The Accreditation Journey: Establishing a Culture of CQI in Your Nursing Program

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Objectives

- Define continuous quality improvement and its relationship to the accreditation process.
- Describe the use of systematic program evaluation to prepare for program accreditation.
- Identify elements of the systematic evaluation plan.
- Explain how to set expected program outcomes and benchmark achievement indicators.
- Discuss how to involve faculty, staff and students in the program evaluation process.

What are your goals for today’s workshop?
Definition of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

“A comprehensive, sustained, and integrative approach to system assessment and evaluation that aims toward continual improvement and renewal of the total system” (NLN, 2009, p. 182).

Culture of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

- Systematic process of ensuring ongoing quality requiring
  - Establishing clear goals, expected outcomes
  - Addressing needs of constituents
  - Defining benchmarks of success
  - Collecting, analyzing and using data for decision-making
  - Collaborative process
  - Collective decision-making

Defining Systematic Program Evaluation

Systematic assessment and analysis of all elements of an educational program through evaluation strategies with the intent to measure and improve the program’s effectiveness in achieving program outcomes.
Creating a Culture of Continuous Quality Improvement in Your Program

• What organizational qualities or characteristics need to be present in the environment to support CQI?

How Does Accreditation Fit into the CQI Process?

• Provides students and the public with evidence of quality assurance
• Provides institutions/programs eligibility to seek federal and state funding
• Is a public mark of quality to the community (employers, donors, etc.)
• Facilitates academic credit transfer between institutions


Definition of Accreditation

• “Accreditation is a standards-based, evidence-based, judgement-based, peer-based process” (Eaton, 2012b, p. 14).
• Assesses the extent to which an institution or program meets a set of pre-established standards
• Involves the collection and analysis of data (through self-study report and on-site interviews, observations, etc.
• Renders a judgment (decision) by peers as to how successful the institution/program has been in demonstrating achievement of the standards.
  • Halstead, 2016
Purpose of CQI and Accreditation

• Internal and external demonstration of commitment to quality and excellence
• Highlight effectiveness of your program
• Identify areas for improvement
• How can we do what we do even better?
• Lead to further acquisition of program resources

Demands of CQI and Accreditation

• On-going institutional and programmatic commitment to both processes
• Good-faith effort of self-assessment of program strengths and areas for improvement
• Transparency in decision-making
• Systemic AND systematic approach to data-collection and analysis
• Respectful use of feedback data
• Engagement of all

CQI and Systematic Program Evaluation: Common Concerns

• Lack of systematic approach
• Ineffective use of data
  • Disorganized records/data
  • Lack of ability to identify trends
  • Inability to complete feedback loop and base program decisions upon data
  • Lack of sharing of data with each other
• Fear of fault finding
• Lack of participation and shared responsibility
Creating a culture of continuous quality improvement helps ensure a pathway to accreditation success!!

Accreditation: List Your Top Three Concerns

Doubt & Fear Just Ahead

Systematic Program Evaluation
Purposes of Program Evaluation

- Determine program effectiveness and the extent to which the mission, goals, and program outcomes are being met
- Determine if the program has been implemented as planned
- Provide a rationale for program decision-making
- Identify efficient use of program resources to improve program quality

Ellis (2016) in Billings and Halstead, 5th edition

Systematic Program Evaluation and Accreditation

- Ensuring program quality – key element!
- Pursuing continuous quality improvement
- Gathering evidence that what we are doing is effective and efficient
- Collecting data, analyzing, and using data to make changes
- Ongoing systematic planned approach related to program outcomes
- However - Accreditation criteria are only one aspect of program evaluation

Program Evaluation Process Steps

- What is the purpose of the evaluation? What are your program’s intended (expected) outcomes?
- What are the questions you want to answer through the evaluation process? How will you know if you are meeting program outcomes?
- How will you design the process? What evaluation data will you collect? How often and by what strategy?
- What criteria will you use to analyze (interpret) the data? Were your outcomes (benchmarks) met?
- How will you report the findings of the data and use for program decision-making? Do changes need to occur, gaps need addressing to achieve quality?
- Oermann, 2017; Ellis, 2016
Systematic Evaluation Plan

- Written document (Blueprint/Roadmap)
  - Outcomes and benchmarks – what do you want to accomplish?
  - How will you know when you get there?
  - Timeline for data gathering – how often?
  - Data to be gathered and strategies by which to gather it – what will you do?
  - Who will be responsible for data collection and analysis?
  - How will results of data analysis be shared with stakeholders?
  - How will decisions be made based upon the data?

SEP activity: Program completion

- Outcomes and benchmarks – what do you want to accomplish? How will you know when you get there?
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Program Elements to be Evaluated

- Program Outcomes
- Mission, goals, governance
- Institutional and Program Resources
- Faculty and Staff
- Students
- Curriculum and Evaluation Processes
  - Ellis, 2016; Boland, 2017
Defining Program Outcomes: Are We There Yet?

