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# CRITICAL QUESTIONS WORKBOOK

## Section III

### Orientation for Quality Assurance Committee Members



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# Critical Questions Workbook

## Section III

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## Introduction

Instructions to Quality Assurance Coordinators:

Section III of the *Critical Questions Workbook* includes descriptions of the committee's responsibility related to the six assurances and of the process suggested by the workbook. You may choose to copy and distribute Section III to committee members as a part of orientation and training for their role, or adjust it as needed to better fit the process that you will use in your own community.



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## Local Quality Assurance Committee Critical Questions Worksheets

In applying for a waiver to allow the state to use federal Medicaid funds to support particular services, the state must make certain assurances. The state described their plan to meet these assurances in the state's "Quality Assurance Plan." The goals listed in the state's plan parallel the assurances and reflect the state's intention to meet the six assurances in all community services. Once the waiver is granted, the state must document to the federal government that action is being taken to attain these goals. The work accomplished by local Quality Assurance Coordinators and Quality Assurance Committees is one way that the state has to demonstrate performance on the goals.

### Goals

These six goals are:

- Individuals in home and community-based waiver services are safe and secure in their homes and communities, taking into account their informed and expressed choices.
- Home and community-based waiver services and supports are planned and effectively implemented in accordance with each participant's unique needs, expressed preferences and decisions concerning his or her life in the community.
- All agency and individual providers of home and community-based waiver services possess the requisite skills, competencies and qualifications to support participants effectively.
- Each individual's need and eligibility for home and community-based waiver services are assessed and determined promptly and accurately.



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- The Department carries out its duties and responsibilities as Oregon’s single state Medicaid Agency with regard to home and community-based waiver services
  - The Department maintains, and participates in, systems and procedures that promote financial accountability at all home and community-based waiver service levels.



These worksheets are designed to help local Quality Assurance Committees to provide “review and comment on the results of information gathered by the CDDP and the effectiveness of corrective actions” {OAR 411-320-0040(9)(e)(B)(iii)}— one of the three QA committee activities defined in the rule governing CDDPs. Because of the importance of showing action on the six goals, the worksheets are organized around them. Each goal has been included as a “Critical Question” that the Committee should answer, with the help of the Quality Assurance Coordinator.

### Critical Questions

The six “Critical Questions” are:

- CRITICAL QUESTION #1: Are individuals in home and community-based waiver services safe and secure in their homes and communities, taking into account their informed and expressed choices?
- CRITICAL QUESTION #2: Are home and community-based waiver services and supports planned and effectively implemented in accordance with each participant’s unique needs, expressed preferences and decisions concerning his or her life in the community?
- CRITICAL QUESTION #3: Do all agency and individual providers of home and community-based waiver services possess the requisite skills, competencies and qualifications to support participants effectively?
- CRITICAL QUESTION #4: Are each individual’s need and eligibility for home and community-based waiver services assessed and determined promptly and accurately?

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- CRITICAL QUESTION #5: Does the county fulfill its role in maintaining, and participating in, systems and procedures that promote financial accountability at all home and community-based waiver service levels?
  - CRITICAL QUESTION #6: Does the county fulfill its role in supporting the Department to carry out its duties and responsibilities as Oregon’s single state Medicaid Agency with regard to home and community-based waiver services?

The advantage of working with the Critical Questions is that they provide focus to the work of the Quality Assurance Committee.

### Desired Outcomes

Each Critical Question is divided into a few “Desired Outcomes.” For example, for Critical Question #2 (“Home and community-based waiver services and supports are planned and effectively implemented in accordance with each participant’s unique needs, expressed preferences and decisions concerning his or her life in the community”), there are four Desired Outcomes:

1. Comprehensive information concerning each participant’s preferences and personal goals, needs and abilities, health status and other available supports is gathered and used in developing a personalized plan.
2. Individuals freely choose between waiver services and institutional care, and among waiver services and providers.
3. Individuals receive services required to meet needs.
4. Individuals are satisfied with plans and outcomes



These Desired Outcomes give further definition to each of the Critical Questions, by identifying the major accomplishment areas identified by SPD.

