

Newsletter



January, 2007

Community Behavioral Healthcare Association of Illinois

The Community Behavioral Healthcare Association of Illinois (CBHA) and Behavioral Pathway Systems have partnered to implement a comprehensive state-wide benchmarking initiative. This action followed a very enthusiastic response to a workshop that BPS President Paul Lefkovitz conducted in December at the annual CBHA conference in Chicago. Several CBHA leaders who were familiar with the benefits of benchmarking through their involvement in the MHCA corporate benchmarking initiative served as co-presenters with Paul. The workshop generated strong interest in a benchmarking initiative that was targeted to the unique needs of community behavioral healthcare providers in Illinois. The initiative will include process benchmarking as one of the featured components to identify potential best practices and enhance organizational performance. Another distinguishing feature will be that comparative benchmarking data will be broken out by geographic region within the state. CBHA is a 95 member organization that “promotes the development of quality programs providing services for community behavioral health including mental health, alcohol and substance abuse, rural mental health and children and adolescents”. Member organizations in total employ approximately 15,000 individuals and serve over 569,000 individuals annually.

Not Enough Time?

When behavioral health leaders are asked why they don't do more to track organizational performance and implement corrective action plans, the number one response is “lack of time”. Full plates represent a very real and powerful barrier to performance management activities. Yet, in reality, we all possess the exact same amount of time—it is how we use it that counts. For those wishing to make their time count more (and who doesn't?), some excellent resources exist. *151 Quick Ideas to Manage Your Time*, written by Robert E. Dittmer, APR, and published in 2006 by Career Press, Franklin Lakes, NJ is one such resource.

Organized around 151 concise, true-to-its word “quick ideas”, this volume offers a wide range of practical and valuable tips. Many readers will find the “assignments” for each idea to be especially helpful. Each idea also presents an “epilogue” that serves as the “last word” on the subject. If you find yourself buried in piles of work that only seem to be growing, find the time to order a book such as this.

Using “Process Benchmarking” in Your Daily Work

Process benchmarking is typically associated with formalized workshops that use benchmarking data to identify potential “best practices”. Yet the underlying principles of process benchmarking can be applied in your day-to-day endeavors. These principles can be beneficial any time a group of individuals finds itself grappling with a common problem. If it can be determined that some members of the group are actually struggling less than others, an opportunity exists for informal process benchmarking.

It is uncommon for a group to explore whether some are dealing with a problem more effectively than others. Pride and modesty are the main obstacles. Typically, problems are discussed as though all experience the issue to the same degree. Yet this is often not the case. If a few moments are taken to determine whether some are addressing the issue more effectively than others, an opportunity for new learning can emerge. The methods used by the “top performers” in the group can be systematically compared with the approaches used by others. In many instances, the differences in tactics will become readily apparent. The methods uniquely used by top performers may be regarded as potential “best practices”. These tactics can then be adopted by the other individuals to address the problem more effectively.

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.

