

Continuous Quality Improvement and Data Management Examples

Part of the Continuous Quality Improvement Toolkit available at <https://apstarc.acl.gov/toolkits>.

Managing Information, specifically data, is important to understanding the work of adult protective services (APS) and to ultimately improve outcomes for clients. The National Institute of Standards and Technology defines measures and indicators as “numerical information that quantifies the input, output, and performance dimensions of processes, products, programs, projects, services, and organizational outcomes”.¹

Often programs struggle with defining and collecting measures. The Administration for Community Living (ACL) [Voluntary Consensus Guidelines for State APS Systems](#) offers ideas for improving client outcomes. “Innovative measurement strategies that allow for client variability and that are capable of tracking change on an individualized set of outcome indicators, such as goal attainment scaling (Burnes et al., 2018), may be effective to assess client-centered APS intervention outcomes².”

The following information includes examples of processes, program and services, and input and output measures. These examples are not intended to be exhaustive of all examples but to reflect the importance of “what gets measured gets managed³”.

Focus Area	Description	Measure Examples	Issue/Explanation
Case Reviews Desk Top Review	Records and data reporting systems checks done electronically. These checks could be automated with variance reports for review by administrative staff. ACL APS Voluntary Guidelines (pages 21-22, 24, 62)	(1) 100% of records will have open and close dates. (2) 75% of records will have race and ethnicity data for clients.	(1) Prior year’s data indicated that field staff consistently included the case open date but, were forgetting to enter the case closure date after supervisory review. This output measure will check records for both dates. (2) Data system modified last year. Previously race and ethnicity were combined. Staff were trained to gather race and ethnicity data. Baseline of 75% was established for first year.

¹ National Institute of Standards and Technology, Baldrige Key Terms, <https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/self-assessing/baldrige-key-terms>

² ACL APS National Voluntary Guidelines, revised 2020

³ The quote is usually contributed to Peter Drucker, management theorist.

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		(3) Supervisors will meet the measure of reviewing 100% of the records of new investigators for the first six months of the new employees' work.	<p>Subsequent year percentages for measure of compliance will increase.</p> <p>(3) The majority of data errors happen within the first six months of employees' work. Supervisors have been trained on new employee assistance with data reporting. System "flags" files of new employees for their first six months to see if supervisors have reviewed cases prior to closure.</p>
Case Record Reviews	<p>Reading of client case record, by supervisor, for compliance with program policies and procedures.</p> <p>ACL Voluntary Guidelines (pages 21-22, 33-35, 62)</p>	<p>(1) (Insert percentage) of case records reviewed will meet policy response/investigation timeframes.</p> <p>(2) (Insert percentage) of cases closed will have documented referral services.</p> <p>(3) (Insert percentage) of cases closed will have been reviewed for comparisons of reported people living in the resident at the time</p>	<p>(1) Prior to case closure, supervisor will review for timeliness of investigation based on policy of response to different types of alleged maltreatment. The data from this measure determines if the policy regarding various levels of response/investigation, based on alleged maltreatment, have been met by staff.</p> <p>(2) Prior to case closure, supervisor will review for documentation of referrals of service(s) for the client, if warranted and agreed to by the client. The data from this measure assists the APS program in documenting the need for services for clients and the frequency of referrals to different provider types.</p> <p>(3) This measure may be connected to a measure addressing worker safety and the improvement of information gathered during the report intake process. Example of an Intake</p>

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		of report intake vs. what was discovered during the home visit.	Center measure may be that all intake reports, accepted for investigation, will include an extra step of conducting criminal records checks to verify if anyone with an arrest record lives at the client's address.
Client Services	<p>Assessment of the impact of an intervention or service delivered.</p> <p>ACL APS Voluntary Guidelines (pages 15-16)</p>	<p>(1) All victims in life threatening situations will receive appropriate, time-limited, shelter, care and supervision.</p> <p>(2) Fifty percent of the clients receiving targeted intervention services from APS and mental services providers will have their landlord eviction notice rescinded.</p>	<p>(1) Victims in life threatening situations may be in need of safe shelter until other arrangements can be made or the perpetrator is no longer in their home. Homeless shelters are usually not the appropriate place for frail, at-risk adults and victims may not be in need of hospitalization. Agreements with skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) provide APS staff with an option for emergency shelter and care while working with the client on a safety plan. APS program obtained memorandums of agreement with (insert number) SNFs to designate one bed for emergency placement for shelter and care for one to seven days for adults in life threatening situations. SNFs will provide care for up to a maximum of (insert number) victims each year.</p> <p>(2) Clients with behavioral health problems, who have received landlord eviction notices will receive targeted intervention services from APS and mental health services provider. APS and mental health services providers have a coordinated response to addressing the needs of clients with behavioral health problems and</p>

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		<p>(3) Clients' satisfaction survey data will indicate that participation in the money management service will rate as "satisfactory" or "good" for (insert percentage) of respondents.</p>	<p>facing eviction from their home. To measure the success of the service intervention, this measure was set as a baseline for the first year.</p> <p>(3) Clients assessed and determined by a physician to be in need of some type of oversight/ guardianship of property are evaluated for participation in the money management program. Clients participating in the money management service will be surveyed/interviewed twice a year as to their satisfaction with participation in the program. Survey or interviews should accommodate and be tailored for any clients with cognitive impairments or intellectual disabilities.</p>
<p>APS clients APS staff</p>	<p>Assessment of the influence of recruitment and training of staff on services to clients.</p>	<p>(1a) (Insert percentage) APS clients, who do not speak English as their first language but, speak Spanish, will speak with staff who are bi-lingual. Spanish speaking clients will receive a face-to-face visit within the same timeframes as non-Spanish speaking clients.</p> <p>(1b) (Insert percentage) APS recruitment efforts will be targeted to the recruitment of people with the appropriate education/experience and bi-lingual (English/Spanish) skills.</p>	<p>(1) The APS investigator workforce needs staff who are bi-lingual. Maltreatment reports of adults, who do not speak English as their first language, but speak Spanish has increased by x% for the past five years. Currently clients and staff wait up to x# of hours/days for an interpreter.</p>

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	<p>ACL Voluntary Guidelines (page 20)</p> <p>ACL Voluntary Guidelines (pages 45-48)</p>	<p>(2) The length of time from start to completion of a financial exploitation investigation will be improved from (insert number) of days to (insert number) of days.</p> <p>(3) APS clients will work with staff who have been trained in Person Centered Planning Principles. A (insert percentage) sample of clients and families who were a part of Person-Centered Planning will be surveyed. Returned surveys will indicate that clients and/or family were “satisfied” with their participation and decision making in the development of their service plan.</p>	<p>(2) On average it takes (insert number) days to investigate an allegation of financial exploitation. In comparison, other types of maltreatment allegations are investigated and a determination made within (insert number) days.</p> <p>APS victims experiencing financial exploitation will benefit from an investigator trained in advanced investigation of financial exploitation and the availability of the expertise of a forensic accounting specialist. A forensic accounting specialist will be hired to be a consultant for investigators working with victims who have experienced financial exploitation. The specialist will provide basic forensic accounting training to investigators and be available to work on challenging cases.</p> <p>(3) APS staff will be trained during new hire orientation and once a year thereafter in Person Centered Planning Principles. Service plans will reflect the client’s participation in developing their service plan and if appropriate the client’s family/friend’s participation.</p>