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## **STANDARDS**

### **Primary Care Services**

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## PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

Accreditation Canada's sector- and service-based standards help organizations assess quality at the point of service delivery and embed a culture of quality, safety, and client- and family-centred care into all aspects of service delivery. The standards are based on five key elements of service excellence: clinical leadership, people, process, information, and performance.

Accreditation is one of the most effective ways for organizations to regularly and consistently examine and improve the quality of their services. The standards provide a tool for organizations to embed accreditation and quality improvement activities into their daily operations with the primary focus being on including the client and family as true partners in service delivery.

Client- and family-centred care is an approach that guides all aspects of planning, delivering and evaluating services. The focus is always on creating and nurturing mutually beneficial partnerships among the organization's team members and the clients and families they serve. Providing client- and family-centred care means working collaboratively with clients and their families to provide care that is respectful, compassionate, culturally safe, and competent, while being responsive to their needs, values, cultural backgrounds and beliefs, and preferences (adapted from the Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care (IPFCC) 2008 and Saskatchewan Ministry of Health 2011).

Accreditation Canada has adopted the four values that are fundamental to this approach, as outlined by the IPFCC, and integrated into the service excellence standards. The values are:

- 1. Dignity and respect:** Listening to and honouring client and family perspectives and choices. Client and family knowledge, values, beliefs, and cultural backgrounds are incorporated into the planning and delivery of care.
- 2. Information sharing:** Communicating and sharing complete and unbiased information with clients and families in ways that are affirming and useful. Clients and families receive timely, complete, and accurate information in order to effectively participate in care and decision-making.
- 3. Partnership and participation:** Encouraging and supporting clients and families to participate in care and decision making to the extent that they wish.
- 4. Collaboration:** Collaborating with clients and families in policy and program development, implementation and evaluation, facility design, professional education, and delivery of care.

Following a review of national and international literature and organizations including the World Health Organization and Health Canada, Accreditation Canada defines primary care:

"As part of the broader primary health care framework, primary care is a service at the entry to the health care system that addresses diagnosis, ongoing treatment and management of health conditions as well as health promotion, disease and injury prevention, and referral to health care specialists."

The Primary Care standards contain elements of a concept known as the primary care "patient-centred medical home." Clients with a medical home are much more likely to receive high quality, safe and appropriate primary care services, and to be satisfied with the services they receive. The "patient-centred medical home" includes the following principles: a regular physician or setting of care; the physician or team take responsibility for the ongoing care of patients; enhanced access through open scheduling and a setting of care that is easy to contact during regular office hours; and the coordination and integration of care across all elements of the health care system such as other physicians, providers or settings.

This set of standards contains the following sections:

- **Investing in quality services**
- **Building a prepared and competent team**
- **Providing safe and effective services**
- **Maintaining accessible and efficient information systems**
- **Monitoring quality and achieving positive outcomes**

The primary care standards may be applied in the following settings: the family practice, clinic, hospital or in a community health centre. Primary care services can be delivered by one practitioner or a group, team, or network of primary care providers and can be co-located, or delivered in a number of sites. All Accreditation Canada standards are developed through a rigorous process that includes a comprehensive literature review, consultation with a standards working group or advisory committee comprised of experts in the field, and evaluation by resident organizations and other stakeholders. If you would like to provide feedback on the standards, please complete the feedback form in this document.

## **Glossary - List of standard terms for all services**

**Care delivery model:** A conceptual model that broadly outlines the way services are delivered. It is based on a thorough assessment of client needs, involving a collaborative approach and stakeholder input, which considers

the best use of resources and services that are culturally appropriate. The benefits of using a care delivery model include improving access to services, providing safe, quality care, promoting a client-centred continuum of care, providing access to a balanced range of services, supporting a highly skilled and dedicated workforce, and reducing inequities in health status.

**Care plan:** May also be known as the service plan, plan of care, or treatment plan. It is developed in collaboration with the client and family and provides details on the client history as well as the plan for services including treatments, interventions, client goals, and anticipated outcomes. The care plan provides a complete picture of the client and their care and includes the clinical care path and information that is important to providing client-centred care (e.g., client wishes, ability/desire to partner in their care, the client's family or support network). The care plan is accessible to the team and used when providing care.

**Client:** The recipient of care. May also be called a patient, consumer, individual, or resident. Depending on the context, client may also include the client's family and/or support network when desired by the client. Where the organization does not provide services directly to individuals, the client refers to the community or population that is served by the organization.

**Client representative or client advisor:** Client representatives work with the organization and often individual care teams. They may be involved in planning and service design, recruitment and orientation, working with clients directly, and gathering feedback from clients and team members. Integrating the client perspective into the system enables the organization to adopt a client- and family- centred approach.

**Co-design:** A process that involves the team and the client and family working in collaboration to plan and design services or improve the experience with services. Co-design recognizes that the experience of and input from the client and family is as important as the expertise of the team in understanding and improving a system or process.

**Electronic Health Record (EHR):** An aggregate, computerized record of a client's health information that is created and gathered cumulatively from all of the client's health care providers. Information from multiple Electronic Medical Records is consolidated into the EHR.

**Electronic Medical Record (EMR):** A computerized record of a client's health information that is created and managed by care providers in a single organization.

**Family:** Person or persons who are related in any way (biologically, legally, or emotionally), including immediate relatives and other individuals in the client's support network. Family includes a client's extended family, partners, friends, advocates, guardians, and other individuals. The client defines the makeup of their family, and has the right to include or not include family members in their care, and redefine the makeup of their family over time.

**Indicator:** A single, standardized measure, expressed in quantitative terms, that captures a key dimension of individual or population health, or health service performance. An indicator may measure available resources, an aspect of a process, or a health or service outcome. Indicators need to have a definition, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and a time period. Indicators are typically expressed as a proportion, which has a numerator and denominator (e.g., percentage of injuries from falls, compliance with standard procedures, team satisfaction).

Counts, which do not have a denominator, may also be used (e.g., number of complaints, number of clients harmed as a result of a preventable error, number of policies revised). Tracking indicator data over time identifies successful practices or areas requiring improvement; indicator data is used to inform the development of quality improvement activities. Types of indicators include structure measures, process measures, outcome measures, and balancing measures.

**In partnership with the client and family:** The team collaborates directly with each individual client and their family to deliver care services. Clients and families are as involved as they wish to be in care delivery.

**Interoperable:** The ability of two or more systems to exchange information and use the information that has been exchanged.

**Medical devices and equipment:** An article, instrument, apparatus or machine used for preventing, diagnosing, treating, or alleviating illness or disease; supporting or sustaining life; or disinfecting other medical devices. Examples include blood pressure cuffs, glucose meters, breathalyzers, thermometers, defibrillators, scales, foot care instruments, client lifts, wheelchairs, syringes, and single-use items such as blood glucose test strips.

**Medical equipment:** A subset of medical devices, considered to be any medical device that requires calibration, maintenance, repair, and user training.

**Partner:** An organization or person who works with another team or organization to address a specific issue by sharing information and/or resources. Partnership can occur at the organization level, team level, or through individual projects or programs.

**Patient safety incident:** An event or circumstance that could have resulted, or did result, in unnecessary harm to a client. Types of patient safety incidents are:

- *Harmful incident:* A patient safety incident that resulted in harm to the client. Replaces adverse event and sentinel event.
- *No harm incident:* A patient safety incident that reached a client but no discernible harm resulted.
- *Near miss:* A patient safety incident that did not reach the client.

**Policy:** A document outlining an organization's plan or course of action.

**Population:** Also known as community. A specific group of people, often living in a defined geographical area who may share common characteristics such as culture, values, and norms. A population may have some awareness of their identity as a group, and share common needs and a commitment to meeting them.

**Procedure:** A written series of steps for completing a task, often connected to a policy.

**Process:** A series of steps for completing a task, which are not necessarily documented.

**Scope of practice:** The procedures, actions, and processes that are permitted for a specific health care provider. In some professions and regions, scope of practice is defined by laws and/or regulations. In these cases, licensing

bodies use the scope of practice to determine the education, experience, and competencies that are required for health care providers to receive a license to practice.

**Self-efficacy:** A person's estimate or judgment of his or her ability to cope with a given situation, or to succeed in completing tasks by attaining specific or general goals. An example of achieving a specific goal includes quitting smoking, whereas achieving a general goal includes continuing to remain at a prescribed weight level.

**Team:** The group of the care professionals who work together to meet the complex and varied needs of clients, families and the community. Teams are collaborative, with different types of health care professionals working together in service provision. The specific composition of a team depends on the type of service provided.

**Team leader:** Person(s) responsible for the operational management of a team. Duties include identifying needs, staffing, and reporting to senior management. Team leaders may be formally appointed or take a role naturally within the team.

**Timely/regularly:** Carried out in consistent time intervals. The organization defines appropriate time intervals for various activities based on best available knowledge and adheres to those schedules.

**Transition in care:** A set of actions designed to ensure the safe and effective coordination and continuity of care as clients experience a change in health status, care needs, health-care providers or location (within, between, or across settings (as defined by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario).

**With input from clients and families:** Input from clients and families is sought collectively through advisory committees or groups, formal surveys or focus groups, or informal day-to-day feedback. Input can be obtained in a number of ways and at various times and is utilized across the organization.

## Legend

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### Dimensions



**Population Focus:** Work with my community to anticipate and meet our needs



**Accessibility:** Give me timely and equitable services



**Safety:** Keep me safe



**Worklife:** Take care of those who take care of me



**Client-centred Services:** Partner with me and my family in our care



**Continuity:** Coordinate my care across the continuum



**Appropriateness:** Do the right thing to achieve the best results



**Efficiency:** Make the best use of resources

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### Criterion Types



**High Priority** High priority criteria are criteria related to safety, ethics, risk management, and quality improvement. They are identified in the standards.



