go a long way in helping you have satisfied committee members!!



LOCAL QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Objective: Provide ideas for how to structure meetings of the Local Quality Assurance Committee to ensure that the work of the committee is accomplished.

Requirements: There are no requirements in the Oregon Administrative Rules specifically related to the number or format of meetings of the Local QA Committee. The CDDP is expected to convene the committee as often as needed to carry out the responsibilities of the committee related to the local quality program.

Guidelines and Suggestions

SCHEDULE

1. Develop an annual calendar of meetings. Determine the topics that must be addressed by the committee across the year, and the time of the year at which these topics are most appropriate. For example, you may want to reserve a meeting in December or January for the committee to review the local Annual Quality Plan. Include on your planning calendar the topics, reports, and other materials that you will need to prepare for the committee. Then use this calendar to guide your work.

Sample Annual Planning Calendar for Committee Meetings

Month	Topics	Reports/Handouts
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review/approve Annual Quality Plan • Discuss priorities for Work Plan 	Revised Annual Quality Plan
February	Participant Health and Safety Review (Outcomes 1,2,5): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility Checklist reviews • Abuse and PSI data 	Annual Plan section Facility Checklist summary SERT data
March	Participant Health and Safety Review (Outcomes 3,4,6): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grievances and Complaints • Monthly monitoring visits 	Annual Plan section Grievances & complaints Monthly monitoring visits summary
April	Qualified Providers Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing and certifications • Results of corrective action plans 	Annual Plan section Licensing/certification report
May	Plans of Care Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing/certification reviews re: plans of care • Monthly monitoring visits 	Annual Plan section Plan of Care report

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**Sample Annual Planning Calendar for
Committee Meetings (*continued*)**

Month	Topics	Reports/Handouts
June	Level of Care Need Determinations • Waiver Reviews	Annual Plan section Summary of waiver reviews
July	Financial Accountability and Administrative Authority	Annual Plan section Results of Audit
August	Cancelled due to summer vacations	
September	SERT System Review • Review trends and patterns	Annual Plan section SERT reports Recommendations from SERT Team
October	Training session for Committee members	TBA
November	• Review Customer Satisfaction data • Complete plan for measuring customer satisfaction next year • Review surveys for needed changes	Annual Plan section Results of fall survey Results of focus groups
December	Cancelled due to holidays	

MEETING FORMAT AND PROCESS

Guidelines for making any meeting interesting and productive also apply to QA Committee meetings. Here are a few ideas:

- Use a standardized agenda format, based on the calendar of topics.
- Take minutes that are easy to read and that document all of the decisions made by the group. Information about the major points of discussion also is useful for later reference.
- Be clear about what you are asking of the Committee. Identify the points in the agenda where you will be asking them to vote, make a recommendation, or support an action that the QA Coordinator is proposing.
- Consider using something like the *Critical Questions Workbook* (available from SPD's Quality website: <http://www/Oregon.gov/DHS/SPD/QA/home.shtm>) for organizing a process for the Committee to review data and make recommendations.

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- Involve committee members in identifying areas of service or outcomes needing improvement. Through their experience with various aspects of the system, they often can offer valuable insights that give more depth to data presented.
 - Keep the meeting moving. Stay on task and focused. But allow time at the start, end or during a break, for free conversation and relaxation.



CONFIDENTIALITY

It is critical to maintain confidentiality regarding individual information when working with the QA Committee. Some QA Coordinators have raised issue related to their ability to maintain confidentiality related to individuals, when discussing incidents, particularly in smaller communities. Here are some things to consider:

- Only provide summary, grouped data to the Committee, rather than data on individual incidents.
- Ask all committee members to sign a confidentiality agreement when they agree to join the Committee.
- Be alert. Help others on the Committee to live up to your expectations regarding maintaining the confidentiality of individual information. Interrupt a person who seems to be about to make a mistake in this area.

A complete review of information related to maintaining confidentiality is beyond the scope of this Resource Manual. However, there is an excellent resource on confidentiality on the DHS website:

<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/spd/tools/additional/generic/a.htm>

HELPING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN A MEANINGFUL WAY

Objective: Identify ways to support, involve, and encourage people with disabilities to actively participate on the Committee.