Defining Program Outcomes

- Results achieved in response to goals set by the program. For example, program goals and related outcomes may be developed associated with the accomplishments of faculty; curriculum; adequacy of support services and resources; student learning and achievement; and any other measure of program quality that faculty and staff, as appropriate, determine to be important to the overall success of the program. (CNEA, 2016)

Expected Program Outcomes

- Expected outcomes are anticipated outcomes established by faculty and staff accompanied by associated benchmark measures used by the program to determine if the outcome has been met. (CNEA, 2016)
Curriculum Outcomes

• Expected culmination of all learning experiences at end-of-program, demonstrating achievement of core nursing practice competencies (knowledge, skill and attributes) and learning outcomes appropriate for the role for which the learner is being prepared to assume upon graduation. (CNEA, 2016)

Faculty Outcomes

• Output (results) of faculty work related to faculty role expectations in teaching, scholarship/research, practice and service, as defined by the program and aligned with institution and program mission. Faculty outcomes are measured individually and in aggregate as one means by which to demonstrate program effectiveness. (CNEA, 2016)

Student Learning Outcomes

• The achievement of expected knowledge, skills and attributes demonstrated by students at course and program levels. Student learning outcomes are measured in classroom and experiential settings, and are reported in individual and aggregate formats. Examples of aggregate student learning outcomes at the program level include retention and graduation rates, performance on licensure and certification examinations, and employment rates. (Sauter, Gillespie, & Knepp, 2012)
Activity

- Identify three program outcome areas, from any outcome category, key to your program’s success
- Briefly write them down
- Use these three outcomes as we work through the SEP process

Expected Program Outcomes

- Benchmark – a set standard
- Institutional and program “fit”
- Benchmarking program elements
  - “As a component of total quality management, benchmarking is a continuous process by which an organization can measure and compare its own processes with those of organizations that are leaders in a particular area.”

How to Choose Benchmarks

- Peer institutions
- Peer nursing programs
- Review regional data
- What is a reasonable benchmark?
- What might you benchmark?
  - Retention and Completion rates
  - Employment rates
  - Faculty workload
  - Curriculum – credit hours, clinical contact hours
Factors to Consider When Developing Outcome Benchmarks

• What do you want to benchmark?
• Do you have a strategic plan with program goals?
• What are your program's priorities?
• What are your program's concerns, challenges?
• What are your program's areas for growth?
• Choose an issue – where are you now? Where do you want to be in regards to this issue?

Activity

❖ Consider your three program outcomes.
❖ How would you begin to benchmark where you want to be with those outcomes?
❖ What data do you need to gather to develop pertinent benchmarks?
❖ What questions do you want to bring to the group?

Systematic Evaluation – Program Outcomes

• Benchmarks
• Evaluation Elements
  • Completion rates and graduation rates
  • Licensure and certification rates
  • Employment rates
  • Alumni, employer and student satisfaction
  • Faculty, staff satisfaction
  • Community Engagement
Systematic Evaluation – Mission, Governance, Resources

- Benchmarks
- Evaluation Elements
  - Alignment between institution and program
  - Philosophy
  - Governance structure – bylaws, committees, faculty and student participation/input, other stakeholders (communities of interest)
  - Policy review – documents, bulletins, catalogs
- Resources - physical, fiscal, technology and human resources

Systematic Evaluation – Faculty

- Benchmarks
- Evaluation Elements
  - Credentials – academic, certification
  - Professional experience
  - Diversity
  - Faculty profile – FT, PT, rank
  - Recruitment and retention, numbers
  - Teaching, scholarship, service
  - Support to fulfill role and responsibilities

Systematic Evaluation – Students

- Benchmarks
- Evaluation Elements
  - Support services
  - Qualifications, demographics
  - Student policies – review, revision, accessibility
  - Admission, progression, retention, graduation rates
  - Satisfaction and complaints
Systematic Evaluation – Curriculum and Evaluation Processes

• Benchmarks
• Evaluation Elements
  • End-of-program curriculum outcomes
  • Link to mission and philosophy
  • Major concepts, professional standards
  • Curriculum design and evaluation
    • Course, level and program outcomes
    • Teaching and learning strategies
    • Student learning outcomes

Systematic Evaluation – Curriculum, and Evaluation Processes (con’t)

• Benchmarks
• Evaluation Elements
  • General education courses
  • Evaluating teaching effectiveness
    • Students, peers evaluation of teaching strategies
    • Learning materials
    • Assessment of student learning
    • Evaluation strategies – clinical and classroom
    • Effective use of technology – faculty and students

Activity – 3 Program Outcomes

• Outcomes and benchmarks – what do you want to accomplish? How will you know when you get there?
• Timeline for data gathering – how often?
• Data to be gathered and strategies by which to gather it – what will you do?
• Who will be responsible for data collection and analysis?
• How will results of data analysis be shared with stakeholders?
• How will decisions be made based upon the data?
Engaging Faculty, Staff, Students in Program Evaluation

Strategies to Support Engagement in Program Evaluation

• Understanding the process
• Participating in the design of the evaluation plan – ownership of the process
• Emphasizing collaboration and collective decision-making
• Committing to transparency of process
• Demonstrating use of the findings
• Establishing a ground rule of no “fault-finding”
• Celebrating successes

Questions?
References