**Required Organizational Practices** Required Organizational Practices (ROPs) are essential practices that an organization must have in place to enhance client safety and minimize risk.

### Tests for Compliance

**Minor** Minor tests for compliance support safety culture and quality improvement, yet require more time to be implemented.

**Major** Major tests for compliance have an immediate impact on safety.



**Performance Measures** Performance measures are evidence-based instruments and indicators that are used to measure and evaluate the degree to which an organization has achieved its goals, objectives, and program activities.

## INVESTING IN QUALITY SERVICES

### 1.0 Services are designed collaboratively to meet the needs of clients and the community.



Client-centred  
Services



#### 1.1 Services are co-designed with clients and families, partners, and the community.

##### Guidelines

Collaboration with clients, partners, and the community in service design is achieved through client advocacy groups, community advisory committees, and client experience surveys. Gaps in services are identified and addressed where possible.



Population  
Focus

#### 1.2 Information is collected from clients and families, partners, and the community to inform service design.

##### Guidelines

New information may be solicited from clients and families, partners, and the community, or existing information may be used when it is still relevant. If it is not within the team's mandate to collect information, the team knows how to access and use information that is available. Information can come from internal and external sources such as the Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI), census data, end-of-service planning reports, wait list data, and community needs assessments.

The information includes the expressed needs of clients served by the organization as well as trends that could have an impact on the community and its health service needs.

Health service needs are influenced by health status, capacities, risks, and determinants of health (i.e., income, social support networks, education and literacy, employment/working conditions, access to health services, gender, and culture).



Appropriateness

- 1.3 Service-specific goals and objectives are developed, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

Clients and families, the team, and community partners are involved in developing team goals and objectives. Goals and objectives are aligned with the organization's strategic directions and are the foundation for delivering services. Objectives are clear, have measurable outcomes and success factors, and are realistic and time-specific.

Goals and objectives are meaningful to the team. They are reviewed annually or as needed and their achievement is evaluated.

Goals and objectives align with federal and provincial/territorial objectives as required.



Efficiency

- 1.4 Services are reviewed and monitored for appropriateness, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

Monitoring and evaluating its services allows the team to examine what services are being offered to and used by clients, and identify areas for improvement. The type of information gathered about services is determined with input from clients and families.

Monitoring the use of services can make internal processes more efficient by identifying service gaps, either within the organization or in the community. Services are assessed to determine whether they are being offered and used as intended, are of appropriate quality, and whether there are opportunities to improve the service design and range of services.

This information is used to improve efficiency by minimizing duplication, evaluating cost-effectiveness of technologies and interventions, and increasing consistency across the organization.

Choosing Wisely Canada (<http://www.choosingwiselycanada.org>) provides information on services for various areas of service that may be unnecessary or inappropriate.



Continuity

1.5

Partnerships are formed and maintained with other services, programs, providers, and organizations to meet the needs of clients and the community.

**Guidelines**

Meeting the full range of needs of clients and a community is beyond the capabilities of one team or organization. Partnerships may be created to help clients navigate services across the continuum of care, or to fill service gaps.

Partnerships may be formed with primary care, acute care, community organizations, mental health services, education, housing, or social services. The organization may also partner or establish linkages with federal, provincial, or territorial organizations as well as non-governmental organizations.

Linkages and partnerships vary depending on the range of services provided by the organization and clients' needs.



Continuity

- 1.6 Partnership or networks are created with other providers and programs.

#### Guidelines

The network may include community-focused services and programs such as school or spiritual health education programs, nutrition services, community-based maternal/child services, therapy services such as physical therapy and occupational therapy, community pharmacists, public health services and programs, medical transportation services, support centers for the elderly, community-based mental health centres, urgent care clinics, shelters for the abused or homeless, rehabilitation services, home care and long-term care.



Continuity

- 1.7 There is collaboration between the clinic, secondary, acute, and specialized health service providers.

#### Guidelines

Collaboration with secondary, acute, and specialized health services improves the provision of coordinated and continuous care for clients and families.



Accessibility

- 1.8 Information on services is available to clients and families, partner organizations, and the community.

#### Guidelines

The information addresses, at minimum, the scope of the organization's services; costs to the client, if any; how to access services; contact points; the effectiveness and outcomes of services; other services available to address the client's needs; and any partner organizations.

Clients and families, partner organizations, and the community are engaged to determine what information is required or desired, and to evaluate whether the information provided meets their needs.



Accessibility

- 1.9 Barriers that may limit clients, families, service providers, and referring organizations from accessing services are identified and removed where possible, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

There is a process to identify, report, and try to remove barriers to access.

Barriers to access may include the proximity and distribution of services, the physical environment, the cultural acceptability of services, wait times, the types of services available, language barriers, financial barriers, availability of transportation, and access to 24-hour emergency services.

Where barriers are beyond the control of the organization or team, they work with partners and/or the community to minimize them.

- 2.0 **Sufficient resources are available to provide safe, high-quality, and client-centred services.**



Appropriateness

- 2.1 Resource requirements and gaps are identified and communicated to the organization's leaders.

**Guidelines**

The resources needed to provide safe, effective, and high quality care are determined by team members and the organization. Resources may be human, financial, structural, informational, or technological.

Identifying resource requirements is a collaborative process between the team and the organization's leaders. It includes criteria to determine where resources are required, potential risks to the team and clients, gaps in services, service bottlenecks, or barriers to service delivery or access.

The team and the organization's leaders work together to determine how to effectively use available resources or where additional resources are required.



Appropriateness

- 2.2 Technology and information systems requirements and gaps are identified and communicated to the organization's leaders.

#### **Guidelines**

Technology includes electronic medical/health records (EMR/EHR), decision tools, client tracking systems, wait list management systems, client self-assessment tools, or access to service-specific registries and/or databases. Depending on the organization, the need for systems could be complex (e.g., advanced software to increase interoperability) or support basic operation (e.g., newer computer systems).

As much as possible, innovative information technology is used to support the work of the service area.



Appropriateness

- 2.3 An appropriate mix of skill level and experience within the team is determined, with input from clients and families.

#### **Guidelines**

Ensuring an appropriate and optimal mix of skill level and experience supports safe, effective, client-centred service delivery and creates learning opportunities for team members.

Optimal evidence-based ratios of skills and experience are determined. Team members have a broad range of knowledge, skills, and experience working with various client groups.

Clients and families have a unique perspective on the skills level and experience available on their team. They may be able to point to services that were not available through their care team as well as individual skills and knowledge that could improve the client experience. For example, clients and families may be well positioned to recognize a resource or knowledge gap on the team (e.g., knowledge of community resources; experience working with clients and families with certain conditions, barriers, levels of understanding, or languages) as well as areas to improve communication (e.g., between teams, between providers, when and how the team communicates with clients and families).



Efficiency

- 2.4 The funding or payment models used create incentives to deliver the best possible primary care services.

#### Guidelines

Mixed funding or payment models may be considered, including the use of capitation or salary, or other incentives in combination with fee-for-service (FFS) systems to promote better coordination and effective delivery of primary care services.

Client-centred  
Services

- 2.5 Space is co-designed with clients and families to ensure safety and permit confidential and private interactions with clients and families.

#### Guidelines

To the extent possible, the physical space is designed to be safe and to respect privacy and confidentiality. Clients and families are involved in planning and designing the layout and use of space to meet their needs. Client dignity; respect, privacy, and confidentiality; accessibility; infection prevention and control; and other needs specific to the clients and community served are considered in space use and design.

When services are provided outside the organization (e.g., in a client's home or a community partner organization), the team works with the client or partner to maintain safety and privacy.



Appropriateness

- 2.6 The effectiveness of resources, space, and staffing is evaluated with input from clients and families, the team, and stakeholders.

**Guidelines**

Evaluating resources, space, and staffing helps determine the extent to which effective services are being provided and identifies opportunities for improvements. Input from clients and families, the team, and stakeholders is gathered through surveys, focus groups, advisory committees, and informal feedback.



Appropriateness

2.7

Team members and clients have access to information about community services, including palliative and end-of-life care.

**Guidelines**

Written and verbal information is provided as needed, and may include information about rehabilitation, community mental health, and primary care, depending on the population served and the resources available. The level of understanding, literacy, language, disability, and culture of the client population are considered when developing and providing information.

Information on palliative and end-of-life care includes information for clients and families as well as resources for the team.



Accessibility

2.8

A universally-accessible environment is created with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

The service environment is kept clean and clutter-free to support physical accessibility for those who use mobility aids such as wheelchairs, crutches, or walkers. The environment is also accessible for those with language, communication, or other requirements, such as those who have auditory, visual, cognitive, or other impairments.

Where team members work outside the organization (e.g., delivering care in the community, home care) they work with partners, clients, and families to support accessibility.



## BUILDING A PREPARED AND COMPETENT TEAM



Appropriateness



### 3.0 Team members are qualified and have relevant competencies.

#### 3.1 Required training and education are defined for all team members with input from clients and families.

##### Guidelines

The required training and education varies by role. They may be defined by a professional regulating body, may be formal or informal, and may include lived experience or work experience.

Clients and families can provide valuable input regarding education and training that could benefit team members and enhance services. For example, clients and families may identify a need for training on working with clients with diverse cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, and care needs. Clients and families can also provide valuable input into where knowledge gaps may exist.

Input from clients and families is sought collectively through advisory committees or groups, formal surveys or focus groups, or informal day-to-day feedback. Input can be obtained in a number of ways and at various times and is utilized across the organization.



Appropriateness



#### 3.2 Credentials, qualifications, and competencies are verified, documented, and up-to-date.

**Guidelines**

Requirements vary for different roles in the organization, including for regulated or unregulated team members.

