



Benchmarking Insights

Upcoming Conferences

BPS will be represented at several upcoming conferences.

In the first week of October, Paul Lefkovitz will conduct a process benchmarking workshop on data-driven organizational improvement at the Pennsylvania Community Providers Association (PCPA) annual conference. BPS will also have a booth in the exhibit hall. On October 13, Paul will also facilitate a process benchmarking workshop at the Michigan Association for Community Mental Health Boards (MACMHB) fall conference in Traverse City. The topic will be clinical change as reflected in the CAFAS. He will also do a presentation for the Pennsylvania Psychiatric Leadership Council in Harrisburg, PA on October 22. October will close with a process benchmarking workshop conducted by Paul at the Alliance for Children and Families annual conference in Baltimore on October 30. The exercise will focus on discharge status. BPS will also be an exhibitor at that conference.

On October 30, David Doty, Ph.D., Director of Compliance and Organizational Improvement at Friendship House, Scranton, PA will represent BPS in his role as Co-Chair of the PCPA Benchmarking Initiative at the 2008 Institute for Behavioral Health Informatics in Washington, DC. He will serve as a presenter in a workshop entitled “Dashboards, Benchmarking, & More: Real-Time Information for Organization Performance Improvement-An Expert Roundtable Review”.

Performance Dashboards

Leaders are often confronted by an overwhelming volume of performance-related data. A legion of reports containing financial, clinical, and quality data all compete for the attention of organizational leaders. As a result, a good deal of information is routinely filed instead of being reviewed. What is reviewed is often not properly digested. Data that could help drive decisions, therefore, fails to become translated into actionable information.

A performance dashboard can help overcome these difficulties. A performance dashboard is much like the dashboard in your car—it presents the key information you need for safe operation of the vehicle in a clear and organized manner. There is neither too little nor too much information. Executive dashboards track key performance indicators that are relevant to the strategic vision of the organization. Departmental dashboards monitor vital tactical indices that relate to effective service delivery. In each instance, the measures are relevant to the intended reviewers. By eliminating extraneous detail, dashboards are highly efficient and command greater attention. A proper dashboard is generally limited to one page (20-30 indices).

The “Balanced Scorecard” approach to dashboard development emphasizes the importance of maintaining a focus on four principal domains of organizational life. In behavioral health settings, that would translate into quality of care, operational performance, financial performance, and organizational climate. Indices from each of these four domains helps ensure that a “balanced” view of organizational performance is being maintained.



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The fact is that these four domains are highly inter-dependent. An impact in one area will produce changes in one or more of the other domains. A performance dashboard that features key indices in each of those four domains will permit these complex interactions to be observed and better understood.

Establishing performance dashboards using a balanced approach can tame the data that often runs rampant within organizations. Once this occurs, data is much more likely to guide decisions and assist in shaping organizational vision.

The performance dashboard is one of the key components of the BPS Performance Management Model that is being used with our consultation clients. Assistance is provided in identifying key performance indicators and using the organization's information system to support data needs. For further information, feel free to contact us at 877-330-9870 or info@bpsys.org.

Making Data More Meaningful

Most organizations report that performance data does not seem to be as helpful as it could be. A common experience is that most performance data is just overlooked and filed away. Why is this? One of the principle reasons is that data is not often linked to key strategic issues.

An answer that lacks a question is not very meaningful. Such is the case with a great deal of data that is routinely generated by organizations. Unless something really stands out, the numbers tend to blur together. Data is most meaningful when it serves to answer a question of some significance. As an illustration, the nutritional characteristics of all prepared food products are required by law to appear on the package. Yet that "data" is pretty much overlooked by many consumers. However, if a person goes on a diet or must follow dietary restrictions due to a health condition, interest in this data suddenly increases and it becomes very meaningful. The same is true of data generated within organizations. It is easy to overlook data that is not tied to key performance issues. Matters of strategic importance should be directly linked to available performance data sources. In that way, data will become a more valued component of the decision-making process.

Contact Us!

We want to create an active and vibrant community of individuals and organizations interested in benchmarking, performance management, and outcomes. If you have thoughts, ideas, suggestions, tips, or questions, we'd like to hear from you. Please feel free to contact us at info@bpsys.org.