

QA the Texas Way

Assessing Quality in APS Casework
NAPSA Conference, November 2020

Presenter

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Workshop Goals

Participants will be able to ...

- Describe the purposes of quality assurance in APS
- Combine qualitative and quantitative data to inform a comprehensive understanding of APS casework
- Describe the processes and services of Texas APS Quality Assurance
- Implement lessons learned into quality assurance programs of other APS jurisdictions

Purposes of Quality Assurance in APS

1. Provide direct feedback on individual cases to caseworkers and supervisors.
2. Gain a more nuanced understanding of program performance.
3. Assist supervisors in understanding their caseworkers' strengths and weaknesses.
4. Comply with statutory requirements to manage program performance.

Data Usage in Texas APS

Data Warehouse | Target Zones | Resource Metrics |
Systems Briefings | Quarterly Legislative Reports

Data Warehouse

- Official historical record for the DFPS case management system
- Reports updated weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually depending on the report
- Many reports allow drill down to region, unit, and caseworker level
- Examples:
 - Cases closed by disposition and closure reason
 - Investigation rapid closure rate
 - Investigations pending over 60 days
 - Days to supervisor rejection/approval
 - Safety decision distribution

Feedback and Questions
Trouble Finding Reports?
DDS Intranet Page

Search Reports

Enter keyword here

Search Reports

Clear All

- Executive
 - ☐ Summary
- Program
 - ☐ PI
 - ☒ APS
 - ☐ Employee Development
 - ☐ Guardianship

Report Parameters

* All parameters are required

Report Period: Monthly

Report Type: State

Month: 04

Year: 2020

State Summary (xls)

Abbreviations: Cnty = County; Prog = Program; Reg = Region; Supv = Supervisor; Wrkr = Worker; XLS = Excel

Legend



The checkmark icon, when displayed next to a report button, indicates that the report has been validated for release to non-DFPS entities. Please verify that the 'For Internal DFPS Use Only' footnote does NOT appear on the report prior to releasing the information. If you have questions regarding the release status of an intranet report, please email your inquiry to the reports mailbox (REPORTS@dfps.state.tx.us).



The multiple values icon, when displayed next to a select box, indicates that multiple values may be selected from

**Adult Protective Services
Safety Decision Distribution
For the Month of April 2020**

Region	# Safe Safety Assmnts	% Safe	# Conditionally Safe Safety Assmnts	% Conditionally Safe	# Unsafe Safety Assmnts	% Unsafe	Total # Cmpltd Safety Assmnts
001	530	94.3%	30	5.3%	2	0.4%	562
002	545	94.8%	28	4.9%	2	0.3%	575
003	1,667	95.7%	69	4.0%	5	0.3%	1,741
004	414	97.2%	12	2.8%	0	0.0%	426
005	359	97.6%	8	2.2%	1	0.3%	368
006	2,029	98.7%	25	1.2%	2	0.1%	2,056
007	815	96.4%	29	3.4%	1	0.1%	845
008	1,246	96.4%	44	3.4%	3	0.2%	1,293
009	299	99.3%	1	0.3%	1	0.3%	301
010	479	97.2%	11	2.2%	3	0.6%	493
011	954	96.9%	29	2.9%	2	0.2%	985
Other	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1
Total:	9,338	96.8%	286	3.0%	22	0.2%	9,646

Data in this table is for example purposes only and may not be accurate.

Target Zones

Created in 2016

- Key performance metrics that reflect “healthy casework”
- Incorporated into management approach to improve practice
- Used to demonstrate clear progress toward meeting expectations

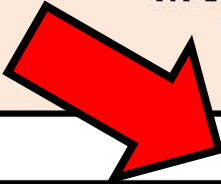
Revised in 2019

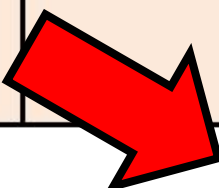
- Expanded to three performance zones:
 - Performance expectation
 - Performance improvement needed
 - Action plan needed
- Prioritized metrics into groups
- Added qualitative metrics



Three Levels of Importance for Target Zones

1. Key Performance Metrics
2. Additional Supporting Metrics for District Management
3. Informational Measures

DW Report	Measure	Performance Expectation	Performance Improvement Needed	Action Plan Needed
<div>  Key Performance Metrics </div>				
QA Database	Client Safety	90-100%	80-89%	≤79%
Inv_aps_05	Initiation	98-100%	96-97%	≤95%
	Initial FTF	98-100%	96-97%	≤95%
Inv_aps_34	SA Timeliness	95-100%	90-94%	≤89%
Inv_aps_05	Safety Contacts	90-100%	80-89%	≤79%
Inv_aps_15	Service Contacts	90-100%	80-89%	≤79%
QA Database	Investigation	90-100%	80-89%	≤79%
	Service Provision - Outcomes	90-100%	80-89%	≤79%
Svc_14	SNA Timeliness	95-100%	90-94%	≤89%