Designations, credentials, competency assessments, and training are monitored and maintained to ensure safe and effective delivery of services. Professional requirements are kept up-to-date in accordance with provincial and organizational policies.

Services are delivered within accepted scopes of practice. Team members have the appropriate training and capacities to provide client-centred care and use equipment, devices, and supplies safely.



Safety



3.3

Each team member has the necessary insurance to cover legal liability related to the delivery of primary care services.

**Guidelines**

For example, the Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA) offers insurance and legal support to practicing physicians as does the Canadian Nurses Protective Society (CNPS) to registered nurses and nurse practitioners.



Appropriateness

3.4

A comprehensive orientation is provided to new team members and client and family representatives.

**Guidelines**

The orientation program covers, at minimum, the organization's mission, vision, and values; the team's mandate, goals, and objectives; the philosophy of client-centred care and how to apply its principles to practice; roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations; policies and procedures, including confidentiality; worklife balance initiatives; and the organization's approach to integrated quality management (e.g., quality improvement, risk management, utilization management, efficient use of resources).

Orientation processes and activities are documented.



Client-centred  
Services

- 3.5 Education and training are provided to team members on how to work respectfully and effectively with clients and families with diverse cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, and care needs.

**Guidelines**

Cultural education and training build the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are required to safely and appropriately deliver interventions and services to culturally diverse populations. The training may cover topics such as disability, level of understanding, or mental health.

Cultural education and experience are part of the recruitment (including position advertisements) and selection processes.



Client-centred  
Services

- 3.6 Education and training are provided on the organization's care delivery model.

**Guidelines**

The education and training program covers the philosophy of client- and family-centred care adopted by the organization, the expected behaviours associated with a client-centred approach, how to apply the principles to problem solve or address issues in the organization, clients' rights, the ways in which clients are involved in planning and delivering services in the organization, and the quality improvement initiatives that are being undertaken.



Appropriateness

- 3.7 Education and training are provided on the organization's ethical decision-making framework.

**Guidelines**

Training and support to handle ethical issues is provided to team members. Ethics-related issues include conflicts of interest, conflicting perspectives between clients and family and/or team members, a client's decision to withdraw care or to live at risk, and varying beliefs or practices.



Safety



3.8

Education and training are provided on the safe use of equipment, devices, and supplies used in service delivery.

**Guidelines**

Information about the safe use of equipment is provided to all team members. They are trained on how to use existing and new equipment, devices, and supplies. Retraining may be requested or required if a team member does not feel prepared to use the equipment, device, or supplies, or has not used the equipment or device for a long time.

Training includes handling, storage, operation, and cleaning; preventive maintenance; and what to do in case of breakdown.



Appropriateness

3.9

Education and training are provided on information systems and other technology used in service delivery.

**Guidelines**

Education and training may cover topics such as knowledge of computer applications, word processing, software, time management tools, communication tools, research applications, cell phone use, and protecting the privacy of client information.



Worklife



3.10

Team member performance is regularly evaluated and documented in an objective, interactive, and constructive way.

**Guidelines**

An established process to evaluate each team member's performance is followed. Client and/or peer input is part of the evaluation process.

The evaluation may consider the team member's ability to carry out responsibilities, apply the principles of client-centred care, and contribute to the values of the organization. It may also consider the individual's strengths; opportunities for growth; contributions toward patient safety, worklife, and respecting client wishes; or specific competencies described in the position profile. The evaluation may identify issues that require follow up such as unprofessional or disruptive behaviour or challenges adopting client-centred care practices.

A performance evaluation is usually done before the probationary period is completed and annually thereafter, or as defined by the organization. An evaluation may also be completed after retraining or when new technology, equipment, or skills are introduced.



- 3.11 Client and family representatives are regularly engaged to provide input and feedback on their roles and responsibilities, role design, processes, and role satisfaction, where applicable.

**Guidelines**

Regular communication between team members/leaders and client and family representatives ensures that the relationship is mutually beneficial. Discussions include opportunities for increased collaboration and role satisfaction.

Though an open and transparent dialogue is encouraged, team leaders recognize that client and family representatives are to remain independent from the organization, to ensure their opinions and recommendations remain unbiased.



- 3.12 Team members are supported by team leaders to follow up on issues and opportunities for growth identified through performance evaluations.

**Guidelines**

Issues may be identified by the team member or the team leaders and are used to develop an action plan or professional development plan.



Worklife

3.13

Ongoing professional development, education, and training opportunities are available to each team member.

**Guidelines**

Team leaders encourage team members to participate in opportunities for professional or skills development on a regular basis. Additional training or education may be given based on the team member's performance evaluation or as identified through professional development plans.

4.0

**Services are provided within a collaborative team environment.**



Appropriateness



4.1

A collaborative approach is used to deliver services.

**Guidelines**

An interdisciplinary collaborative team needs to evolve and adapt to the changing needs of the client. Depending on the needs and desires of the client and family, the team may consist of specialized roles (e.g., care providers) and support roles (e.g., care planners, translators, security staff, or representatives from community partner organizations). Students, volunteers, and client representatives or advisors may also be included as part of the team.

A team leader (or leaders) is defined and the role of each team member is made clear to the client and family.

The collaborative team is established based on defined criteria such as accepted standards of practice; legal requirements; knowledge, experience, and other qualifications; volume or complexity of caseload; changes in workload; and client safety and needs.



Appropriateness

4.2 The team works in collaboration with clients and families.

#### Guidelines

Clients and families are engaged in shared decision making and understand how care is provided. The client defines the makeup of their family, and has the right to include or not include family members of their choice in their care, and the right to redefine the makeup of their family over time. Family includes an individual's extended family, their partners, friends, advocates, guardians, and other representatives.



Worklife

4.3 Position profiles with defined roles, responsibilities, and scope of employment or practice exist for all positions.

#### Guidelines

Position profiles include a position summary, qualifications and minimum requirements, the nature and scope of the work, and reporting relationships. They are developed for all team members including those who are not directly employed by the organization (e.g., contracted team members, partners, client and family representatives).

Role clarity is essential in promoting client and team safety as well as a positive work environment. Understanding roles and responsibilities and being able to work to one's full scope of practice helps create meaning and purpose for team members.



Worklife

4.4 Each team member works to their full scope of practice.

**Guidelines**

Allowing each team member to work to their full scope of practice preserves professional autonomy, promotes effective and coordinated services, allows team members to understand their contribution toward the greater whole, and increases team member satisfaction.



Safety



4.5

Standardized communication tools are used to share information about a client's care within and between teams.

**Guidelines**

Standardized communication increases consistency, minimizes duplication, and improves teamwork while promoting patient safety. Tools may include protocols, technologies, or standardized processes such as SBAR (Situation Background Assessment Recommendation).

Team members are trained on organizational policies and practices regarding standardized communication tools.



Appropriateness

4.6

The effectiveness of team collaboration and functioning is evaluated and opportunities for improvement are identified.

**Guidelines**

The process to evaluate team functioning and collaboration may include a review of its services, processes, and outcomes. This could be done by administering a team functioning questionnaire to team members, clients and families, and partners to stimulate discussion about areas for improvement.

The team evaluates its functioning when there has been a significant change to the structure of the team.

5.0

**Well-being and worklife balance is promoted within the team.**



Worklife

- 5.1 The workload of each team member is assigned and reviewed in a way that ensures client and team safety and well-being.

#### Guidelines

Appropriate criteria are used for determining workload depending on the environment and the unique demands of different services areas, including hours of work, caseload, role complexity, complexity of client care, physical or emotional demands, repetitive nature of tasks, and level of responsibility. The preferences and availability of each team members are also considered.

In some cases teams may designate a maximum workload for team members. The process of assigning and reviewing workload includes monitoring and tracking hours and clients and when additional measures are needed (e.g., staffing transfers or team re-design).

An environment where team members are comfortable discussing demands and stress levels in the workplace is promoted by the organization and leaders. Measures are taken to alleviate these pressures as much as possible. These can include scheduling strategies, workload sharing, and scheduled time for documentation.



Worklife

- 5.2 Work and job design, roles and responsibilities, and assignments are determined with input from team members, and from clients and families where appropriate.

#### Guidelines

Job design refers to how a group of tasks, or an entire job, is organized. Job design addresses all factors that affect the work, including job rotation, work breaks, and working hours.

When developing and reviewing job design, roles, responsibilities, and assignments, team member and client and family input and feedback is considered. They can all provide unique insight into areas of job design that directly impact them. The flexibility of job design, roles, responsibilities, and assignments will vary depending on the type of services being delivered, the clients being served, and the individual team members involved. Assignments include who each provider cares for, as well as other elements of the team members' roles (e.g., participation in quality improvement activities, training new staff members).



Worklife

5.3 Team members are recognized for their contributions.

**Guidelines**

Recognition activities may be individual, such as awards for years of service or special achievements, or they may involve team recognition or activities.

Recognition can be formal or informal and may be verbal, written, or focus on promoting an atmosphere where team members feel appreciated for their contributions.



Worklife

5.4 There is a policy that guides team members to bring forward complaints, concerns, and grievances.



Safety



5.5 Education and training on occupational health and safety regulations and organizational policies on workplace safety are provided to team members.



Safety



5.6 Education and training are provided on how to identify, reduce, and manage risks to client and team safety.

**Guidelines**

Training may include physical hazards; challenges with equipment; handling spills, waste, or infectious materials; working with clients who may pose a risk to themselves or others; and challenges with handling, storing, or dispensing medications.

Common risks to the team may include lack of training on safety issues, performing improper lifts, improper use of equipment, or working alone.



Safety



5.7

Education and training are provided to team members on how to prevent and manage workplace violence, including abuse, aggression, threats, and assaults.

### Guidelines

Acts of violence include abuse, aggression, threats, and assaults. They may be committed by clients, their families, teams, or anyone else in the workplace.

