



A Systematic Approach to Sustain a CQI Culture with Application to Public Health

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Background

Continuous Quality improvement (CQI) philosophies such as Lean/Six Sigma are supported by an array of tools and resources. However, in order to be successful there needs to be a systematic and standardized method to deploy CQI with an emphasis not just focusing on customer value and elimination of waste, but also engaging all levels of workforce, aligning to strategic goals and the 10 Essential Public Health Services/11 Core Functions of Public Health Laboratories, and relating improvements to cost effectiveness. The State Hygienic Laboratory at the University of Iowa (SHL) is in the process of implementing an organization-wide, systematic approach to deploy and standardize CQI throughout all levels of the organization and align to performance metrics including cost-effectiveness through our financial management system. This presentation will provide a management-focused demonstration of a deployment model.

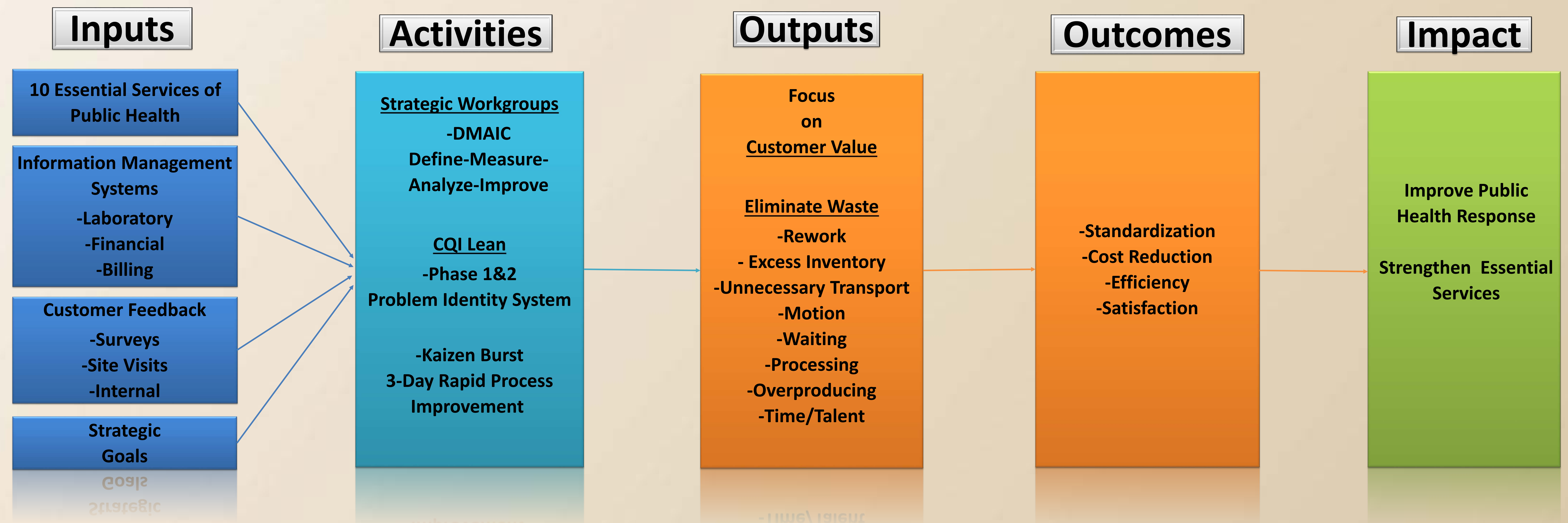
Data Sets & Sources

SHL is in the early stages of deployment at the time of this abstract submission. Data sets and sources include our deployment model, examples of a multi-phase (Phase 1/Phase 2) problem identity process, the laboratory information management system (including visual analytical tools), customer surveys, financial management decisions making systems and workforce behavior surveys.

Analysis & Conclusions

Analysis and discussion will focus on principal findings from early evaluation of the CQI approach; outcomes from the multi-phase (Phase 1/Phase 2) problem identity process (decreased response time, improved productivity); improved customer satisfaction; analysis of survey data; and level of participation by workforce.

Conclusions, including lessons learned and findings to date will focus on the impact of applying a systematic approach to support a self-sustaining CQI philosophy and culture with a specific application to public health.



Objective

SHL's objective is to design and implement a standardized and systematic approach to CQI (identify improvement opportunities, implement solutions) within all levels of an organization that will align to organizational strategic goals and the 10 Essential Services/11 Core Functions; include customer feedback and satisfaction; support workforce engagement; and incorporate measurable outcomes (including cost effectiveness such as reduction and avoidance). As part of the approach, specific methodologies, templates and visual analytical tools are being applied.

Study Design

The CQI approach is based on Lean/Six Sigma principals, Covey's Quadrants, Malcolm Baldrige organizational systems model, development of a Phase1/Phase problem identity system, customer impact analysis, workforce engagement analysis, the 10 Essential Public Health Services/11 Core Functions of Public Health Laboratories, and financial and laboratory information management systems.

Implications for Public Health Practice & Policy

Management needs to be thoughtful on how it approaches and implements continuous quality improvement within the organization, as well as to programs and to goals for improving public health. A usable methodology needs to be identified, implemented and embraced throughout the entire organization in order to be sustainable. Methods need to align with internal financial management, operational and program data. In addition, CQI deployment needs to be synergistic with public health organizations' goals and actions, and related to accreditation, Healthy People 2020, and current and future funded local and national goals.