

QUALITYNEWS MARCH 2020

The challenge of managing a crisis such as COVID-19 brings out the best in health, aged and human services.

All over the world, people are rising to the occasion: defining what they do and don't want to happen; planning to get more of the 'do' happen and less of the 'don't'; identifying which standards and protocols are needed; ensuring staff are trained, equipped and supported to do the right things; measuring progress and adjusting strategies when required. If Plan A doesn't work, there will be Plans B and C, all implemented with the same unrelenting drive, and integrated and implemented to provide a whole of organisation approach; because there's no point some parts of the organisation managing the virus well, and others not.

Compliance will skyrocket: hand hygiene rates will go up, because staff now really do have skin in the game! Standards

and protocols will be seen as useful as they provide essential guidance - not things we 'have' to do. Data collection will give valuable insight into our effectiveness.

Yes - a crisis brings out the best in human services. We understand the consequences of not being at our best. Every effort is

'In the midst of every crisis lies great opportunity.' -
Albert Einstein.

made to get the best possible outcomes in incredibly challenging

circumstances. Staff focus intensely on the quality and safety of their care. We become consistently high performing.

What would it take to keep people this excited about planning, creating and monitoring high quality care every day? If you can harness the energy, focus and action demonstrated in a crisis, and translate it how you run your quality system every day, you should maintain at least some of the quality and safety system effectiveness you've gained -

IN THIS QNews BULLETIN...

All over the world, health, aged and human service organisations are gearing up to manage COVID-19. Learning and applying the valuable lessons on how this plays out in organisations could help transform your quality system and culture over the long term.

Plus...my new free eBook "Three Essential Strengths for Quality Leaders.

My free 'LEEDIT' course to support your great care improvement leadership in 2020...

AND - a new No Harm Done Podcast on Value Based Care.

and create a culture of high performance in the process. Whether you run a quality system in a department, service or across an organisation, observe what's happening around you over the next few weeks and make notes on what 'works'. Make these observations a part of how you run your quality system when the crisis has passed, and see the difference it makes to your quality culture and achievements. Pay attention to:

1. What motivates people

What's the difference between 'having to' and 'wanting to' do things well? Self interest! 'What's in it for me' is a strong motivator, followed - in human services, at least - by 'how can I help others'? When people want to change, the rest is just the 'how'. Managing COVID-19 has both significant self interest and helping others components. These must also be at the core of all quality improvement.

2. What gives people satisfaction in their work

People love work that has meaning to them and the opportunity to demonstrate their expertise within that work. They like to do things they're good at and to acquire new skills they see as useful. They like to be able to

make decisions and work with others in a way that supports their meaningful work. Watch the way people take on training and skills to help them manage the virus and to make good decisions in their care. How can you frame all training to be helpful to people in their roles?

3. How clarity and purpose act as turbo-chargers for change

Most people working in human services are do-ers. Give them a clear and purposeful goal that has meaning for them, and challenge them to achieve it, and they will bring their energy and innovation to the task. COVID-19 is a massive challenge - and most people in health and human services are embracing it. We know our definitions of success and are working towards achieving them. Creating high quality care with consumers every day is also a massive challenge - but we've made it dull and unclear. Re-energise and re-clarify the challenge!

4. How 'freedom within a framework' supports high performance in complex systems

We need guidance to manage a crisis and we look to a framework of evidence based and best practice standards and protocols to provide it. A crisis demands that we follow the

rules - but not blindly. In a crisis, not every situation is covered by the rules. There are a lot of unknowns and grey areas. In the complexity of a crisis, we must also think; and be alert to unexpected situations cropping up that require us to stop, reflect and consult about the best response. Some of the old ways will be questioned and improvements made to achieve specific outcomes: purposeful and targeted improvement that's not just nice to have, but need to have. The complexity of day to day care requires the same approach: testing, reflecting, improving to achieve specific goals. It's a hard balance to get right, but this is high performance in action - not just in a crisis, but every day.

