Introduction to CARF

The CARF accreditation process centers on enhancing the lives of persons served! CARF accreditation is a process not an event!
CARF is not a project but a process

“Because of CARF we moved from counting inputs/activities to measuring outcomes and impacts in service delivery.”

Who “Owns” CARF?

On December 1, 2001, the CARF Board of Trustees declared that the “Moral Ownership” of CARF was the Persons Served!

In order to comply with the CARF Mission Statement to “center on enhancing the lives of persons served,” three Board Policies were adopted.
CARF Today

- Accredits more than 30,000 service programs at over 10,000 sites in nearly 4,800 organizations in the United States, Canada, and Europe.
- Works closely with consumers, parents, families, advocacy and provider associations, and funders.

CARF Today

- Is accepted or required in over 40 states and provinces through:
  - Certification/Mandates
  - Deemed Status/Licensure
  - State Memos/Special Considerations
CARF Accreditation Themes

- Consumers define quality outcomes (results).
- Field-driven, non-prescriptive standards.
- Consultative, not inspective.
- Peer review survey process.
- Accreditation of the organization’s services.
- Continuous quality improvement.

Budget for the Costs

- Standards Manual = $145 USD
- Other helpful CARF publications = $160 USD
- Intent Fee = $900 USD
- Survey = $1,300 USD per surveyor per day
- Your staff time $$$
Getting Started

- Select a Standards Manual:
  - Employment and Community Services
  - Behavioral Health
  - Medical Rehabilitation
  - Aging Services
  - Children and Youth Services (new in 2005) for child welfare/protection agencies

The ECS Team

Is Only a Phone Call Away: 1-888-281-6531

- Paul Andrew, ext. 112
- Margaret McHenry, ext. 106
- Julia Vining, ext. 170 (Western States & Canada)
- Mary Boegemann, ext. 142 (Central States)
- Pete Hathaway, ext. 252 (Midwestern/Southwestern States)
- Penny Parac, ext. 171 (Eastern/Southeastern States)
- Angela Ruffalo, ext. 131
Using the Survey Preparation Guide

- Your Organization's Responses – how you can demonstrate conformance
- Suggested Documents for Review

Standards Cycle

- Revised standards manual is issued every year in January.
- Standards year is July 1 to June 30 of the following year.
- All standards reviewed at least every 3 years.
The Standards are “Field-Based Quality Indicators” as defined by:
- Persons served and/or families.
- Funding, referral, & governmental agencies.
- Local community leaders and interests.
- Clear, simple, unidimensional.
- Active language – “Something is happening.”

Reflect positive changes in:
- Peoples’ lives
- The organization
- The community

Allow the organization to demonstrate its outcomes in many ways.
A “typical” standard (see p. 49)

1.B.1. The leadership demonstrates accessibility planning that addresses the needs of the:
   a. Persons served.
   b. Personnel.
   c. Other stakeholders.

Intent Statement
The leadership has a working knowledge of what needs to be done to promote an accessible setting. The leadership is able to discuss plans to improve accessibility and remove barriers. Organizations address accessibility issues in order to:

• Enhance the quality of life for those served in their programs/services.
• Implement nondiscriminatory employment practices.
• Meet legal and regulatory Requirements.
• Meet the expectations of stakeholders in the area of accessibility.

Examples
Examples of conformance may be found in minutes of meetings where analysis, action planning, and goals are established; in conversations with stakeholders; in focus groups and council meetings.

Committees

- At least one designated person to co-ordinate: should be a “detail” person
- Use the strengths/interests of staff to work on pieces, e.g., Health & Safety, outcomes...
- Include ALL the staff, everyone needs to do something
### Beginning Strategies

- Conduct a Self-Evaluation and identify major areas for improvement
- Start with organizational standards
- Work backwards from survey date
- Develop system(s) for tasks, e.g., calendars
- Early on tell staff that doing assessments & other documentation IS client service
- Remember the “loop of improvement”

### Communication

- Involve governance partners at the beginning
- Orient all staff that this is about improving service quality not passing the survey
- Communicate: do newsletters, internal and external; e-groups; regular meetings
Getting Help

- Other agencies
- CARF
- Governance
- Funders

Trust

GOOD WORK!
BUT I THINK WE MIGHT NEED JUST A LITTLE MORE DETAIL RIGHT HERE.
Putting All This Together to Prepare for a Site Visit

Consider Your Services:

- What are the best examples of your results in terms of your stakeholders’ expectations?
  
  ______________________________________________________
  ______________________________________________________

- How will you demonstrate these examples to the Survey Team?
  