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## HOW TO ANSWER THE CRITICAL QUESTIONS



Each Community Developmental Disability Program (CDDP) is expected to maintain a set of Quality Assurance processes (referred to as “Quality Assurance Components”) and documentation related to aspects of each of these Critical Questions and Desired Outcomes. Therefore, there are two basic sets of information that a Quality Assurance Committee can use to determine the answer to each Critical Question:

1. Information that describes the extent to which the expected local CDDP Quality Assurance **processes** related to this Critical Question are in place and functioning to standards.
2. Information about the **results** discovered through those Quality Assurance process, i.e., how well our county as a whole is performing related to the Critical Question and its Desired Outcomes.

Thus, the Quality Assurance Committee, the Quality Assurance Coordinator, and/or other CDDP staff will need to review information about both the status of CDDP processes and the picture of local performance that those processes yield.

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In each local area, Quality Assurance Coordinators may decide to do this in a different way. They may make conclusions about the county's status related to the Critical Questions, and ask the Committee to review and approve those conclusions. Or, they may present graphs and charts of data and ask Committee members to come to their own conclusion about the local status related to each Critical Question. However your CDDP and Committee operate, you should feel free to ask the Quality Assurance Coordinator to give you data to support their conclusions, particularly if you have concerns about performance on a Desired Outcome or Critical Question. You might ask questions such as:



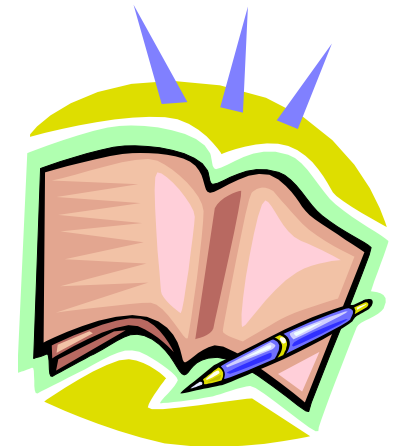
- What does the state expect of you related to a Quality Assurance process in this area?
- How well are you as a CDDP meeting those standards?
- What evidence do you have related to meeting those standards? How do you get that information?
- What were the most important findings related to actual performance?

### **WORKSHEETS**

The worksheets provided are designed to support your decision-making process. There are worksheets for each of the Critical Questions and their Desired Outcomes. Each worksheet follows the same format. Each worksheet asks two questions:

- Does our CDDP have a **process** that works well to measure quality?
- What did we find out about performance (**results**) on this desired outcome?

The QA Coordinator will present information to help the Committee to answer these questions.





The QA Coordinator may ask you to rate the overall local status on a Desired Outcome, given the information received. Considering both the status of the process itself and the performance outcomes, rate the Desired Outcome, as defined in the following table:

<input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	Choose "Don't Know" if the CDDP had no information to present on this Desired Outcome, or if you feel you need additional information to better determine how things are going.
<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Standards	When a community is doing better than required standards, with a particularly strong quality assurance process and great outcomes, you should select "Exceeds Expectations." In other words, the performance of the Quality Assurance Component by the CDDP <u>and</u> the results that were reported <u>both</u> are above what is expected by standard, rule, or contract.
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Standards	Choose "Meets Standards" if you are comfortable that the Quality Component processes are in place and functioning, and if the performance falls in a range that is satisfactory related to the Critical Question. In other words, the performance of the Quality Assurance Component by the CDDP and the results that were reported are approximately equal to what is expected by standard, rule, or contract.
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	"Needs Improvement" would indicate that there are no, immediately pressing priority problems, but that there are ways in which the community and CDDP need to improve either its processes or its performance on the Desired Outcome. In other words, Either the performance of the Quality Assurance Component by the CDDP or the results that were reported does NOT meet what is expected by standard, rule, or contract.
<input type="checkbox"/> Priority Problem Area	Select this if the information provided indicate there are major issues related to the Desired Outcome, or if the CDDP does not have adequate processes for assuring quality in this area. In other words, either the performance of the Quality Assurance Component by the CDDP or the results that were reported or both are substantially below what is expected by standard, rule, or contract.



For the responses “Don’t Know,” “Priority Problem Area,” or “Needs Improvement,” you should list your major concerns that led to this score. This information will be used later, when the Committee determines if there will be a follow-up project to improve the community’s performance on that Critical Question.

### **SUMMARY**

This is important work. You have a role in making sure that Oregon continues to meet its promises in providing high quality services to its citizens with developmental disabilities, and therefore continues to receive federal support to do so. These worksheets are an effort to help you to fulfill this role.