

The Child Care Quality Assurance systems – maintaining momentum

Some educators may be experiencing some challenges in maintaining momentum as they progress through the Child Care Quality Assurance (CCQA) systems. However, all educators have a responsibility to maintain their focus on implementing quality practices by continuing to work through the current CCQA systems in which they participate.

The following tips and strategies may assist educators to refresh their approaches to providing quality education and care for children and families.

Review the service's Quality Practices Guide

When reviewing the *Quality Practices Guide*, educators can consider the areas in which they are meeting a Satisfactory or higher standard of practice, and areas where they feel they need to improve or change their practices. During this process it is helpful to ensure that educators take an objective, honest view of their own and other's work, and to ensure that both the positives and negatives are identified and responded to.



Do some reflective thinking

Reflective thinking involves educators in questioning how and why certain practices occur in the service. This often involves moving out of the mind set of doing things in one way because 'that is the way we've always done it'. While changing what have been considered to be tried and true practices can be challenging, educators often find that adopting new ways of doing things leads to improved quality care and education for children. Change can also be refreshing and energising for educators, even when they experience initial trepidation about this.

The questions outlined in the *Quality Practices Supplementary Resources* for each quality system offer a good starting point for individual and groups of educators to begin thinking about what practices they can or should change.

Revisit the service's most recent Continuing Improvement Guide

Even if the *Continuing Improvement Guide*,

which was sent with the Accreditation Decision, was received some time ago, revisiting it may help educators to identify further areas for improvement, opportunities for professional development or the need for additional resources.

Seek feedback from stakeholders

Be proactive in seeking feedback from your service's stakeholders including children, families and the broader community, and openly acknowledge and listen to their ideas and opinions. This feedback can often provide new and innovative perspectives on what is working well, what could be improved and how improvements could be enacted.

Consider having a range of methods for seeking and recording family feedback, including surveys/questionnaires, meetings, suggestion boxes/boards, email and, most importantly, daily conversations.

While all stakeholders should have equitable opportunities to be involved in reviewing the service's practices, it needs to be understood that some people may choose

not to take the opportunity to provide feedback. This decision should be respected.

Engage in professional development

For many services it may be tempting to hold back in planning for learning and development opportunities until more information is made available about the future of quality assurance in child care. However, in the interests of focusing on outcomes for children and families, participation in professional development is still relevant, and will help educators to keep up to date with current and best practice.

Conclusion

Maintaining momentum can some times be a challenge. However, this can be achieved when educators ensure that their primary focus is on the quality of care and education they provide everyday ■