  ______________________________________________________
  ______________________________________________________
During the Survey:

- Which sites will the surveyors visit?

- Who will they talk to?

- What questions will they ask?

During the Survey:

- What documents will you show them?

- What questions will you want to ask the team to help you improve the services?
Overview of Steps Quality Through CARF Accreditation

1. Identify your CARF Resource Specialist, and establish communication. (Julia, Mary, Penny or Pete)
2. Connect regularly with CARF resources (www.carf.org and CARF Connection via e-mail).
3. Know (or learn!) the benefits of accreditation.
4. Make personal and organizational decisions.
## Overview of Steps Quality Through CARF Accreditation

5. Educate staff and customers.
6. Plan for quality (create teams and networks, use your community resources).
7. Select services & standards manual to submit for survey.
8. Pick a time for a site visit – submit Intent to Survey.

## Overview of Steps Quality Through CARF Accreditation

9. Experience the peer survey.

10. Receive your accreditation decision:

   - Three-Year Accreditation
   - One-Year Accreditation
   - Provisional Accreditation
   - Non-accreditation

11. Respond with the Quality Improvement Plan.
Overview of Steps Quality Through CARF Accreditation

12. Implement your plan.

13. Continuously improve your services.


15. Set up quality management time lines.

16. Think “continuous quality improvement.”

What is a “Blended” Survey?

- Flexible blended survey opportunities.
- A process of customizing a survey so that an organization with programs/services in more than one CARF Customer Service Unit can seek accreditation for all of them during a single site visit.
- Preselected standards from more than one CARF standards manual are applied during the same survey.
What is a “Blended” Survey?

- Blended surveys share a set of Business Practice Standards (with a few additional in Medical).
- Program/Service standards maintain the original intent and integrity.

Survey Preparation

- Allow adequate time and resources.
- 12-18 months average (standards must be in use for at least 6 months prior to the survey).
- Develop your team and timetable for survey preparation.
- Assign tasks.
- Yea, team!
It’s All in the Teamwork

- Training sessions for all staff.
- Active involvement by all department heads.
- Identify core “work group” and leader.
- Have CARF meetings.
- Use time frames to stay on track.

It’s All in the Teamwork

- Include all community partner groups. Community partners provide resources for:
  - Accessibility
  - Health and Safety
  - Legal
  - Financial
  - Human Resources
  - Outcomes
  - Individual Planning
  - Program Design
At Least Twelve Months Prior

- Purchase current materials.
- Establish your “CARF team” and develop your organization’s commitment.
- Educate staff.
- Identify services to be accredited.
- Use the Survey Preparation Guide to seek input from staff and familiarize staff with standards.

At Least Twelve Months Prior

- Attend a training.
- Visit or contact other CARF-accredited organizations.
- Look for the “yes/no” items and make sure they are accomplished.
- Call CARF for any standards interpretation or other questions – Unlimited technical assistance is available by phone/e-mail!
Six Months Prior

- Complete Intent to Survey and send to CARF (should be at least four months prior to desired survey dates - your resource specialist can answer any questions you have).
  - Intent includes HIPAA agreement (for US only unless Veterans Administration)
- Selection of services for accreditation

Six Months Prior

- Continue preparation.
- Educate board and consumers about accreditation.
- Implement new systems, policies, and procedures, and establish your review of systems.
- Gather information and samples of conformance.
- Plan your own demonstrations of conformance using the Survey Preparation Guide.
Three to Four Months Prior

- Conduct a mock survey, role play the survey with staff.
- Plan – What do we show? Who will they talk to? What documents will we need? How shall we organize it?
- Review all documents and think from a surveyor perspective in all activities.

Three to Four Months Prior

- Create an action plan from results of internal review.
- Assign responsibility for any last minute details to staff.
- Stay in touch with your Resource Specialist.
What if Something Changes?

- Notify CARF if something changes after you have completed your Intent to Survey.
- Especially stay aware of the time frame you have requested for the survey.
- If you have been notified of the survey dates and then want to change, there is a $1300 cancellation fee!

One Month Prior

- Typically you will know your survey dates 60 days prior to the actual survey.
- Follow-up on the mock survey results.
Two Weeks Prior

- At least two weeks prior you will receive a call from the team coordinator.
- Please notify CARF if the site visits or interviews will need to take place outside of normal business hours.

