



QAT Quarterly

Welcome to the QAT Quarterly Newsletter!

As QAT members you are an integral part of the Region 10 Quality Assurance licensing process. The time, expertise and energy you bring to the VOICE Review process plays an important role in the success of Region 10 Quality Assurance.

The VOICE Review Process truly improves the quality of the lives of people with disabilities.

Here are some highlights of things to come in the QAT Quarterly Newsletter:

The Sampler -- Learning Portrait Ideas
Quality Corner -- Ideas/Suggestions for Maintaining Quality
QA Happenings -- Region 10 Quality Assurance Updates
Current Events -- Upcoming Conferences, Meetings & Events
The Spot Light -- Getting to Know a QAT
Informative Features -- Good Things to Know

We want this Newsletter to be informative and energizing. We will need your help with such things as learning portrait ideas and individual QAT's to be featured. We are always open to new ideas and suggestions. Do not hesitate to email or call me with your thoughts and input.

Deb Niedfeldt

Quality Corner Quiz

1. When do you give an E finding using the ERIC Scale?
2. How many days in advance of the final meeting does LeAnn want the VOICE Review draft in order to provide feedback and approval?
3. Are you suppose to go through the Voice Review Packet or just pass it out at the final meeting.

(Look for the answers in the next few pages)

Director Dan's Notations

Right now is a very exciting time for Region 10 QA. We are starting to see the efforts that we have made for our counties beginning to be appreciated in other areas of the state. We have additional counties in Region 10 that are thinking about joining our efforts. We have three geographical pilot projects up and running in 8 other counties (Blue Earth, Faribault, Martin, Nicollet, Beltrami, Polk, Sherburne, and Wright). QATs have been trained in Regions 1 and 9, and **VOICE** reviews have begun. The St. Cloud area is gearing up for their first QAT training this fall. Many people across the state, with the aid of Arc MN, local Arc chapters and through conferences put together by DHS, are seriously asking for **VOICE** to go statewide. All these efforts reinforce to me how beneficial QA has been to our own counties, providers and people.

As we have gone through the state, the subject of QATs is always raised. How do we generate so many good QATs that volunteer their time to do such great **VOICE** reviews? How are people able to keep finding the time to assist us? With out fail, other areas are awed by your commitment to **VOICE** and Region 10 Quality Assurance and worried that they will have difficulty finding great people like you.

Throughout the State I've been sharing that one strength of our QA **VOICE** system is our dedicated QATs. As a QAT, you are able to bring an unbiased view to the person and their Quality Circle. Your only goal is to provide an accurate picture of the quality of the person's life at that point in time; what is working great and what needs to be improved. We are blessed that so many people in Region 10 continue to step forward to perform this role. We will continue to support you in any way possible to make sure that you continue to be the best you can be! Thank you so much!

Dan Zimmer
Director

QA Happenings...

NEW QAT Recruitment Packet

Along with this newsletter you will find a new QAT Recruitment Packet in this mailing. As you are probably all aware Region 10 Quality Assurance is always looking for additional QAT's. We would like you to share this Recruitment Packet with people you know who might be interested in becoming a QAT. Who better to recruit new QATs than those of you who are already QATs. This document can be found on the QA web site at www.mn-voice.org/

In the Spot Light

Getting to Know a QAT

Hi,

I thought I would take this opportunity to introduce myself in this first newsletter since I am also a QAT. I have met several of you over the last few months, but there are still a lot of QATs that I don't know yet.

My name is Deb Niedfeldt and I live in Rochester with my son David and my husband Steve. David is 18 years old and has Aspergers Syndrome. He was born premature and was medically fragile for many years with a feeding tube and oxygen. He is the main reason I became involved in the world of disabilities.



Deb Niedfeldt

I joined Region 10 Quality Assurance staff in late February of this year. The primary focus of my work is to do VOICE Reviews and help QA get caught up with those. I also have developed a QAT Recruitment Packet (which you will find included in this mailing) and I am helping with the QAT small group meetings.

Previous to my work with Region 10 Quality Assurance I worked for Arc Southeastern Minnesota with the Family Liaison Project for 10 years until 2003. I also worked with MN*TAFS (Minnesota Technical Assistance for Family Support) for 10 years until 2005.

At this point I have had the opportunity to work with several other QATs and have learned a lot from them. Besides their willingness to mentor me it has been a thoroughly enjoyable experience getting to know each one. I am looking forward to working with and getting to know the rest of you.

It has been amazing to see the positive changes happen in peoples lives because of Region 10 Quality Assurance and the VOICE Review process. So often change occurs so slowly if at all. It is great to see the impact QA is having on the lives of people with disabilities. This is especially important to me, being the mom of a young man with disabilities.

Deb

Current Events

Provider's Network Inc. Fall Conference

October 16-17, 2006
Rochester International Event Center
Rochester, MN

Arc Minnesota State Convention

October 27 - 28, 2006
Kahler Hotel
Rochester, MN

Tools For Transforming Language

The way we describe people often affects how we treat them.