Where possible, team members use de-escalation techniques as a preventive measure. De-escalation techniques are minimally intrusive and the least restrictive way to manage violence. Some training programs on how to safely work with clients who are at risk of or who exhibit aggressive or responsive behaviors include:

- CPI Training (Crisis Prevention and Intervention)
- GPA (Gentle Persuasive Approach)
- U-First!

Training and education include the use of a standardized risk assessment tool such as the Hamilton Anatomy of Risk Management (HARM) tool. Training may address:

- Identifying triggers
- Assessing and communicating a client's potential for violence and recognizing signs of agitation and aggression
- Reducing harassment
- Responding to and managing violence (e.g., non-violent crisis intervention, emergency code response guidelines, conflict resolution and mediation, and self-defense)
- The trauma-informed approach
- Communication techniques

Training may also specify the team's alternate procedure for when de-escalation techniques are unsuccessful.



Safety



5.8

The organization's policy on reporting workplace violence is followed by team members.

### Guidelines

Perceived, potential, or actual incidents of physical or verbal violence are reported to the appropriate authorities in accordance with applicable legislation, and may be reported in the client medical record depending on the nature of the incident.



## PROVIDING SAFE AND EFFECTIVE SERVICES



Accessibility

### 6.0 **Access to services for current and potential clients, families, teams, and referring organizations is provided in a timely and coordinated manner.**

6.1 There is a process to respond to requests for services in a timely way.

#### **Guidelines**

Requests for service may come from clients, families, other teams, or referring organizations. There may be different processes to respond to a request based on who is requesting the services and what is being requested.

Requests for service, the process to respond to requests, and the definition of timely will vary by type of service being offered.

Responsiveness is monitored by setting and tracking times for responding to requests for services as well as through gathering feedback from clients and families, referring organizations, and other teams.



Appropriateness

6.2 Information about the client is gathered as part of the intake process and as required.

#### **Guidelines**

This process may be called admission, intake, pre-admission, screening, start of service, or moving in. The information is validated and reviewed. It is used to determine if the organization's services fit with the client's needs and preferences, identify the client's immediate needs, and decide on service priorities.

The intake process is adjusted as needed for clients and families with diverse needs such as language, culture, level of education, lifestyle, and physical or mental disability.



Accessibility

6.3 Defined criteria are used to determine when to initiate services with clients.

**Guidelines**

The needs of potential clients are assessed in relation to the capacity of the team to meet those needs.



Accessibility

6.4 When the team is unable to meet the needs of a potential client, access to other services is facilitated.

**Guidelines**

In the case where the organization is unable to meet the client's needs, the rationale is explained and access to other services is facilitated. The information is documented for use in service planning.



Accessibility

6.5 Clients and families are made aware of the team member who is responsible for coordinating their service, and how to reach that person.

**Guidelines**

The assigned team member may be the collaborative team member with the most consistent contact with the client, or the primary provider responsible for care.



Accessibility



6.6 During regular hours, same-day access to primary care services is available to clients and their families, as required.

**Guidelines**

Timely access to primary care services should be achieved without compromising the quality of care. A proactive process called advanced access, open access, or same-day scheduling may be followed to reduce waits and delays in services without having to add resources. These models can only be sustained as long as the demand for appointments does not permanently exceed the team's capacity to offer them.



Accessibility



6.7

Written policies and procedures to screen all clients at the point of contact, and to identify clients with immediate or urgent needs, are followed.

**Guidelines**

Set criteria are used to categorize clients according to need and gives priority to clients with immediate or urgent needs such as chest pain, myocardial infarction, bowel obstruction, or allergic reactions to medications administered in the office. These conditions may also require that clients be transferred promptly to another level of care.

The screening process may be referred to as triage. It should be carried out by a qualified team member such as a nurse or physician.



Accessibility



6.8

An out-of-office and after-hours care process is followed for clients and families requiring access to primary care services outside regular business hours.

**Guidelines**

Out-of-office and after-hours access to primary care services can help clients and families avoid unnecessary emergency department visits. This is especially important for clients with complex health needs or chronic conditions. The process may include extended roles or hours for family physicians or other staff, on-call procedures or rotations, or linkages with other physicians or agencies to help deliver services after hours.



Accessibility

6.9

The out-of-office and after-hours care process includes how to respond to requests for medication refills and medication information after hours and in emergencies.



Accessibility



6.10

Clients and families have access to a teletriage service 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week.

**Guidelines**

Teletriage refers to information or advice provided by registered nurses following evidence-based protocols. This information or advice can allow callers to make decisions about accessing the most appropriate health care service, e.g., emergency room, primary care provider, self-help.

Where teletriage services are not accessible, clients must have 24/7 access to information and advice through community health services or hospitals.



Appropriateness

6.11

Clients' ability to access services is tracked and the information used to make improvements to services.

**Guidelines**

For example, wait times to the next or third next available appointment, the number of clients who are waiting for an appointment, or the number of clients who were unable to be seen within a given timeframe may be tracked.

Tracking the clients' ability to access services provides useful information about performance, and can also indicate if additional resources are needed.



Accessibility

6.12

Clients and families are provided with access to additional off-site or outreach primary health care services.

**Guidelines**

In addition to the primary care services delivered directly by the team, the team works with partners and community organizations to provide clients and families with access to additional off-site or outreach primary health care services or resources such as community health centres, public health services, specialty care, advocacy services, shelters, housing services, food banks, or spiritual services, as needed.



Accessibility

6.13 Clients and families are provided with information about how and when to access secondary, tertiary, or referral services available to them.

**7.0 Activities to promote health and prevent disease are conducted with input from clients and families.**



Client-centred Services

7.1 Clients are provided with information about staying healthy and the risk of developing a health condition.

**Guidelines**

To stay healthy and prevent illness, clients need education about the importance of preventing conditions they may be at risk of developing. Health education includes healthy behaviours, early detection of illness, and how to reduce health risks.



Client-centred Services



7.2 A health risk assessment process is followed to identify clients at risk for preventable health conditions.

**Guidelines**

Clients at risk for preventable health conditions are identified by using a health risk assessment process or tool to assess the impact of client's lifestyle choices and health history. By identifying clients at risk for preventable health conditions, the team can educate clients about delaying and/or managing existing health conditions.



Client-centred  
Services



7.3

Clients at risk for preventable health conditions are screened and timely follow up on the results is provided.

**Guidelines**

To optimize intervention and prevention, clients who may be at risk for preventable health conditions should be screened. Depending on the client and the family history, screening may focus on breast cancer, cervical cancer, or risk factors for heart disease, diabetes, or other chronic conditions. The Canadian Task Force on Preventative Health Care (CTFPHC) has guidelines on periodic health examinations, prevention and screening available at <http://www.ctfphc.org/>. Screening tools used may vary depending on the facility and provincial priorities.



Client-centred  
Services

7.4

Screening exams are planned and clients are informed of the examination date.

**Guidelines**

The client may be informed in writing, where possible, or over the phone if time is a factor.

8.0

**Clients and families are partners in service delivery.**



Appropriateness

8.1

There is a shared roster or registry of clients and families who access the team's primary care services.

**Guidelines**

There must be a clear definition of the community served by a particular practitioner or organization in order to effectively plan and deliver services. The shared roster or registry provides the team with a list of clients and families served, and establishes for each client and family their “medical home”.

Rostering, often referred to as enrolment or registration, can be organized in a number of ways, including geography, affinity groups and disease groups. Enrolment is generally voluntary. When the client is put on the roster, the team guarantees them a certain package of services, and in return, the client is committed to receiving his or her services within the organization in which they are rostered. Rostering and the maintenance of accurate roster information will be dependent upon adequate information technology. Basic client data and roster information can be expanded as the technology to support integrated health systems grows.



Client-centred  
Services

- 8.2 There is an open, transparent, and respectful relationship with each client.

**Guidelines**

The team supports a respectful and transparent relationship with clients by introducing themselves and explaining their role; asking permission before performing tasks; explaining what they are doing; using a respectful tone; expressing concern or reassurance; providing an opportunity for questions, input, and feedback; respecting cultural and religious beliefs or lifestyle; and respecting confidentiality and privacy.



Client-centred  
Services

- 8.3 Clients and families are encouraged to be actively engaged in their care.

**Guidelines**

The environment encourages clients and families to be active participants in their care, ask questions, and provide input at all stages of the care process.



Client-centred  
Services

- 8.4 The capacity of each client to be involved in their care is determined in partnership with the client and family.

**Guidelines**

Each client will have differing levels of ability to be involved in their own care. At each stage, the appropriate team member works with the client, family, or substitute decision maker to determine how much and what type of information the client or family requires to be meaningfully involved in their care. This information is documented in the client record.



Client-centred  
Services

- 8.5 The client's wishes regarding family involvement in their care are respected and followed.

**Guidelines**

The team finds ways to include members of the client's support network in the client's care.

Applicable legislation when a substitute decision maker or family is involved in decision-making is respected. There is a process to resolve conflicts regarding level of desired involvement between the client and family.



Client-centred  
Services

- 8.6 Complete and accurate information is shared with the client and family in a timely way, in accordance with the client's desire to be involved.

**Guidelines**

Sharing detailed and complete information is critical for informed choice and shared decision making between clients, families, and the team. Information is delivered according to individual needs and interests, as well as levels of understanding.

Clients and families are made aware of the risks and benefits of care; the client's roles and responsibilities in service delivery; the benefits, limitations, and possible outcomes of proposed services or interventions; how to prepare for tests and treatments; the availability of counselling and support groups; and how to reach team members in an emergency or crisis.

Varying levels of information may be required at different points in the client's care and are accommodated wherever possible. Similarly, different messages will require different delivery methods (e.g., serious topics require a more structured approach).



