4. Examine the Current Approach

Executive Management and the Core CQI team gathered to complete the NACCHO LHD self-assessment utilizing an online version. Results confirmed that Essential Service I had the lowest score, and that this standard has the greatest potential impact on the LHD. Essential Service I, Standard I-C: conduct or contribute expertise to periodic community health assessment. The selected team members: Health Officer, SCDFP strategic planning (a process that is referred to as MOD squad) co-facilitators, the Emergency Preparedness Director and the former Community Health Assessor.

Original AIM Statement: To conduct a Community Health Assessment utilizing the MAPP model.

3. Assemble the Team

A Continuous quality improvement (CQI) Core Team was assembled with individuals based on the expertise and experience related to CQI and strategic planning. The selected team members: Health Officer, SCDFP strategic planning (a process that is referred to as MOD squad) co-facilitators, the Emergency Preparedness Director and the former Community Health Assessor.

4. Identify Potential Solutions

Based on the CQI tools used in evaluating the results from the survey, the group identified a shortage of staff with knowledge of community health assessment as a significant barrier. Four action steps were identified as potential solutions to achieve the AIM statement:

1. Develop training module (curriculum) and guide
2. Conduct training with knowledgeable instructor
3. Measure training conducted through pre- and post-test scores
4. Identify the PDCA cycle to be used as the basis for report

The CQI Core Team scheduled a 2-day training session for the Executive Team, key staff members, and selected community partners on May 1 – 2, 2008.

5. Develop an Improvement Theory

- If SCDFP could train staff to conduct a Community Health Assessment, then capacity could be built to better provide Essential Service 1, Standard 1-C.
- If a curriculum was developed to train staff on conducting a Community Health Assessment, then the process could be sustained if key staff members left the agency.
- If a pre- and post-test were administered, then success of the training could be measured.

6. Test the Theory

The Core Team developed a flow chart for the Assessment Training process. A flowchart process was used during development of the Community Assessment workshop. The flowchart was improved as the pilot progressed. The final flowchart was formatted in an innovative circular fashion to reflect the iterative nature of the training process. The E-Team identified key staff to receive assessment training. Training dates and facilities were selected. Funding was secured to supplement NACCHO grant monies to complete the training in tandem with a strengths based assessment related to a specific SCDFP program. The only SCDFP manager with practical experience in conducting community health assessment developed the pre- and post-test to measure success of the training, and worked closely with the QI consultant to formulate the curriculum.

A review of the training curriculum at a Core Team meeting identified that the training did not follow the MAPP assessment process. The curriculum was revised to align with MAPP, which in turn aligns with the current SCDFP strategic plan regarding community public health assessment.

On May 1 and 2, 2008, the E-Team, key staff, and community partners participated in the training to learn about assessment methods. Participants were asked to identify important community issues as well as community strengths. An introduction to the Ten Essential Public Health Services, the four MAPP assessments, and the PDCA improvement cycle was presented. The group was divided into groups to participate in a “World Café” discussion to share ideas and develop common themes and possible plans for action.

Post tests were administered to all...