“Person-first language” is a concept that emerged from the disability rights movement, and it affirms that individuals are first and foremost people, not diagnoses, or clients or patients.

Person-centered alternatives to commonly used words & phrases

Worn-out Language

Language that promotes acceptance, respect and uniqueness

you're just	you are more than
decompensating	not him/herself today; he/she is experiencing symptoms
manipulative	resourceful; really trying to get help
crazy	unique
compliant	might not be confident about personal choices, decisions, afraid
noncompliant	beginning to think for him/herself; taking personal responsibility
entitled	aware of rights
resistant	not open to; chooses not to; has own ideas
frequent flyer	gives us many options to intervene and support
baseline	what a person looks like when doing well
unmotivated	has other interests; bored ; doesn't know how to begin
helpless	unaware of capabilities
hopeless	unaware of opportunities
grandiose	has high hope and expectations of self
user of the system	resourceful: good self-advocate
druggie; crackhead, junkie	person with an addiction or diagnosis of substance abuse
high functioning, low functioning, dangerous	person is showing these issues and characteristics

Are we bogged down in shortcut code language that only means something to us and others like us. When we use “clt” or “pt” to refer to a person we distance ourselves from acknowledging them as a real person -- a person just like us, but with extra life challenges. Staff has said that when they begin to refer to people by name in charts, they immediately feel more connected to them as persons and see them as partners.

This was excerpted from ‘Tools for Transformation’ authored by Lori Ashcroft, PhD, and William A. Anthony, PhD



Quality Corner

- **Giving an E on the ERIC Scale** -- If you are thinking about giving a provider an **E for Exceptional** ask yourself this question. Is it something that is a normal or typical expectation as a part of their job? Then this merits and R. If it is above and beyond normal expectations then they deserve the E, but make sure they have earned it
- **LeAnn would like the Voice Review draft a week in advance**, at a minimum 48 hours. If you are going to submit it only a couple of days in advance you will need to check in with LeAnn and make sure she is available and has the time to review it and give feed back before the final meeting. If you are unable to have the VOICE Review approved before the final meeting you will need to cancel and reschedule the final meeting.
- **When you pass out the Voice Review packet, point out the pieces to it** such as the Learning Summary, General Findings chart, Provider value contributions, explanations of the 8 life areas and ERIC score, and suggestions for writing the action plan. Your Learning portrait should include the content of the findings from the Learning Summary to all provider contributions. For more direction on presenting the Learning Portrait and the workbook, refer to the Outline of a VOICE Review on pages 35 – 39 of your QAT Training and Reference manuals.”

Quips and Quotes From the QA Manager

I'm happy to announce our new **QAT Training and Reference manuals** are almost completely distributed. Many of these were passed out at the small group meetings. I know you will find these very helpful in doing a good review. If you have not received one, please contact me right away.

The **updates to the database** are working well. If you haven't downloaded the updates or are having trouble with them let me know and we can work through the process.

Many of you have done **VOICE reviews** in the recent past or are in the process of doing one now. If you haven't done a **VOICE** review in the last 6 months please give me a call.

A **training for new QAT's** will be held On September 12, 13 and 14. Please encourage anyone you know who might be interested in becoming a QAT to contact me. This would be a perfect time to share the new QAT Recruitment Packet with someone. This QAT training is also available as a refresher to existing QATs and can replace your attendance at the fall small group meetings. If you are considering attending this training please let me know so I can have an accurate count for materials and lunches.

Watch for dates for **fall small group meetings**. These will be held in October and November. Please plan on attending.

Thanks for all you do!
LEANN

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The SAMPLER

Movie Theme -- Learning Portrait

Supplies:

Director's chair – Found at Wal-Mart, Dollar Store, Big Lots, etc.

Megaphone – Make out of poster board

Script – Scripts can be found online for different movies. You can also create a script of the person's life.

Clapper – Can be made out of a couple of small boards and cardboard

For more information regarding this learning portrait you can contact the creative artist: Tina Richter, 1031 Gillmore Valley, Winona, MN 55987, (507) 454-5377

TinaR@hco.org

Great for someone who loves movies!

Speaker and Support Available - Region 10 Quality Assurance

If you are looking for someone to speak at a meeting such as People First, Arc, or community in-service to educate and inform others about the alternative quality assurance and licensing process called **VOICE** you can call Karen Larson. Karen also works with Stakeholders to educate others throughout Minnesota and the United States by writing proposals to do presentations and speaking at conferences. If you or someone you knows needs support or assistance in participating in Region 10 Quality Assurance work such as the stakeholder group, committees, QA Commission, QARC and doing **VOICE** reviews as a QA Team Member call Karen Larson.

Karen Larson - (507)332-2922 or email at qakaren@msn.com

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