

News Today

An online newsletter for ODJFS employees

Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2009

Fourth ODJFS Kaizen Event Held

The fourth ODJFS Kaizen event since October was held the week of Dec. 15, this time to improve the Combined Proposed Adjudication Order (CPAO) process for performing financial reviews of long-term care facilities. This Kaizen was particularly important—because it could help reduce the state’s budget deficit by bringing in millions in recovered overpayments. It also will reduce the time it takes to identify and recover overpayments from nursing home providers.

“Kaizen” is a Japanese word that, loosely translated, means “to break and put back together.” It’s a process improvement method known for bringing about dramatic improvements to work processes in a very short amount of time. With the state facing additional budget cuts and the economy still faltering, many agencies are using Kaizen to reduce waste and inefficiencies. The offices of Workforce Development, Contracts and Acquisitions, and Unemployment Compensation all have held Kaizens.

Kaizen is different from other improvement methods in that team members meet for a solid week to examine a process, identify inefficiencies and then restructure that process, with changes taking place immediately. The method is also unique in that it includes team members who work in the process, team members who are customers of the process, and team members who know nothing about the process, to provide a fresh perspective.

The CPAO Kaizen team included members from the offices of Ohio Health Plans; Chief Inspector; Research, Assessment and Accountability (ORAA); Fiscal Services;



The CPAO Kaizen Team

Front row, left to right: Laurie McCool (ORAA), Michelle Horn (ORAA), Anita Jennings (ORAA), Renee Gossett (Fiscal), Pat Power (Fiscal). Second row, left to right: Cathy Herron (DAS), Tracy Bryniarski (BWC), Sylvan Wilson (MIS), Pam Skrzynski (Howard, Wershba). Third row, left to right: Al Hammond (OCI), Janet Mihalopoulos (BWC), Sally Davis (Lorain CDJFS), Chris Carson (ORAA), Sharon Lewis (ORAA), Greg Hack (Summit CDJFS). Fourth row, left to right: Bill Walters (MIS), Susan Johnson-Adkins (ORAA), Lou Tomlin-King (ORAA), Mike Compton (Ohio Health Care Association), Vanessa Irvin (Fiscal). Back row, left to right: Bill Demidovich (DAS), Kevin Jones (OHP/OCI), Josh Anderson (OHP), Mollie Fast (OHP), Bill Wetterhahn (ORAA), Marty Brodniek (Legal Services), Kim Griffin (Communicare), Marina King (Taxation). Not pictured: Carolyn Thurman (OHP) and Monica Burke, Kierstyn Canter, Rebecca Carr, Sherry Hamilton, Kevin Kent and Dan Wilkins, all of ORAA.

Information Services; and Legal Services. It also included members from the Bureau of Workers’ Compensation, county agencies, the Department of Taxation, private health care providers and representatives of provider associations.

“It was incredible to see those in the room check their titles and functions at the door and work together

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for the betterment of all," said ORAA Deputy Director Michelle Horn. "To have several ODJFS offices work beside Medicaid providers, their representatives and county staff to solve several issues within a larger process was inspiring."

The team's objectives included improving the accuracy of recipient eligibility information in CRIS-E and the Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS), reducing the time it takes to identify and collect overpayments, and automating the reporting process to better account for all collectibles.

The CPAO process came about as a result of an Ohio Supreme Court decision several years ago requiring the agency to automate and combine the nursing home claims settlement process with the final nursing home reimbursement rate determination process. In short, the CPAO is the means by which ODJFS finalizes nursing home provider payments for Medicaid-eligible residents.

In just a week's time, the CPAO team greatly reduced the number of steps in the overpayment identification process, and they isolated a key miscommunication defect between CRIS-E and MMIS.

"To see the Kaizen process work firsthand was truly phenomenal," Horn said. "The group pushed the methods established under Kaizen beyond normal expectations and came out on the other side successful. We fully expect to be able to reach a goal that was first thought to be unobtainable. When people are shown they can accomplish something they first thought impossible, they become unstoppable. That's the excitement of Kaizen."

Staff in ORAA's Bureau of Audit perform hundreds of CPAO reviews each year. Through the first six months of SFY 2009, they identified \$11.9 million in General Revenue Fund recoveries. After the improvements identified through the Kaizen are implemented, they anticipate identifying at least \$44 million for recovery by the end of SFY 2009.

Mammogram Shuttle Available Next Tuesday

Grant Medical Center is offering a free shuttle for state employees from the State Officer Tower (SOT) to the medical center for mammograms at noon on Tuesday, Jan. 27.

The shuttle will pick up employees in front of the SOT on Broad Street shortly before noon, transport them to Grant for a mammogram, and bring them back to work in about an hour. Anyone interested in the service can register by calling Jamie at 566-9045.

Although the shuttle is free, the mammograms are not. Employees should check with their insurance companies to verify coverage. Jamie will take each person's insurance information and submit the claim for processing.

Feeling Stressed?

Help is available through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by calling 1-800-221-6327.

GOT NEWS?

To submit an article or idea to *News Today*, email NewsToday@jfs.ohio.gov. Photos should be sent in JPEG or TIF format.
