

**Pacific Island Health Officers Association  
Quality Assurance Initiative**

**Health Service Generic Unit Surveys**



**January, 2009**

## Introduction:

The surveys instruments in this package are one component of a whole-system quality assurance program for a district health service. They were initially developed by a quality assurance nurse, Ms. Mary Cowan, in the Federated States of Micronesia, and have gone through several revisions in several of the district health services of the FSM. The generic version presented here has been completely overhauled, taking into consideration feedback from those who have used the instruments in Yap, Pohnpei and Kosrae states in the FSM. Also, items that are likely to apply only to a specific site have been broadened or eliminated, so that the instrument can be more easily adapted to new sites. Since each health service is different with respect to organization, level of development and priorities, it makes sense to customize the survey instruments so that it fits the site where it will be used.

The survey instruments are organized by health service unit, so that each work unit can be surveyed separately. This has been done to permit the surveys to be done in manageable “pieces” and to enable the QA program to emphasize team work. Each unit’s survey is organized into four sections, each of which addresses a general quality standard (staff professionalism, efficiency and effectiveness of services, adequacy and upkeep of supplies, equipment and facilities, and safety and infection control). The items are intentionally presented in an intuitive format in basic language so that they effectively communicate important aspects of policy and procedures to front line staff. The items within each section primarily assess health service inputs and processes, rather than outputs and outcomes. They therefore support QA programs that strive to assure that basic operations are sound, rather than to optimize specific outcomes of care. The survey items are designed to be as easy to ascertain and as unambiguous as possible. Each item is dichotomous (is scored as either “yes” or “no”). Together, the items within a work unit can yield a summary score that reflects the adherence of the unit to quality standards.<sup>1</sup> *Items in bold italic type* are “core items” which are designed to be used to perform a quick 2-3 day survey of the health service. They were selected from the larger list of items because they are basic, important and non-controversial. They are especially suited to making comparisons among different health services.

In addition to being data gathering tools, the survey forms are organized as worksheets for the development of post-survey corrective plans. A work unit’s corrective plan can be completed by reviewing the survey results and entering onto the form a problem cause, solution, person responsible and deadline for each item that does not meet standards. Thus the recording of survey results, computation of unit summary scores, and formulation of improvement plans can all be completed and documented using this instrument, without recourse to computers or even a typewriter.

## Unit surveys included (in order of placement in this collection):

### Support Units:

Administration

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<sup>11</sup> A unit score can be computed as follows: [(number of items scored “Yes”)/(total number of items) X 100%]. It is also possible to emphasize certain items that are deemed to be especially important by giving those items higher “weight”. (Such an item might be counted as 2 or 3 or 10, for example, rather than as 1 like the usual items).

Medical Supply  
Laundry  
Janitors  
Security  
Sterilization and Surgical Supply Room  
Kitchen  
Maintenance  
Medical Records

**Allied Health Units:**

Lab  
Pharmacy  
Rehabilitation  
X-Ray

**Clinical Units:**

Ward  
Outpatient Department  
Emergency Room  
Operating Room  
Labor & Delivery  
Dental

**Public Health:**

Public Health Administration  
Well Child  
Antenatal  
Children with Special Needs  
Family Planning  
Immunization  
School Health  
Non-Communicable Disease  
STI/HIV  
TB/Hansen's Disease  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Environmental Health