Requirements: 411-320-40 Community Developmental Disability Program
(08/03/04)

(e) *Local quality assurance committee. The CDDP will utilize a committee of stakeholders to assist in the development and review of local quality assurance plans and activities.*

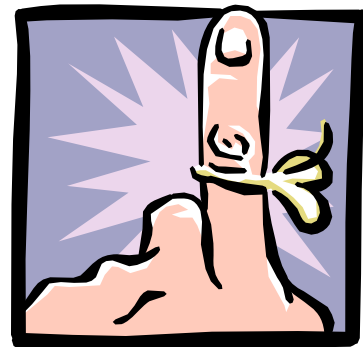
(C) *Committee membership will include persons representing self-advocates, service providers, advocates, family members of individuals with developmental disabilities and Service Coordinators.*

Guidelines and Suggestions

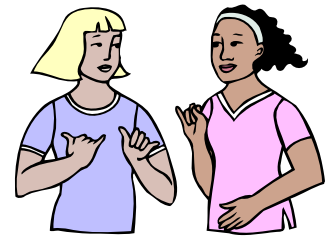
PROVIDE SUPPORT TO INDIVIDUALS TO PARTICIPATE FULLY

1. Provide Clear Job Description of Individual's Role & Responsibilities. Describe a specific project that the individual might work on first or what subcommittee she will be a part of. For example, she might be on the subcommittee that will plan a focus group to gather information on customer satisfaction. Give examples of what she might talk about at a meeting and how long it might take to prepare for the meeting. Explain the use of term appointments so that people understand that they are agreeing to serve for a specific period of time.

2. Provide Reminders in Between Meetings. Some individuals will need assistance with remembering meeting times and locations, following up on tasks, or remembering to bring needed materials to the meeting.



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3. Prepare the Individual for Each Meeting. Prior to the meeting explain the goal(s) of the meeting and explain how the group works. Discuss how people communicate with each other, and whether there are any particular rules that are followed by the group. Work together to help the individual think about what he will talk about during the meeting, the points she wants to make. Go over any materials prior to the meeting, such as minutes, agendas, or other handouts, to help familiarize the individual with these. Explain any hard to understand language that may appear. Help them to develop a list of questions they may want to bring up during the meeting.
 4. Support the Individual During the Meeting. Prior to the meeting, talk with the individual about the types of support she may need during the meeting. For example, some individuals may need help to meet other Committee members, and to remember names. Some may need assistance to stay on the topic, or a reminder of what they had planned to say.
 5. Provide Support After the Meeting. Take time after the meeting to review what was accomplished with the individual. Help the person to manage the materials from the meeting, storing them appropriately so they are ready for the next meeting. For those people with disabilities who have personal assistantsinvolve them.
 6. Help the Individual to Understand the Meaning of “Quality” and “Quality Assurance.” For example, explain that this is a way to “make sure that you are Happy, Healthy, and Safe” or “Quality Assurance is a way to make sure that everyone who receives services is Happy, Healthy, and Safe.”
 7. Keep the Meeting Short. Shorter meetings will help everyone to stay more focused on the topic at hand.
 8. Include More Than One Person with Disabilities in the Group. Joining a committee as the only person with disabilities participating may be daunting. Ask more than one person to join the Committee at the same time, so that they can be supporters to each other.



ESTABLISH INCLUSIVE METHODS

For every meeting, it is helpful to use methods that are inclusive of varying skills and abilities. Many of the strategies already discussed in earlier sections of this chapter also apply to supporting people with disabilities to participate fully.

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1. Use Visual Records. Do not assume that everyone is at the same reading level. Outline the agenda and record the discussion and conclusions onto newsprint using colorful pens and images.
 2. Small Group Discussion is Vital. Allow time to use small groups during the meeting so members can talk with one another about their questions or the meaning of some information that is being presented before sharing with the full group. These small groups should be facilitated.



3. Involve Members in Presenting Information to the Full Group. Ask committee members to join work groups and be responsible for bringing information back to the full group. Be prepared to allow time & staff to facilitate these work groups. Use a work group to prepare committee members for a full group meeting by disseminating materials and the agenda well in advance and request a specific task to be completed. If necessary, review the completed task a couple of days before the full group meeting. If members with disabilities have personal assistants working with them, ensure that the assistants have information about the meetings so they may support the individual's participation as well as offer insight themselves.

4. Use Posters. Present information in a concrete and relevant manner using colorful posters that summarize the highlights of the meeting or of a specific issue. Be clear and brief with more detailed information in a handout or via presentation. Use symbols as much as possible to represent words or in conjunction with words.

5. Do Something. It is important that Committee members feel that they are accomplishing something, making a contribution to their community, by means of their participation on the QA Committee. Recruit their full involvement in planning annual focus meetings and consumer satisfaction surveys. If meetings consist of primarily presenting information to committee members, their interest and attendance will quickly wane. However, if the committee is responsible to establish policy, develop procedures, or plan events, they are more likely to feel that their time is being well-used.



SOME USEFUL RESOURCES

- Aging & Disabilities Resource Centers Technical Assistance Website:
<http://www.adrc-tae.org>
- The University of Montana Rural Institute. Rural Practice Guidelines:
Involving People with Disabilities as Members of Advisory Groups.
<http://rtc.ruralinstitute.umt.edu>
- The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Council. (1995). *Not Another Board Meeting: Guides to Building Inclusive Decision-Making Groups*. Available from the Oregon Developmental Disabilities Council, 540 24th Place N.E., Salem, OR 97301 (503) 945-9941 or 1-800-292-4154 (in Oregon).

Cost: \$10 per copy (discounts for multiple copies).