Client-centred  
Services

8.7

The team verifies that the client and family understand information provided about their care.

**Guidelines**

The level of understanding, literacy, language, disability, and culture are considered when providing information to clients and families.

Processes to verify clients' understanding include encouraging and allotting time for questions, having the client repeat back information, ensuring a linguistic or cultural match wherever possible, using visuals or videos where possible, and creating an ongoing exchange where confirming understanding is a recurring event.

The Always Use Teach-back! Website ([www.teachbacktraining.org/](http://www.teachbacktraining.org/)) provides useful tools to learn how to confirm client understanding of information.



Client-centred  
Services

- 8.8 Translation and interpretation services are available for clients and families as needed.

**Guidelines**

Written materials are available in the languages commonly spoken in the community, as required. Interpretation services are available when required by clients or families, wherever possible.



Client-centred  
Services

- 8.9 The client's capacity to provide informed consent is determined.

**Guidelines**

The process of evaluating a client's capacity to consent is carried out on an ongoing basis. With respect to decision making for consent purposes, “capacity” means the ability to understand the information relevant to the decision, appreciate foreseeable consequences of a decision or failure to make a decision, and weigh the risks and benefits of that decision.

Federal, provincial, and territorial legislation are followed when working with children and youth. When dealing with the elderly, minors, or those deemed incapable of consenting, clients are involved to the greatest extent possible in making decisions about their services, and the team values their questions and input.



Client-centred  
Services



- 8.10 The client's informed consent is obtained and documented before providing services.

**Guidelines**

Informed consent consists of reviewing service information with the client, family, or substitute decision maker; informing the client about available options and providing time for reflection and questions before asking for consent; respecting the client's rights, culture, and values including the right to refuse consent at any time; and recording the client's decision in the client record. The consent process is ongoing.

Implied consent occurs when providing services where written consent is not needed, such as when clients arrive for an appointment or class, have blood pressure taken, present their arm to have blood drawn, arrive for service through Emergency Medical Services (EMS), or present with life-threatening or emergent condition(s) and require immediate resuscitation.



Appropriateness



8.11

When clients are incapable of giving informed consent, consent is obtained from a substitute decision maker.

**Guidelines**

A substitute decision maker is consulted when clients are unable to make their own decisions, and an advance directive is used, where available, to ensure decisions are in line with the client's wishes. In these cases, the substitute decision maker is provided with information about the roles and responsibilities involved in being a substitute decision maker, and given the opportunity to discuss questions, concerns, and options. Selecting the appropriate substitute decision maker is done in consideration of the applicable legislation and may be an advocate, family member, legal guardian, or caregiver.

If consent is given by a substitute decision maker, his or her name, relationship with the client, and the decision made is documented in the client record.

When working with children and youth, informed consent is received and documented from the child, youth, family or legal guardian before providing services. The consent process includes involving them as much as possible in the decisions about their service, intervention, or treatment, and valuing their questions and input.



Appropriateness

8.12

Clients and families are provided with opportunities to be engaged in research activities that may be appropriate to their care.

#### Guidelines

There is an ethical review process to determine when to involve a client in a research activity. Research activities may include clinical trials, assessments of new protocols, or changes to existing protocols. Clients and families are included in participatory research project design and implementation where appropriate, (e.g., gathering qualitative data for quality improvement initiatives).



Appropriateness



8.13

Ethics-related issues are proactively identified, managed, and addressed.

#### Guidelines

Ethics-related issues are ones in which values may be in conflict, making it hard to reach a decision. The issues may be very serious, life-and-death matters, or related to day-to-day activities. Examples include conflicts of interest; respecting a client's choice to live at risk; triaging community members during an emergency; requests to withdraw or end services, including life-sustaining supports or treatments; and end-of-life care.

The organization's ethics framework is used to manage and address ethics-related issues. They may be addressed by an ethics committee or consultation team that may include health service professionals, clergy, or ethicists. In addition to clinical consultation, the ethics committee may be involved in policy review and ethics education.

Ethics-related issues involving particular clients are documented in the client record.



Client-centred  
Services



8.14

Clients and families are provided with information about their rights and responsibilities.

#### Guidelines

Client and family rights include the right to have privacy and confidentiality protected; be aware of how client information is used; have access to their record and information about them; be treated with respect and care; maintain cultural practices; pursue spiritual beliefs; live at risk; and be free from abuse, exploitation, and discrimination.

Client and family rights regarding service delivery include the right to refuse service or refuse to have certain people involved in their service; participate in all aspects of their service and make personal choices; have a support person or advocate involved in their service; appeal a care plan decision or file a complaint; take part in or refuse to take part in research or clinical trials; receive safe, competent service; and raise concerns about the quality of service.

Client and family responsibilities include treating others with respect, providing accurate information, reporting safety risks, and observing rules and regulations.

The information is provided at intake or admission and is adapted to meet diverse needs such as language, culture, level of education, lifestyles, and physical or mental disability. When the information cannot be provided to the client and family on intake, it is provided at the earliest opportunity.



Client-centred  
Services



8.15

Clients and families are provided with information about how to file a complaint or report violations of their rights.



Client-centred  
Services



8.16

A process to investigate and respond to claims that clients' rights have been violated is developed and implemented with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

An environment where clients, families, and team members feel comfortable raising concerns or issues is promoted. The organization may provide access to a neutral, objective person from whom clients and families can seek advice or consultation. Where electronic health records are used, there is a process to receive and respond to client complaints and questions regarding the privacy of the electronic record.

Claims brought forward by team members or other teams are also addressed.



Continuity



8.17

There is a process or system in place for managing and coordinating care for clients with complex health needs or multiple co-morbidities.

**Guidelines**

As part of the management of more complex clients, the team links with and provides follow up with more highly specialized service providers. Disease-specific clinical guides, evidence-based practice guidelines, flow sheets, and other resources may be used to effectively manage clients with chronic conditions over time. There may also be a registry as well as programs to assist clients with specific chronic diseases.



Continuity



8.18

The team works with other health care providers to deliver services to clients with complex health needs or multiple co-morbidities.

**Guidelines**

To reduce unnecessary visits, the team tries to schedule appointments so clients with more than one health need can access multiple health care providers at one appointment.



Safety



8.19

A policy to maintain accurate allergy information for each client is developed and followed by the team.

**Guidelines**

The policy identifies who is responsible for updating allergy information in the client record.

**9.0 Care plans are developed in partnership with the client and family based on a comprehensive assessment.**

**9.1** Each client's physical and psychosocial health is assessed and documented using a holistic approach, in partnership with the client and family.

**Guidelines**

Elements of physical health include:

- Medical history
- Allergies
- Medication profile
- Health status
- Nutritional status
- Palliative care needs
- Dietary needs

Elements of psychosocial health include:

- Functional and emotional status family and caregiver involvement
- Communication and self-care abilities and strengths
- Mental health status, including personality and behavioural characteristics
- Cognitive status
- Socio-economic status
- Cultural and spiritual beliefs and needs.

**9.2** The assessment process is designed with input from clients and families.



Appropriateness



Client-centred  
Services

**Guidelines**

The assessment process is as streamlined and straightforward as possible, so that clients are not required to repeat information to multiple providers or team members. Where applicable, an interdisciplinary or collaborative assessment may be completed with the client, family, and appropriate team members.



Client-centred  
Services

- 9.3 Goals and expected results of the client's care and services are identified in partnership with the client and family.

**Guidelines**

The client's physical and psychosocial needs, choices, and preferences as identified in the client assessment are used to develop service goals. Service goals and expected results suit the client's individual circumstances, are achievable, measurable, and complement those developed by other team members and organizations with which the client is involved.



Client-centred  
Services

- 9.4 Standardized assessment tools are used during the assessment process.

### Guidelines

Tools are standardized and adopted across the team, and where applicable, across the organization. Assessment tools are designed to assist the team to systematically collect and interpret all of the information gathered during the assessment process. Benefits of using standardized tools for the client and the care provider include being more efficient, collecting more accurate information, consistency of assessment, and reliability of results and improved opportunity for communication between the client and the care provider.

The standardized assessment tools used will vary depending on the needs of the client and the type and range of services provided. Examples of standardized assessment tools are the Glasgow Coma Scale, the Clinical Frailty Scale, the Beck Depression Inventory, or the InterRAI tool. The standardized assessment tools used are evidence-informed and meaningful for the services provided.



Safety



9.5

When prescribing any medication, the team reconciles the client's list of medications.

### Guidelines

Medication reconciliation is a way to collect and communicate accurate information about client medication, including over-the-counter medication, vitamins, and supplements. Poor communication about medication can cause errors and patient safety incidents.

Medication reconciliation is a shared responsibility which must involve the client and/or family. Liaison with the community pharmacist is often required.

See Accreditation Canada's patient safety FAQs at [www.accreditation.ca](http://www.accreditation.ca), for more information.



Safety



9.6

Universal fall precautions, applicable to the setting, are identified and implemented to ensure a safe environment that prevents falls and reduces the risk of injuries from falling.

**Guidelines**

Organizations should identify and adopt precautions for all clients, regardless of risk of falling. The acronym S.A.F.E. (Safe environment; Assist with mobility; Fall-risk reduction; and Engage client and family) describes the key strategies for universal fall precautions. The following are examples of universal fall precautions: familiarize clients to new environments; if you have call buttons (e.g., in washrooms) ensure they are within reach; have sturdy handrails in bathrooms, rooms, and hallways; use appropriate lighting; provide chairs that are appropriate for clients with mobility issues; have mobility aids on hand as appropriate to your client population; keep floor surfaces clean and dry; clean up all spills promptly; keep hallways and care areas uncluttered. It is important to identify precautions that align with the clinical setting and needs of clients in that setting, including their right to live at risk.



