



International interest in our performance measures

The way in which we measure and evaluate our performance as an accrediting body is the subject of an article in the international publication, ISQua Bulletin.

The article, *Improving performance through iterative feedback*, published in the February/March 2011 issue of the ISQua Bulletin outlines the way in which we measure industry satisfaction with our services. The article includes our review methods for measuring our performance such as periodic formal reviews of the accreditation process, focus groups with industry stakeholders, the comments and complaints register and site visit questionnaires. The article also includes summaries of recent results of these measures

The International Society of Quality in Health Care (ISQua) publishes the ISQua Bulletin bimonthly. The article written by Mark Brandon, Victoria Crawford, Ingrid Fairlie, Jeanne Fretton, Lyn Irwin and Gill Knowles can be downloaded from <http://www.isqua.org/bulletin.htm> on the ISQua website.

Meet Maha Solomon

How long have you been with us?

I have worked for the Accreditation Agency for five years.



What roles have you had with us?

My first role was a Senior Administration officer in the Parramatta office. Last year I became the Operations Manager for our Melbourne office.

What is your background?

My background is in quality management and hospitality management.

What is it like to work for us?

I have embraced the opportunity that was offered to me to work as the Operations Manager in the Melbourne office. The job is never short of challenges and everyday, there is something new that unfolds. Team work, determination, dedication and hard work are what makes operations work. I enjoy my work as I work with a team of dedicated operations staff, assessors and management.

Tell us something about yourself?

I fell in love with Australia when I visited several years ago. I migrated to Australia from Malaysia eight years ago. This is the first job I got when I was granted residency. I have learnt and grown a lot after migrating to Australia and appreciate the richness that Australia has to offer.

Go to *Meet our people* on our website, to read snippets about some of our people.

This month...

Page 2

- Accreditation arrangements
- Business qualifications training

Page 3

- Behavioural interviewing
- Workforce planning
- Latest updates

Accreditation arrangements

Our Chief Executive Officer, Mark Brandon, recently addressed the Tri-State conference in Albury and outlined some of the proposed changes to the accreditation arrangements. The following is an outline of the main changes, however, there will be formal documentation published and training provided before the new arrangements come into place.

Under the proposed changes, approved providers will no longer be required to submit their self-assessment at the time of application for accreditation. However, providers will still be required to do self-assessment and have it available for the assessment team at the site audit. The self-assessment can be in the form that best suits the individual organisation. We will provide a revised self-assessment tool that organisations can use if they want to.

Desk audits will no longer be part of the accreditation process given that self-assessments are no longer required as part of the application. Assessors will still need to plan the site audit. If a self-assessment is submitted to the Accreditation Agency with the application the team will use it as part of their planning.

The current Principles allow for approved providers to nominate an assessor for site audit. Support contacts, which make up around 80 per cent of our visits, do not have this provision. Under the new arrangements providers can no longer nominate assessors for site audits. It is not common among accrediting bodies to include such a provision, and we have seen the number of nominations decrease over time.

We will no longer recommend sanctions to the Department of Health and Ageing. Enforcement of regulations will be strictly the role of the regulator, not us, as the accreditation body.

Changes to the accreditation arrangements as proposed by the Department of Health and Ageing will need to be reflected in revised Accreditation Grant Principles. The timing is a matter for the Australian Government.

Business qualifications training

Seven staff have been selected to participate in our first business qualifications training program.

The business qualifications training program contains two qualifications - Certificate IV Frontline Management and Diploma in Management. Both programs will commence in March and utilise a blended learning approach through our training partnership with Upskilled, a registered training organisation.

These programs will be run in four phases. In March and April, participants will attend public workshops where they will be learning alongside people from other organisations – a great environment in which to share ideas and learn from other organisations.

The second phase, June and July, will see the participants engaged in online learning but with support from a dedicated instructor and opportunity to link up with other online students for support and learning activities.

Phase three will be a two-day in-house workshop in Parramatta during August. The fourth and final phase involves public workshops in September and October where all the participants have learned can be pulled together. Graduation will be in December.

Please congratulate the following participants as we encourage and support them while they undertake their studies:

Maha Solomon – Melbourne office; Geraldine Hughes-Jones – Melbourne office; Natalie Davies – Perth office; Tracey Clerke - Operations; Kirsten Peddie – Parramatta office; Denise Inch – Parramatta office; Maria Theoharous - Corporate Affairs.

Behavioural interviewing

The next Behavioural interviewing course is being held in May. The course is for people who are involved in recruiting staff, particularly for those participating in interview panels. The courses are run by Chandler Macleod and cover the following:

- job role analysis and key job behaviours
- compliance with employment laws when recruiting
- design of effective behavioural interview questions
- interviewing face-to-face and over the telephone
- the roles and responsibilities of a selection panel
- evaluating and selecting candidates
- our recruitment processes including supporting paperwork.

Behavioural interviewing is in block three of the Learning and development framework and is a technical competence for specialists, managers, State Managers and Executive work streams.

Workforce planning

During 2011 and 2012, we will increase our program of audits in accordance with the accreditation cycle. We plan to increase our staff numbers and have already filled a number of positions with assessors recruited directly from the register of aged care quality assessors. Recruitment for trainee assessors has commenced with advertisements for quality assessor positions in our Parramatta, Melbourne, Hobart, Perth and Adelaide offices. Applications for these positions will close on 15 April 2011.

During 2011 and 2012 the majority of residential aged care homes will apply to renew their accreditation. This will require a very significant increase in the number of accreditation audits to be completed.

In February, we wrote to all external assessors on the register to ask them about their availability during the period of increased program of audit. The response rate regarding external assessor availability has been high.

Some assessors have indicated interest in working as a term-defined or permanent assessor and this interest is being taken into account in our workforce planning arrangements and our recruitment plans.

Feedback from assessors about our approach in engaging external assessors during the last peak is being considered in the development of our approach for this round.

The responses from assessors are also used in planning any required update training.

Latest updates

Industry performance fact sheet

A special edition of *The Standard* was sent to the industry containing the results of round four accreditation. The industry performance information from this edition is now a handy fact sheet located on our intranet.

Timeline for timesheets

An update of timelines to submit timesheets is now available through to May 2012.

Support contact hours on site and report writing

Both assessment team members and team leaders can now update their total hours for hours spent on their Support contact report.