

Newsletter



February, 2007

Pennsylvania Grant

The Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) is extending a second year of funding in support of the PCPA Benchmarking Initiative, being conducted in partnership with BPS. BPS is very appreciative of the continued support! A meeting was held in Harrisburg on January 31 with OMHSAS executive staff and BPS President, Paul Lefkovitz, PCPA Executive Director, George Kimes, and project co-chairs Susan Blue and David Doty to review the accomplishments of the initiative in its first year. The presentation was received very enthusiastically by OMHSAS leadership. Joan Erney, who oversees OMHSAS, was particularly pleased to hear about the emphasis on the identification of best practices. Through this ongoing support, it is hoped that participation can extend beyond the current 79 organizations that are involved.

Technology Boon to Process Benchmarking

Audience polling technology acquired by BPS has now been used in three different settings and it is shaping up to be everything that was hoped for. Process benchmarking workshops proceed much more efficiently due to the automated management of the data. Also, respondents have reported feeling much more comfortable with the anonymity of the electronic keypads. The graphic displays of the results are clear and attractive. At the same time, additional process benchmarking exercises are being conducted with the aid of on-line surveys and conference calls. These developments continue to expand the effectiveness and reach of process benchmarking.

Upcoming Conference

BPS will be an exhibitor at the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare conference in Las Vegas March 26-28, 2007. Please stop by booth 126 to say hello if you are there.

Partial Hospitalization/IOP Projects

BPS is working in partnership with the Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare on its 2007 Ambulatory Survey and Benchmarking initiative. A special component of this year's project is a "field study of impact" of partial hospitalization and intensive outpatient programs. AABH has been invited by U.S. Congressional staffers to provide data regarding the impact of PHP/IOP services as they deliberate legislation that would have significant impact on partial hospitalization and IOP. BPS has also rolled out its work with AABH on the development of a perception of care instrument for PHP/IOP settings. These projects are now active and those wishing to serve as part of a review panel or work group should reply to this e-mail.

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? BPS feels one of the principle reasons is that data is not often linked to key strategic issues.

An answer that lacks a relevant 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 tied to 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.

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