Appropriateness

9.7

Each client's preferences and options for services are discussed as part of the assessment, in partnership with the client and family.

**Guidelines**

The client's expressed needs, preferences and the options for care and service are discussed with the client and family. The team and client engage in shared-decision making that considers client preferences, expected outcomes, and risks and benefits of the options.

For example, various strategies to manage pain—such as analgesics including opioids and adjuvants, as well as physical, behavioural, and psychological interventions—may be discussed and the client is able to select the preferred option.

Other preferences that are discussed include options for self-care, privacy, visitors, treatments and testing, and personal care, such as sleeping, bathing, and eating.



Continuity

9.8

Diagnostic and laboratory testing and expert consultation are available in a timely way to support a comprehensive assessment.



Safety



9.9

Critical diagnostic tests are flagged and a process that is distinct from the routine process is followed to make sure the physician immediately receives those results.

Client-centred  
Services

9.10

The completion of diagnostic tests is tracked and the client and family are informed about how both abnormal and normal results are followed-up on.

#### Guidelines

If the team does not follow up when diagnostic test results are normal, clients and families are told that this is the procedure and are aware that they will not be notified if the test results are normal.



Safety



9.11

Timely follow up is provided for abnormal diagnostic test results.



Continuity

9.12

The results of the assessment are shared with the client and other team members in a timely and easy-to-understand way.

#### Guidelines

Sharing assessment results as applicable improves clarity and prevents duplication. In order to provide information that is easy to understand, information is tailored to the client's literacy level, language, and culture.



Continuity



9.13

A comprehensive and individualized care plan is developed and documented in partnership with the client and family.

#### Guidelines

The care plan is based on the results of the assessment and the client's service goals and expected results. It includes the roles and responsibilities of the team, other organizations, and clients and their families. It includes detailed information about the client's history, assessments, diagnostic results, allergies, and medication, including any medication issues or adverse drug reactions.

The plan addresses where and how frequently services will be delivered; timelines for starting services, reaching the service goals and expected results, and completing services; how achievement of the service goals and expected results will be monitored; and plans for transition or follow-up once service ends, if applicable.

Client-centred  
Services

9.14

Planning for care transitions, including end of service, are identified in the care plan in partnership with the client and family.

#### Guidelines

Including information in the care plan about transition planning, whether to home, another team, an alternate level of care, or end of service, enhances coordination among teams or partner organizations and helps prepare clients for the end of service. Client involvement in end-of-service planning ensures the client and family are prepared and know what to expect.

Discussions about the client's transition and post-care needs and preferences are part of developing the care plan. The discussion may include post-care follow up, ability to perform self-care, referrals to community supports, or other anticipated needs or challenges.



Appropriateness

**10.0 Care plans are implemented in partnership with clients and families.**

10.1 The client's individualized care plan is followed when services are provided.



Appropriateness

10.2 All services received by the client, including changes and adjustments to the care plan, are documented in the client record.

**Guidelines**

The client record is accessible to the team involved in care, including the client, and is contained in a single client record.



Appropriateness



10.3 Treatment protocols are consistently followed to provide the same standard of care in all settings to all clients.



Appropriateness



10.4 The client's health status is reassessed in partnership with the client, and updates are documented in the client record, particularly when there is a change in health status.

**Guidelines**

Delays or failures to report a change in health status, in particular deterioration in a client's condition, are significant barriers to safe and effective care and services. Changes in the client's health status are documented accurately, in a timely manner, and communicated to all team members.



Appropriateness

- 10.5 Client progress toward achieving goals and expected results is monitored in partnership with the client, and the information is used to adjust the care plan as necessary.

#### **Guidelines**

Documenting progress toward goals is done using both qualitative and quantitative methods and includes the client and family. It may include the use of standardized assessment tools, discussion with clients and families, and observation.

Client-centred  
Services

- 10.6 Access to spiritual space and care is provided to meet clients' needs.

#### **Guidelines**

Spiritual care is available to meet the needs of clients, as required. It includes access to a spiritual leader appropriate to the client's beliefs (e.g., a chaplain, imam, rabbi, or non-denominational counsellor). Clients and families have access to a designated space to observe spiritual practice.

The client's spiritual needs and preferences are seen as integral to the care and healing process, and are discussed when making care decisions that may involve an ethical or spiritual component.

Client-centred  
Services

- 10.7 Clients and families have access to psychosocial and/or supportive care services, as required.

#### **Guidelines**

Emotional support and counselling can help clients and families cope with the health needs and health-related issues. Supports may address coping with a diagnosis, help with decision making, dealing with side effects, or ethics-related issues such as advance directives.



Client-centred  
Services

10.8 Support for the family, team members, and other clients is provided throughout and following the death of a client.

**Guidelines**

Relevant information is shared with clients and families about the dying process, such as the signs and symptoms of imminent death; coping strategies; how to provide support and comfort during the final hours; and grief and bereavement services.

The client's family and friends are encouraged to use community support systems. When these are insufficient, or when family and friends are identified as being at risk for complex grief reactions, access is facilitated to bereavement services for clients, families, team members, and volunteers, including volunteer support or professional services.

**11.0 Clients and families are partners in planning and preparing for transition to another service or setting.**



Client-centred  
Services



11.1 Clients and families are actively engaged in planning and preparing for transitions in care.

**Guidelines**

Clients and families are involved in all transition planning. The team, client and family discuss the client's care plan, goals, and preferences; the care provided; outstanding issues, clinical or otherwise; what to expect during transition; follow-up appointments; exercise and nutrition plans, where applicable; contact information for the team members and details on when they should be contacted.

Continuity of care is improved when clients participate in transition planning and preparation and have comprehensive information about transitions and end of service.

Examples of key transition moments include rounds, shift changes, handoffs, moving in or out of an organization, to another community provider or at end of service.

Talking with the client and family about transitions helps them understand the process and provides an opportunity to ask any questions. It also helps ensure all information is accurate and complete, and that the client's wishes are respected.



Continuity

11.2

A set process is followed to transfer and refer clients, their families, information and records to and from other primary, secondary, acute and specialized health services.

**Guidelines**

Effective referral processes that include the timely and complete transfer of information and records promote seamless care and services, and reduce duplication.



Client-centred  
Services

11.3

The client's physical and psychosocial readiness for transition, including their capacity to self-manage their health, is assessed.

**Guidelines**

This assessment happens as early as possible within the care process. Instances where self-management would benefit the client are determined. Capacity to self-manage is influenced by factors such as access to a support network, community care options, cognitive and physical ability, and literacy level.



Client-centred  
Services

- 11.4 Clients are empowered to self-manage conditions by receiving education, tools, and resources, where applicable.

**Guidelines**

Education that promotes empowerment and helps clients self-manage chronic conditions may include action planning; modeling behaviors and problem solving strategies; reinterpreting symptoms; and social persuasion through group support and guidance for individual efforts. Self-management training topics should include exercise; nutrition; symptom management techniques; risk factor management; fatigue and sleep management; use of medications; managing emotions; cognitive and memory changes; training in communication with health professionals and other individuals; and health-related problem solving and decision making.

Tools and resources made available to help clients to self-manage and are tailored to each client's needs. For example, tools and resources can be modified based on level of understanding, literacy, language, disability, and culture.



Continuity

- 11.5 Appropriate follow-up services for the client, where applicable, are coordinated in collaboration with the client, family, other teams, and organizations.

**Guidelines**

Responsibility for the client's care continues until service has ended or the client has been transferred to another team, service, or organization.

Follow-up services may include primary care, home and community services, community-based rehabilitation, psychological counselling services, and recommendations for ongoing care. Working together to establish proper placement for the client helps ensure the client receives the most appropriate services in the most appropriate setting, and minimizes temporary solutions or unnecessary transfers.

To ensure clients receive seamless and continuous care, placement and follow up includes a process for when transitions do not go as planned.



Continuity

- 11.6 The transition plan is documented in the client record.



Continuity

- 11.7 There is a process to partner with the client and family at the time of transition to share information and instructions.

**Guidelines**

Continuity of care is enhanced when clients and their families have comprehensive information about their health, transitions of care, and the end of service. This can reduce the stress of a transition to the home or community and minimize delays in end-of-service.

Information provided to the client at the time of transition may include written discharge information or instructions, action plans, goals, signs or symptoms of declining health status, and contact information for the team.

The SMART Discharge Protocol available from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (<http://www.ihl.org>) is a set of tools to help teams standardize and improve their discharge process.



Continuity



11.8

When referring a client, the notice of referral and a complete set of client information, including medication records, is provided in a timely way to the chosen physician or organization.

#### Guidelines

When clients require more specialized care, a referral process is followed so clients may receive the most appropriate care by the most appropriate service provider.

The sharing of complete client information in a timely way facilitates transitions and hand-offs, and reduces redundancy and duplication in obtaining client information. Appropriate information technology is used to share information with other service providers or organizations.

Evidence suggests that having access to up-to-date and accurate client information and being knowledgeable about the client's medical history is a significant predictor of (the client's perspectives of) the quality of the primary care services they receive.

To enhance communication and the timeliness of the communication, appropriate information technology should be used to communicate with other services such as emergency medical services, pharmacy, diagnostic imaging services, and alternative levels of care.



Continuity



11.9

When referring a client to a consultant or hospital, referral requests are sent in a timely way.



Continuity

11.10

There is a mechanism to follow clients through referral and to consult with service providers to follow client progress over time.

**Guidelines**

Steps are taken to make sure that consultation notes are received from other providers and that discharge notes are received from hospitals in a timely and complete manner.



Continuity

- 11.11 Following discharge from hospital or consultation services, follow-up visits are provided to the client.

**Guidelines**

Following discharge from another organization or service provider, the team provides follow-up visits as required by the client's condition unless the client's referral centre or location is confidential.