DW Report	Measure	Performance Expectation	Performance Improvement Needed	Action Plan Needed
<div>  Additional Supporting Metrics For District Management </div>				
QA Database	Qualitative Performance - Overall	90-100%	80-89%	≤79%
QA Database	Productivity	90-100%	80-89%	≤79%
QA Database	Case Documentation	90-100%	80-89%	≤79%
Inv_aps_22	Overall Documentation Timeliness	90-100%	85-89%	≤84%
Inv_aps_09	Rapid Closure Rate	10-20%	5-9% 21-25%	≤4% ≥26%
Inv_aps_33	Closure Reason by Risk Level-High Progress to ICS	92%-100%	84%-91%	≤83%
Inv_aps_06	Validation Rate	65-75%	60-64% 76-80%	≤59% ≥81%
Inv_aps_04	Percent of Validated Cases with Services Provided	≥70%	60-69%	≤59%
Inv_aps_30	Discretionary Overrides-Increase	≤5%	6-8%	≥9%
	Discretionary overrides-Decrease	≤5%	6-7%	≥8%

DW Report	Measure	Performance Expectation	Performance Improvement Needed	Action Plan Needed
Informational Measures				
Investigation Durations				
Inv_aps_25	Investigation without services provided	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
	Investigation with services provided	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
	Overall Investigation Duration	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
Service Delivery Durations				
Inv_aps_25	ICS Duration	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
	Maintenance Duration	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
	Overall Service Stage Duration	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
	Overall Case Duration	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
Other Informational Measures				
Csl_aps_07	Average Daily Caseload	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
Inv_aps_38	Priority Decrease	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
Safety Distribution				
Inv_aps_29	Safe	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
	Conditionally Safe	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
	Unsafe	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
Final Risk Distribution				
Inv_aps_32	Low	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
	Moderate	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only
	High	Info Only	Info Only	Info Only

Resource Metrics

- Resource metrics measure the strength and stability of the workforce
- Examples:
 - Vacancy rate
 - Case carrying staff ratio
 - Investigation stages opened/closed
 - Service stages opened/closed
 - Turnover rate
 - Average daily caseload

Systems Briefings

- Monthly report and bimonthly meetings with key DFPS executives:
 - Commissioner
 - Deputy Commissioner
 - Chief of Staff
 - Chief Financial Officer
 - Director of External Relations
- Discuss target zones, resource metrics, and associated APS actions

Quarterly Legislative Report

Organization:

- Background and Summary
- Appendix A: Caseworker Performance Measures
- Appendix B: Staffing Data
- Appendix C: Qualitative Data

Audience:

- Governor
- Lieutenant Governor
- Speaker of the House

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Reports_and_Presentations/APS/default.asp

Texas APS QA Processes and Services

Regular Case Readings | Targeted Case Readings | Unit Analyses |
Quality Improvement Meetings | Training

Who are Texas APS QA Analysts?

- Experienced former APS caseworkers, supervisors, and trainers
- Knowledgeable on policy and practice
- Strong attention to detail
- Strong written communication skills
- Able to work independently and collaboratively

Regular Case Readings

- The QA Analyst ...
 - Receives a batch of closed cases each month
 - Enters scores into a Microsoft Access database
 - Seeks input from teammates as needed
- At the end of a case reading, the QA Analyst ...
 - Notifies the caseworker and supervisor that a new case reading is available
 - Emails the caseworker and caseworker's management chain when cases have exceptionally high quality
 - Notifies the appropriate manager when Standard 6 indicates a potential severely unsafe situation for the client

Case Reading Standards

1. Client Safety
2. Investigation
3. Case Documentation
4. Services & Outcomes
5. Productivity
6. Reasonable Effort

- Each standard corresponds to one or more essential job functions on the caseworker performance plan and evaluation
- Each standard is made up of several items QA Analysts score
- Each item is based on policy

Item Scoring

Standards 1-5

- N/A = Not applicable
- 0 = Policy requirements not met
- 1 = Policy requirements met
- 2 = APS Specialist went above and beyond policy and practiced mission-based work

Standard 6

- Yes = AV/CL is not left in a state of ANE
- No = AV/CL is left in a state of ANE
- Unknown = It is unknown if the AV/CL is left in a state of ANE

Targeted Case Readings

- Case readings with data collection instruments designed to answer specific questions
- Examples:
 - Estimating the number of substantiations that should have been referred to the Employee Misconduct Registry
 - Determining the accuracy of investigations closed as “does not meet”
 - Estimating the number of investigations of home health providers funded by Medicaid vs. other sources
 - Determining policy compliance during the COVID state of emergency

Unit Analyses and Quality Improvement Meetings

- Share quantitative and qualitative data
- Discuss performance
 - What is going well?
 - How can performance be improved?
- Address questions
- Help plan action items to improve performance

Training to New Caseworkers and Supervisors

Supervisor Basic Skills Development:

- One day portion
- Covering:
 - Case reading standard
 - Case reading database
 - Data Warehouse
 - Identifying a problem
 - Devising a solution
 - Goal setting

Caseworker Instructor-Led Skills Development:

Two hour portion

Covering:

- Case reading standards
- Case reading database
- Data Warehouse
- Insight (daily report on time-sensitive tasks)
- Performance evaluation

Lessons Learned

1. Be clear on the purposes of QA

“Why do you need to read my case when my supervisor already approved it?”

2. Anticipate resistance

“You haven’t worked a case in 10 years. Who are you to criticize my case?”

3. Avoid terminology with negative connotations

“Am I going to get dinged for not interviewing the alleged perpetrator?”

4. Balance the use of qualitative and quantitative data

“All management cares about are the numbers!”

5. Work on one or two issues at a time

“This month, let’s make sure we complete safety assessments on time and by policy.”

6. Celebrate when improvement happens

“Look how far we’ve come!”

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