

## WHATCOM COUNTY EMS CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT



*WHAT IS CQI?*

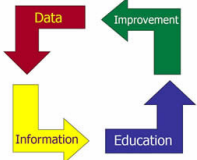
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## What is Continuous Quality Improvement?


- CQI is an organizational tool that builds on Quality Assurance to improve outcomes
- It emphasizes system-wide assessment for improvement
- It focuses on processes, not individuals
  - Most problems are found in processes, not in people. CQI does not seek to blame, but rather to improve processes.
- It recognizes both internal and external “customers”

## Use of the Scientific Process

- Formal observation as well as incident-specific data is collected and applied to every day work
- Designed to meet the needs of those we serve and to continually improve service
- Promotes the use of objective data analysis and timely response to assessment



## CORE CONCEPTS of CQI




- Quality is defined as meeting and/or exceeding the expectations of our coworkers and patients.
- Success is achieved through meeting the needs of those we serve.
- We seek to reduce or eliminate unwanted variation in the process.
- It is possible to achieve continual improvement through small, incremental changes using a scientific process.
- Continuous improvement is effective when it becomes a natural part of the way everyday work is done.

## CORE STEPS in the CQI process

- Form a team that has knowledge of the system needing improvement
- Define clear objectives
- Understand the needs of the people who are served by the system
- Identify and define measures of success
- Brainstorm potential change strategies for producing improvement
- Plan , collect and use data for facilitating effective decision making
- Apply the scientific method to test and define changes

Adapted from: Iowa State University



## Whatcom County EMS CQI

Developed by the WCEMSTCC per Washington State Guidelines ([WAC 246-50-020](#)).

WCEMSTCC established the CQI Committee to implement those guidelines beginning in January 2010.

- Please select CQI under the Committees tab at [www.whatcomcountyems.com](http://www.whatcomcountyems.com) for more information.

The goal is to monitor, improve, and address challenges in the quality of pre-hospital care in Whatcom Co.

- assist all pre-hospital agencies to provide the best possible care to the residents and visitors to Whatcom County

## CQI Committee Representatives

- Fire Districts of Whatcom County
- Bellingham Fire/Whatcom Medic One
- St Joseph Hospital
- Prospect/Dispatch
- Mt. Baker Ski Area
- Whatcom County MPD




The CQI representative for my agency is:

## Clinical Indicators in the CQI process

- CQI uses a scientific approach to assess current standards of care.
- CQI will study aspects of various medical conditions (such as anaphylaxis, chest pain, or diabetic emergency) to determine if improvements can be achieved through a change in the standard of care and/or education.
- Clinical Indicators will be evaluated for various periods of time depending on complexity of the issue.
- Data will be collected by the CQI committee through online surveys, patient care reports, transport decisions, hospital records, and other source documents.

## Agency Responsibilities to CQI

- Designate an internal QA Officer and/or CQI committee representative
- Implement an internal CQI plan and educate agency members on CQI processes and resources.
- Assist in the identification of clinical indicators and insure compliance with the county CQI plan and initiatives.
- Share the results of internal CQI activities with the committee.
- Disseminate information from the CQI Committee back to agency.
- Maintain records of CQI activities, review, and action regarding:
  - Exemplary practice
  - Unanticipated events
  - Utilization management



## CQI Resources

Online Forms

## ED Disposition form

Patient outcomes following treatment and transport by EMS to the Emergency Department (ED) can provide valuable information

- ongoing quality assurance efforts
- training and education
- positive reinforcement of good practice

- For an EMS incident in which you directly participated in patient care
- Online form accessed via the WCEMSTCC webpage: [www.whatcomcountyems.com](http://www.whatcomcountyems.com)
  - request is sent via secure electronic connection to the SJH ED
  - Feedback to CQI representative via a secure, encrypted agency email account (or phone)

## Clinical Indicator Surveys

The CQI and Education Committees collaborate to assist your agency in the periodic review of training efforts for effectiveness, and help identify and resolve any provider-related issues.

Please participate in CQI by letting your **CQI representative** know if you provide care related to the assigned clinical indicator.

- Current Clinical Indicator: administration of **epinephrine in anaphylaxis by BLS**.
- Help collect information useful in assessing the training and implementation of the new protocol option
- Following training, please complete the online evaluation accessed via the WCEMSTCC webpage: [www.whatcomcountyems.com](http://www.whatcomcountyems.com)