Client-centred  
Services

- 11.12 A client's wish to end or limit services, transfer to another service, or transition home, is respected.

**Guidelines**

Shared decision making regarding a client's transition takes place in consultation with the family or substitute decision maker, when required, and takes the client's decision-making capacity into consideration. The risks of the transition are discussed with the client and family, as well as other community-based services that are available to them after the transition.

An ethical or values-based decision making framework is used when working with clients who have chosen options against the team's recommendation. In the event the client wishes to continue service against the team's recommendation or beyond the capacity of the organization, an ethical or value-based decision making framework is used to ensure a fair and equitable outcome for the client and the organization.



Appropriateness

11.13

The effectiveness of transitions is evaluated and the information is used to improve transition planning, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

At regular intervals, a sample of clients, families, or referral organizations is contacted to determine the effectiveness of the transition or end of service, monitor client perspectives and concerns after the transition, and monitor follow-up plans. Evaluating transitions is an opportunity to verify that client and family needs were met and concerns or questions addressed.

Client feedback and the overall results of the evaluation are shared with the organization's leaders and the governing body and the information is used to improve transitions.

## MAINTAINING ACCESSIBLE AND EFFICIENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS



Appropriateness



- 12.0**      **Client records are kept accurate, up-to-date, and secure.**
- 12.1      An accurate, up-to-date, and complete record is maintained for each client, in partnership with the client and family.

**Guidelines**

Client records are accessible and up-to-date. Information is easy to find and identify, and is organized for ease of use. The record includes the dates of service, is signed by the appropriate authority, and is legible.

Only recognized abbreviations are used in the record, and critical client information is prominently displayed.

The client record is updated whenever there is a change in health status, the care plan, the client's medications, or when the client is transitioned to another level of care or service.

Organizational and professional standards are followed when determining what information is needed for the client record to be considered complete. These include significant changes in condition, diagnostic results, alert notations, progress notes, significant events or patient safety incidents, and others.

Clients and families are involved in providing and documenting information, and ensuring the information captured is accurate and complete. The team may partner with the client and family in various ways depending on the service setting and individual circumstances. For example, in community settings or primary care, documentation can often be completed in the room, with the client and family. This is not always possible in all care settings, particularly if the client record is maintained in a central location, concurrent documentation detracts from the care or service being delivered, or urgent care is being delivered.

When documenting in the client record with the client and family is not possible, the team works to include the client and family in the process as much as possible (e.g., taking notes with them, confirming information) to ensure that what is documented is accurate and reflects the nature of the service provided, intervention, or conversation.



Appropriateness

12.2

A standardized set of health information is collected to ensure client records are consistent and comparable.

**Guidelines**

Collecting standardized information applies whether the client records are paper-based or electronic.

The nature of the health information collected will vary depending on the type of organization and the services provided. Standards for data collection may be set out in provincial/territorial or national guidelines. Standardized data elements can be found through the Canadian Institute for Health Information, as well as provincial platforms for electronic records (e.g., e-Health Ontario). Where information is not available, the organization works with partner organizations and/or the health region to determine what information to collect for each client.



Appropriateness



12.3

Policies and procedures to securely collect, document, access, and use client information are followed.

**Guidelines**

Policies outlining authorized access to client information are available to the team, including how, when, and what information they may access. Only team members who are actively involved in a client's care have access to the client record.

The team is aware of and knows how to comply with applicable legislation to protect the privacy and confidentiality of client information. Applicable legislation may be provincial, territorial, or federal.

Client-centred  
Services

12.4

Clients are able to access information in their records, including electronic medical/health records, in a routine, client-centred, and timely way.

**Guidelines**

Client access to their records is facilitated in a proactive way, according to the organization's policy and applicable legislation. The processes to access records are client-centred and support clients to access their information. Clients have opportunities to discuss the information, ask questions, provide feedback.



Client-centred  
Services

- 12.5 Information is documented in the client's record in partnership with the client and family.

**Guidelines**

Clients are the owners of their health information. They are included in the process of documenting information in their record and can provide input on the information being documented. Clients are given the right to read and comment on information that is recorded. The charting or documentation process may be conducted in partnership with the client as part of their care, or access to their records may be provided electronically.



Appropriateness



- 12.6 Policies and procedures for securely storing, retaining, and destroying client records are followed.

**Guidelines**

Relevant legislation, including the federal Privacy Act and the federal Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, are followed, where applicable. Each province and territory refers to their respective privacy laws, and laws governing health information protection, where relevant.



Continuity

- 12.7 The flow of client information is coordinated among team members and other organizations, in partnership with the client and in accordance with legislation.

**Guidelines**

While respecting the client's right to privacy and with the client's consent, information is shared as required to facilitate a client-centred approach to service delivery. Effective information sharing helps the team better meet the needs of clients and reduces duplication in obtaining client information. The team obtains client consent to share information.

Clients are involved in sharing information (e.g., maintaining and sharing a current list of medications, or providing a discharge summary to appropriate providers).



Appropriateness



12.8

There is a process to monitor and evaluate record-keeping practices, designed with input from clients and families, and the information is used to make improvements.

**Guidelines**

Record-keeping may be paper-based and/or electronic. The monitoring and evaluation process meets any applicable legislation or requirements. The process examines privacy breaches, as well as accuracy and effectiveness of practices.

Evaluation may be done for a sample of records on an irregular or regular basis. Where record-keeping is electronic, evaluation can be triggered based on certain events, such as unusual activity, attempt to retrieve certain data, or unmasking of data.

All electronic activities are linked to a unique user identifier, date and time stamped, and an activity log is maintained to ensure practices can be appropriately monitored.

13.0

**Health information is managed to support the effective delivery of services.**



Appropriateness

13.1

Training and education about legislation to protect client privacy and appropriately use client information are provided.

**Guidelines**

Training is provided to all team members and may be formal or informal. Further training or education is provided when there are changes to legislation or after an extended period of time.



Appropriateness

13.2

Policies on the use of electronic communications and technologies are developed and followed, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

Policies regarding the use of electronic mail, texting, web applications and social media are determined using the perspectives of clients and families. This may include inter-team communication, communication with clients, or communication with partners and potential clients.

When determining what electronic communications and technologies to use, considerations are made for how to manage issues of privacy, professionalism, security of information, client communication preferences, and legislation. Technologies may be used to assist in service provision or care, (e.g., demonstrating procedures on a tablet).



Appropriateness

13.3

Policies and procedures for disclosing health information for secondary use are developed and followed.

**Guidelines**

Secondary use refers to using health information for a purpose other than direct service provision, such as clinical program management, health system management, public health surveillance, and research.

Policies and procedures cover the appropriate circumstances in which to disclose the data and how to ensure client privacy is maintained (e.g., by de-identifying or aggregating data prior to disclosure). Where identifiable or re-identifiable data is requested, the team follows an ethics approval process and assesses risk prior to disclosure.



## MONITORING QUALITY AND ACHIEVING POSITIVE OUTCOMES

### 14.0 **Current research, evidence-informed guidelines, and best practice information is used to improve the quality of services.**



Appropriateness



### 14.1 There is a standardized procedure to select evidence-informed guidelines that are appropriate for the services offered.

#### **Guidelines**

Guidelines may be selected by a committee, council, or individual who makes recommendations to the team on which guidelines to use and how they can be integrated into service delivery.

Guidelines from other organizations or associations can be adopted by the team. The process for selecting guidelines is standardized and formalized. It may include using content experts; a consensus panel; Grades of Recommendation Assessment, Development and Evaluation (GRADE); or the Appraisal of Guidelines Research and Evaluation (AGREE) II instrument, which allows organizations to evaluate the methodological development of clinical practice guidelines from six perspectives: scope and purpose, stakeholder involvement, rigour of development, clarity and presentation, applicability, and editorial independence.



Client-centred  
Services

### 14.2 The procedure to select evidence-informed guidelines is reviewed, with input from clients and families, teams, and partners.

**Guidelines**

A collaborative approach is used to select guidelines that are appropriately linked to improved client experience and outcomes.

Organizations will use a comprehensive procedure to select evidence-informed guidelines. Depending on the scope of the project, this may include a comprehensive literature review, an environmental scan, consulting other organizations about their practices, and an evaluation with partners and stakeholders.

As with any activity that affects client care and experience, organizations gather and consider input from clients and families when reviewing the procedure to select evidence-informed guidelines. Although clients and families may not be involved in a technical or scientific review, their perspectives on clients' experiences of care are valuable. Client and family perspectives can be gathered through their attendance at procedural review committees, their review of procedural documents, and by shadowing the use or implementation of the procedure in practice.



Appropriateness



14.3

There is a standardized process, developed with input from clients and families, to decide among conflicting evidence-informed guidelines.

**Guidelines**

Comprehensive documents that synthesize the evidence from several guidelines may be used. For example, the Cochrane Collaboration conducts systematic reviews of the available evidence that can help teams and organizations with their review process.

Clients and families are consulted to determine whether the method of deciding among guidelines follows a client-centred approach (e.g., helping to determine which guideline is more client-centred, reviewing whether a guideline was developed with the client perspective).



Appropriateness



14.4

Protocols and procedures for reducing unnecessary variation in service delivery are developed, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

Selected guidelines and evidence are used to develop procedures and protocols to improve service delivery and provide standardized care to clients. The procedures and protocols may enhance patient safety, improve inter-team collaboration, increase efficiency, and minimize variation in service delivery. Client and family perspectives are considered when evaluating improvements. As the recipients of care, clients and families are often best positioned to help identify unnecessary variations or duplications in service.

Research knowledge is adapted and applied to each unique care setting.



Appropriateness



14.5

Guidelines and protocols are regularly reviewed, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

The review process includes accessing the most up-to-date research and information and determining its relevance (e.g., through literature reviews, content experts, or national organizations or associations). Research information may include intervention research, program evaluations, or clinical trials.

