

## **Upcoming Conferences**

BPS is going to be busy during the month of October. Paul Lefkowitz will be conducting a process benchmarking workshop on October 15 at the Pennsylvania Community Providers Association (PCPA) Annual Conference. The topic will be missed appointments for the initial session. On October 18, he will be conducting another process benchmarking workshop at the Alliance for Children and Families Annual Conference in Anaheim, California. The focus will be outpatient productivity. On October 23, he will lead another process benchmarking workshop in Traverse City Michigan in conjunction with the Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards (MACMHB) fall conference. Inpatient length of stay in community settings will be the dimension investigated. With each passing workshop, the process benchmarking technique continues to be refined. Read article below for further details.

## **Process Benchmarking**

Ongoing experience with process benchmarking has brought about a number of exciting refinements. The electronic audience polling technology adopted this past year has not only added efficiency and anonymity to the technique, it has opened the door to new possibilities. One enhancement has been the addition of post-hoc analysis. The polling technology makes it possible to re-analyze the data based on different criteria after the exercise. For example, the comparison groups can be modified. During the exercise the top performers can be compared to all others; after the exercise, the top performers can be compared to the poorest performers. This has yielded additional discoveries in several instances. Another enhancement is "proxy voting". With proxy voting, individuals that cannot attend the workshop provide written responses to the questions that will be posed during the exercise. These responses are then entered by proxy during the workshop. While the interaction and input of the proxy voter are missed, the additional responses add to the sample size and the reliability of the findings. Undoubtedly, further refinements of process benchmarking will continue to unfold over time.

## **"Apples-To-Apples" Comparisons**

One of the unique features of BPS benchmarking is the "apples-to-apples" comparisons between your organization and others. In addition to general comparisons, "peer group" comparisons are provided for a more targeted view of performance. "Peer group" comparisons are made available in various areas such as: organization type (community mental health, general hospital, etc.), geographic setting (urban, rural, etc.), and size (measured by annual budget). Therefore, in the "peer group" columns of our reports, large organizations are compared only with large organizations, rural settings are compared only with other rural settings, and so on. These specialized comparisons address the most common concern expressed by participating organizations, namely, "Will my organization be compared with similar organizations?"

## **Types of Benchmarking**

For those unfamiliar with the practice of benchmarking, it is helpful to know that several types exist. Descriptive benchmarking involves external, industry norms. Comparative benchmarking consists of a formal statistical comparison between your organization's measured performance and those norms, most frequently provided in the form of percentile rankings. Process benchmarking uses benchmarking data as a vehicle to identify potential best practices. This is done by systematically revealing the methods uniquely used by top performing organizations. BPS encompasses all three types of benchmarking in its collaborative initiatives with state and national associations.

## **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](mailto:info@bpsys.org).