One Week Prior

- Keep staff informed.
- Recognize staff and their efforts.
- Prepare a working room for the surveyors for:
  - Interviews,
  - Reviewing documents,
  - Phone calls.
- Relax!
One Week Prior

- Prepare a tentative schedule for site visits with the CARF team coordinator.
- Arrange for interviews of consumers (not specific times).
  - Board member
  - Funding sources
  - Invites to opening and exit conferences

The Site Survey

- Evening Prior: Assist surveyors by delivering non-confidential documents to their hotel.
- Orientation Conference: You choose who will attend.
- Tour, documents, and interviews.
- Working evening meetings: Surveyors only.
- Pre-exit and Exit Conference: You choose who attends. (Sometimes funders require participation in exit conferences.)
Ways a Surveyor Spends His/Her Time

Consultation with your Staff

Be sure to ask questions and benefit from the surveyors’ experience and expertise.

Interviewing Stakeholders:
- Consumers
- Family Members
- Staff Members
- Board Members
- Funders

Tip: Have individual records match consumers to be interviewed.
Ways a Surveyor Spends His/Her Time

Visiting Sites and Observing Services

- Service sites
- All sites owned, rented, or under the organization’s control
- Sampling of community sites

Document Review

- In a room set up for surveyor use.
- Files will include:
  - Administrative/Business documents
  - Individual records
- Staff who know materials.
Ways a Surveyor Spends His/Her Time

Sharing observations:
- Informally during the survey process.
- Pre-exit meeting.
- Orally at the Exit Conference.
- Formally in writing to CARF.

Remember

The survey team is looking for a demonstration of consistency between services, policies, procedures, and documentation:

Walk the Talk!
Remember

- CARF wants you in the accreditation “family.”
- The process is to screen you “in” not “out”!
- Surveyors are from accredited organizations. They have experienced the same first-time anxiety and anticipation as you.
- We are all on the same team!

Tips for Success

- Start some things early.
- Practice teamwork.
- Use CARF resources to prepare.
- Use peer organizations.
Tips for Success

- Allow adequate financial resources.
- Do a practice survey.
- Use preparation as a management tool and quality strategy.
- Use a team approach to prepare.
- Make sure of organization wide “buy-in”.

Tips for Success

- Give yourself enough preparation time.
- Don’t do things for CARF. Show where your activities fit and satisfy the standards.
- Make sure you show the things you are proud of!
Reminders

- Accreditation will always be a work in progress
- Accreditation is a lifestyle change, not a one-time test
- Take the time to do the process well and the outcome will take care of itself
- Maintain a balance between the detail and the big picture
- Use the Survey Report and Quality Improvement Plan for strategic positioning

Summary: A Quality Organization

- Deals with many complex customers— they define quality.
- Focuses on individual service outcomes.
- Is continuously changing and improving!
- Continuously seeks input.
Make this a consultative, helpful experience!

- Be open – don’t try to hide things!
- Ask questions during the:
  - Administrative Surveyor’s initial call,
  - Entire on-site visit,
  - Exit conference, and
  - Development of the Quality Improvement Plan.
- Expect explanations and assistance.
- Call your CARF Resource Specialist.

After the Survey

- Thank your staff.
- Feedback questionnaires to CARF. We use your feedback to improve.
- Report and outcome are sent approximately 6 weeks after the survey via e-mail and hard copy.
**Survey Report Contains**

- Documented recognition for observed excellence and strengths.
- Consultative suggestions based on collective experience.
- Recommendations for areas of improvement.
- No surprises!

**Quality Improvement Plan**

- Due 90 days following receipt of survey report.
- Address all recommendations.
  
  *(If you are unsure about any of the recommendations, call CARF.)*

- Review and response by CARF staff.
- Included for surveyor’s review and use in the next site survey.

  *Make the survey experience live on!*
Certificate of Accreditation

- One free; additional certificates $65.
- Publicizing CARF accreditation with press release.
- Free camera-ready CARF logo or computer file.

Ongoing Communication with CARF

- Keep CARF informed about:
  - Changes in leadership, ownership, and/or addresses.
  - Major catastrophes.
  - Significant litigation or sentinel events related to accredited programs.
  - Online reporting form available on CARF website.
### Annual Conformance to Quality Report

- Condition of accreditation for organizations achieving Three-Year Accreditation.
- CARF sends format ten weeks before due date.
- Due on first and second anniversaries of accreditation.

### Ongoing Communication with CARF

- **CARF Connection** newsletter is e-mailed to all accredited organizations.
- CARF Web Site.
- CARF notifies organizations 7 months prior to expiration.
- Sign up to get Promising Practices by email.
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Thank You, from Tucson!