The review process informs the procedure to select evidence-informed guidelines.

Although clients and families may not be involved in a technical or scientific review, their perspectives on clients' experiences while receiving care driven by guidelines and protocols are valuable to the review process.



Appropriateness



14.6

There is a policy on ethical research practices that outlines when to seek approval, developed with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

The need for ethics approval is evaluated and, if necessary, sought, prior to undertaking research or activities (including quality improvement activities), where information is collected.



Safety



## 15.0 Client and team safety is promoted within the service environment.

15.1 A proactive, predictive approach is used to identify risks to client and team safety, with input from clients and families.

### Guidelines

A proactive, predictive approach is designed to address potential issues by mitigating a risk or hazard before it occurs. While it may not be possible to identify all risks in a service setting, a comprehensive process is used to identify the most probable risks.

Through this approach, the team works to address processes that create errors, delays, or inefficiencies and may be viewed as beyond the team's control. These may be small, continuously occurring interruptions to work flow that create significant loss of resources as time goes on (e.g., having to look up commonly used information, having to search for commonly used items).

Information is gathered to determine the causes of potential problems and strategize possible solutions. These activities include conducting audits, talking to clients, talking to team members, monitoring areas for risk, identifying interruptions, participating in safety briefings, and addressing areas where there is a high margin of error.

Regular opportunities to share information about potential problems and actual incidents can reduce risk and the likelihood of an incident occurring or recurring.



Safety



15.2 Strategies are developed and implemented to address identified safety risks, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

The team works together to increase participation in risk mitigation strategies. Client and family perspectives are incorporated in the process of developing and implementing risk mitigation strategies. The strategies are tested on a small scale and results are monitored. Strategies will vary depending on the types of risks identified and may include action planning and working with other team members to address identified risks.



Safety



15.3

Verification processes are used to mitigate high-risk activities, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

To identify high-risk activities, the team may review its services and use this information to develop and implement checking systems to reduce the risk of harm to clients and team members.

Across the care continuum, verification systems vary depending on services. Examples may include but are not limited to:

- Repeat back or read back processes for diagnostics or verbal orders
- Checking systems for water temperature, especially for bathing
- Standardized tracking sheets for clients with complex medication management needs
- Automated alert systems for communication of critical test results
- Computer-generated reminders for follow-up testing in high-risk clients
- Two person verification process for blood transfusions
- Independent double checks for dispensing and administering high-risk medications
- Medication bar coding systems for drug dispensing, labeling, and administration
- Decision support software for order entry or drug interaction checking
- Safety monitoring systems for teams in community-based organizations or for clients in high-risk environments
- Standardized protocols to monitor vital signs (e.g., fetal heart rate during medical induction/augmentation of labour, or in high-risk deliveries)
- Systems to monitor vaccine fridge temperatures
- Standardized protocols for the use of restraints
- Standardized screening processes for allergies to contrast media.



Safety



15.4

Safety improvement strategies are evaluated with input from clients and families.

#### Guidelines

Adjustments are made as needed to ensure positive change is sustained.



Safety



15.5

Patient safety incidents are reported according to the organization's policy and documented in the client and the organization record as applicable.

#### Guidelines

Reporting and recording is done in a timely way. Patient safety incidents include harmful incidents, no harm incidents, and near misses, as per the World Health Organization International Classification for Patient Safety.

Client-centred  
Services

15.6

Patient safety incidents are disclosed to the affected clients and families according to the organization's policy, and support is facilitated if necessary.

#### Guidelines

The Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI) publishes a guide to disclosing patient safety incidents, for health care providers, interdisciplinary teams, organizations, and regulators who are developing and implementing disclosure policies, practices, and training methods.

Support following a patient safety incident is an important part of the process. Support is provided to clients and families as well as team members affected by a patient safety incident.



Safety



15.7

Patient safety incidents are analyzed to help prevent recurrence and make improvements, with input from clients and families.

#### Guidelines

Analyzing patient safety incidents includes determining the contributing factors, taking action to prevent the same situation from recurring, and monitoring the effectiveness of those actions. Organizations use this information when developing strategies to proactively anticipate and address risks to client and team safety.

The Canadian Patient Safety Institute offers a framework for incident management. It provides an in-depth description of the process of analyzing and managing patient safety incidents. An online Incident Analysis Learning Program series is available to assist organizations to apply the principles of incident analysis at [www.patientsafetyinstitute.ca/](http://www.patientsafetyinstitute.ca/).

16.0

**Indicator data is collected and used to guide quality improvement activities.**

Client-centred  
Services

16.1

Information and feedback is collected about the quality of services to guide quality improvement initiatives, with input from clients and families, team members, and partners.

#### Guidelines

Information and feedback is collected in a consistent manner from key stakeholders about the quality of services. Feedback can take the form of client and family satisfaction or experience data, complaints, indicators, outcomes, scorecards, incident analysis information, and financial reports. It may be gathered by a variety of methods, including surveys, focus groups, interviews, meetings, or records of complaints.



Appropriateness

16.2

The information and feedback gathered is used to identify opportunities for quality improvement initiatives and set priorities, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

Feedback and other forms of information, observation, and experience are used to identify and prioritize areas for quality improvement initiatives. This is done using a standardized process based on criteria such as expressed needs of clients and families, client-reported outcomes, risk, volume, or cost.



Appropriateness



16.3

Measurable objectives with specific timeframes for completion are identified for quality improvement initiatives, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

Quality improvement objectives define what the team is trying to achieve and by when. Appropriate quality improvement objectives are typically short term, have targets that exceed current performance, and are usually aligned with longer-term strategic priorities or patient safety areas. The timeframe will vary based on the nature of the objective.

The SMART acronym is a useful tool for setting meaningful objectives. The objectives should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers a guide to writing SMART objectives.



Appropriateness

16.4

Indicator(s) that monitor progress for each quality improvement objective are identified, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

Indicators are used to monitor whether the activities resulted in change and if the change is an improvement. Primarily, indicators are selected based on their relevance and whether they can accurately monitor progress. When there are multiple potential indicators, criteria such as scientific validity and feasibility are used to select them.

If there are difficulties selecting indicators, it may mean the quality improvement objective needs clarification.



Appropriateness



16.5

Quality improvement activities are designed and tested to meet objectives.

#### Guidelines

Quality improvement activities are the actions that are undertaken to initiate improvements, and are part of the larger quality improvement plan. Activities are first designed and tested on a small scale to determine their effect prior to implementing them more broadly.

The Getting Started Kit for Improvement Frameworks is a resource created by the Canadian Patient Safety Institute and is based on the Model for Improvement. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement offers a framework to guide quality improvement activities using Plan, Do, Study, Act cycles.



Appropriateness

16.6

New or existing indicator data are used to establish a baseline for each indicator.

#### Guidelines

Establishing a baseline reference point makes it possible to monitor progress towards meeting quality improvement objectives by comparing pre- and post-activity data and noting changes. Establishing a baseline may require one or many data points and occurs over a defined period of time. Once the baseline is established, the team may need to reevaluate its quality improvement objectives to ensure they remain feasible and relevant.



Appropriateness

16.7

There is a process to regularly collect indicator data and track progress.

#### Guidelines

How indicator data will be collected and how often is determined. Regularly collecting data allows the team to track its progress and understand the normal variation of values.



Appropriateness



16.8

Indicator data is regularly analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the quality improvement activities.

#### Guidelines

The team compares the intended and actual effects of its quality improvement activities, and, if the objective has not been achieved, adjusts its actions accordingly to meet the objective.

Analyzing data helps identify trends and may reveal areas that could be considered for future quality improvement initiatives. Indicator data can be displayed in a run chart or control chart, both of which are valid means of data analysis.

Safer Healthcare Now! offers Patient Safety Metrics, a web-based tool where organizations can submit data on various interventions, analyze results, and generate reports.

If it is not within the team's capacity to analyze the data, it seeks qualified internal or external assistance.



Appropriateness



16.9

Quality improvement activities that were shown to be effective in the testing phase are implemented broadly throughout the organization.

#### Guidelines

The way in which activities are implemented broadly will vary based on the scope and scale of the team's services and the timeframe (e.g., an effective activity is implemented in more than one area of care and for a longer period of time).

Population  
Focus

16.10

Information about quality improvement activities, results, and learnings is shared with clients, families, teams, organization leaders, and other organizations, as appropriate.

**Guidelines**

Information is tailored to the audience and considers the messaging and language that is appropriate for each audience.

Sharing the results of evaluations and improvements helps familiarize stakeholders with the philosophy and benefits of quality improvement and engage them in the process. It is also a way for organization to spread successful quality improvement activities and demonstrate its commitment to ongoing quality improvement.

Among other benefits, sharing indicator data externally allows for comparisons with organizations offering similar services.



Appropriateness

16.11

Quality improvement initiatives are regularly evaluated for feasibility, relevance, and usefulness, with input from clients and families.

**Guidelines**

The evaluation of quality improvement initiatives includes activities, objectives, and indicators. Results are used to plan future quality improvement initiatives including how and when to sustain or spread existing initiatives.

Outcomes of the quality improvement initiatives are considered with respect to how they align with the organization's overall quality improvement plan, goals and objectives, mission and values, and strategic plan. The team evaluates whether objectives were met within the timeframes and whether the timeframes are still relevant.

Based on the review of the initiatives, objectives and indicators may be added, amended, or removed as appropriate. The rationale for amending or removing them is documented.

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**Feedback: Please indicate the name of the standard, as well as the criterion number in your comments. Please be as specific as possible in your comments.**

*For example: I would like to provide comments on the Long-Term Care Services standards, criterion 3.12. Clients should be included in this process. I suggest you change the wording to "The team engages staff, service providers, and clients in the process to plan services."*

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