5. The importance of getting clear about the essentials of planning, leadership and management

There's nothing like a crisis to demonstrate that doing lots of stuff isn't the answer to achieving what you need to achieve. You have to do the right stuff. And that's impossible without a shared understanding of what you're trying to achieve. Shared purpose, clear goals, care for others, best practice and focused implementation all start with great leadership and consultative planning, whether it's COVID-19 or providing

consistently high quality care day to day. Leaders must model behaviour that inspires others as well as providing the systems and resources to make the goals achievable. The next bit often gets lost though: all this must be sustained by great managers. To be their best, staff need managers equipped to support them to be their best; to provide the direction, knowledge, resources and encouragement they need to go out every day and do what it takes. Without this, high performance can't be sustained to manage crises or to achieve everyday excellence.

6. Seeing data as useful information

In a crisis, people want data because it answers their questions. So often we use data to give people answers to questions they're not interested in, or we give them information that doesn't help with what they do want to know. People will be interested in data collection, analysis and discussion (even at meetings) when it answers their questions and helps them better understand and manage the things they're grappling with - in a tight situation, or meeting everyday challenges. The same

goes for consumers - they need clear, evidence-based information to participate positively in their care - whenever and wherever they access care.

Great care is created by great people, supported by great systems. Take the opportunity to learn from the management of COVID-19 and integrate the lessons into the way your quality system works. Consumers need our best efforts and high performance every day - crisis or not. And in the process you might find it just that bit easier to engage people in meeting that challenge.

RESOURCES

Something a little different this year: with cyber attacks now the norm, rather than the exception, I've removed the links from my resources and provided just one link that will take you to all of them: [QNews Resources links](#)

And if you can't click on even one link, go to my website cathybaldingdotcom, click on 'Tools, Tips and Links' at the top of the page, and 'Website, Resources and QNews Links' in the drop down menu, and you'll find all the links to the following resources:

COMING SOON! The Quality System Roadmap to Great Care

'Where the focus goes, the energy flows.' Where is the quality energy flowing in your organisation? To compliance tasks? Or creating great point of care experiences? Watch this space for my new online Quality System Roadmap course. If you're charged with leading a quality system across an organisation, service or department, and want to build a point of care focused quality and clinical governance system that staff want to be a part of – the Quality System Roadmap provides the step-by-step tools and know-how you need to build a system and culture of excellence. Watch this space!

And in the meantime - my free **LEEDIT** course gives you my top tips on engaging people in every step of the improvement process. If bringing people along feels more like pushing them uphill - you need some new strategies!

NEW FREE EBOOK! THREE ESSENTIAL STRENGTHS FOR QUALITY LEADERS

In my experience working with thousands of quality leaders, sooner or later, people in these roles ask three questions:

“Why don't people respect my role?”

“Why don't people do what I ask them to?”

“Why am I working so hard - but not getting where I want to go?”

And yet, they are seldom answered, except with: ‘try harder’, ‘be more organised’, or ‘do a better job’, none of which helps! I’ve come to realise that knowing and applying the answers to these questions is key to crafting a successful quality leader role, whether you’re a service, department or organisational leader. Earning respect, clear communication and role management for success are strengths that, when mastered, can turn a quality role from a series of tasks to a satisfying and effective career.

Three Essential Strengths for Quality Leaders gives tips for mastering each of these strengths, based on my experience, research and

observation of successful quality leaders. We need great quality leaders – never more than now - supported by great quality leader roles.

My technical and fiction books paint the complete quality system picture. **‘The Point of Care’** shows how one leader took a health service from ordinary to extraordinary. Plenty of high performance tips in this story! TPOC takes the tools from my technical quality books and wraps them up in a story about tackling quality care and culture challenges that’s relevant to any health, aged or human service organisation.

NoHarmDone Podcast Episodes #21 and #22 are ready for action!

Ep 21 finds us focused on the positive aspects of creating great care...including the need for positive responses to the Aged Care Q&S Royal Commission Interim Report. (If you’ve listened to the Ep#21 with sound quality problems - we’ve cleaned it up and added some material so you might want to give it another go!)

In Ep 22 we tackle ‘Value Based Care’ - what is it? Why has it captured so much attention? Is it worth pursuing? What are the four cornerstones of VBC? What is the ‘quicksand of measures’? And where can you participate in a public recording of No Harm Done? These and many more questions will be answered - or at least asked...

