

Background

Quality Assurance Performance Improvement (QAPI) Plans

- Well-defined, organized approach to:
 - Avoid inefficiencies
 - Identify weaknesses
 - Create more effective processes (Leger & Forest, 2021)
- Goals:
 - Improve patient outcomes
 - Optimize patient function
 - Minimize emergency room visits and hospitalizations (Bloodworth et al., 2018):

Pediatric Skilled Nursing Office

- Midwestern office provides pediatric skilled nursing home care
- Part of larger company providing various home health services:
 - Adult and pediatric clients
 - Skilled nursing
 - Home health aides
 - Hospice
 - Physical and occupational therapy
 - Behavioral health
- Corporate-level QAPI Plan drives company-wide policies
- Office reports to corporate regarding:
 - Infections
 - Wounds
 - COVID-19
 - Client and employee complaints
 - Unexpected tracheostomy or gastrostomy tube changes
 - Client condition changes
- This Midwestern office did not have a QAPI plan

QAPI facility requirements

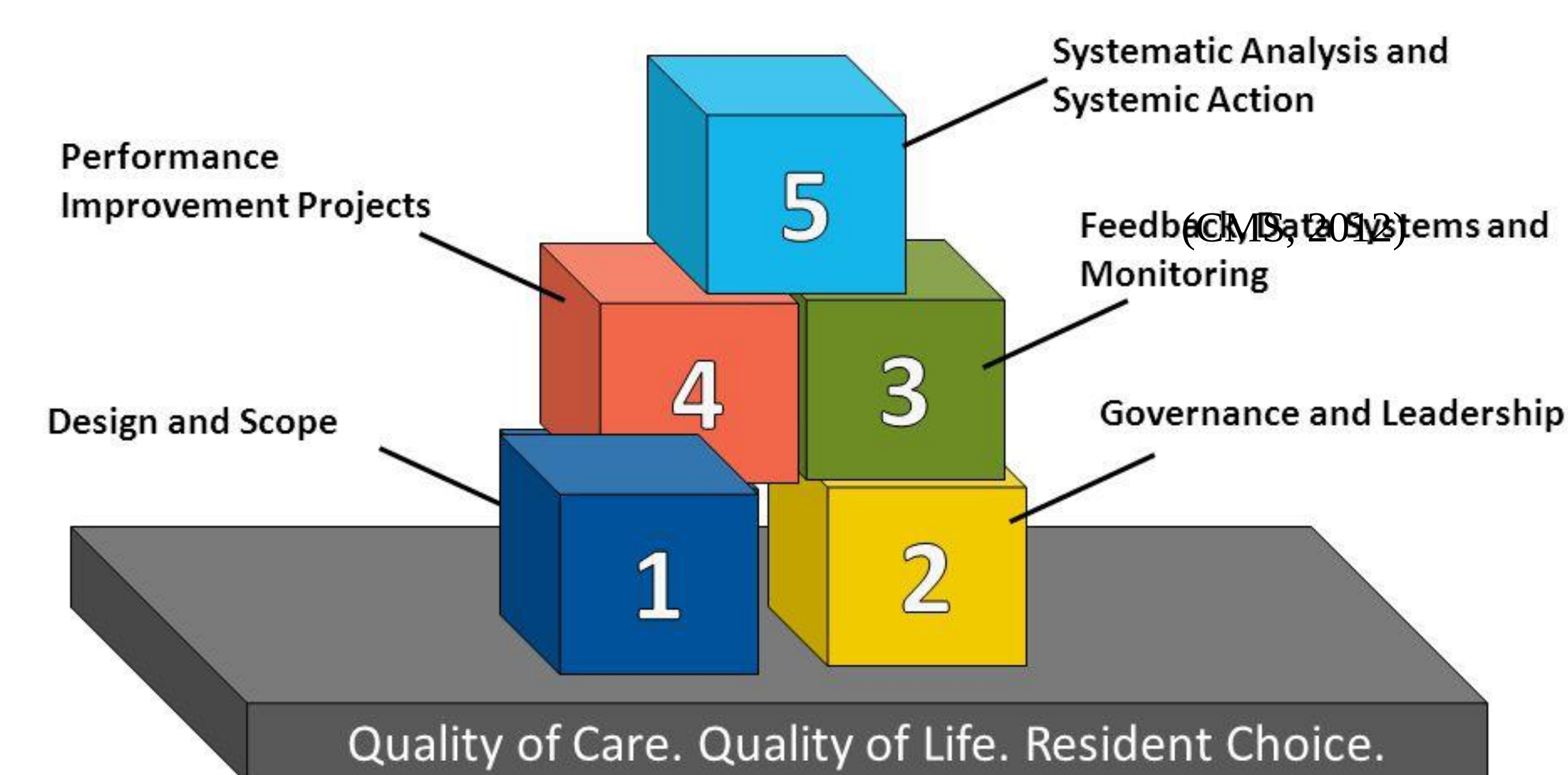
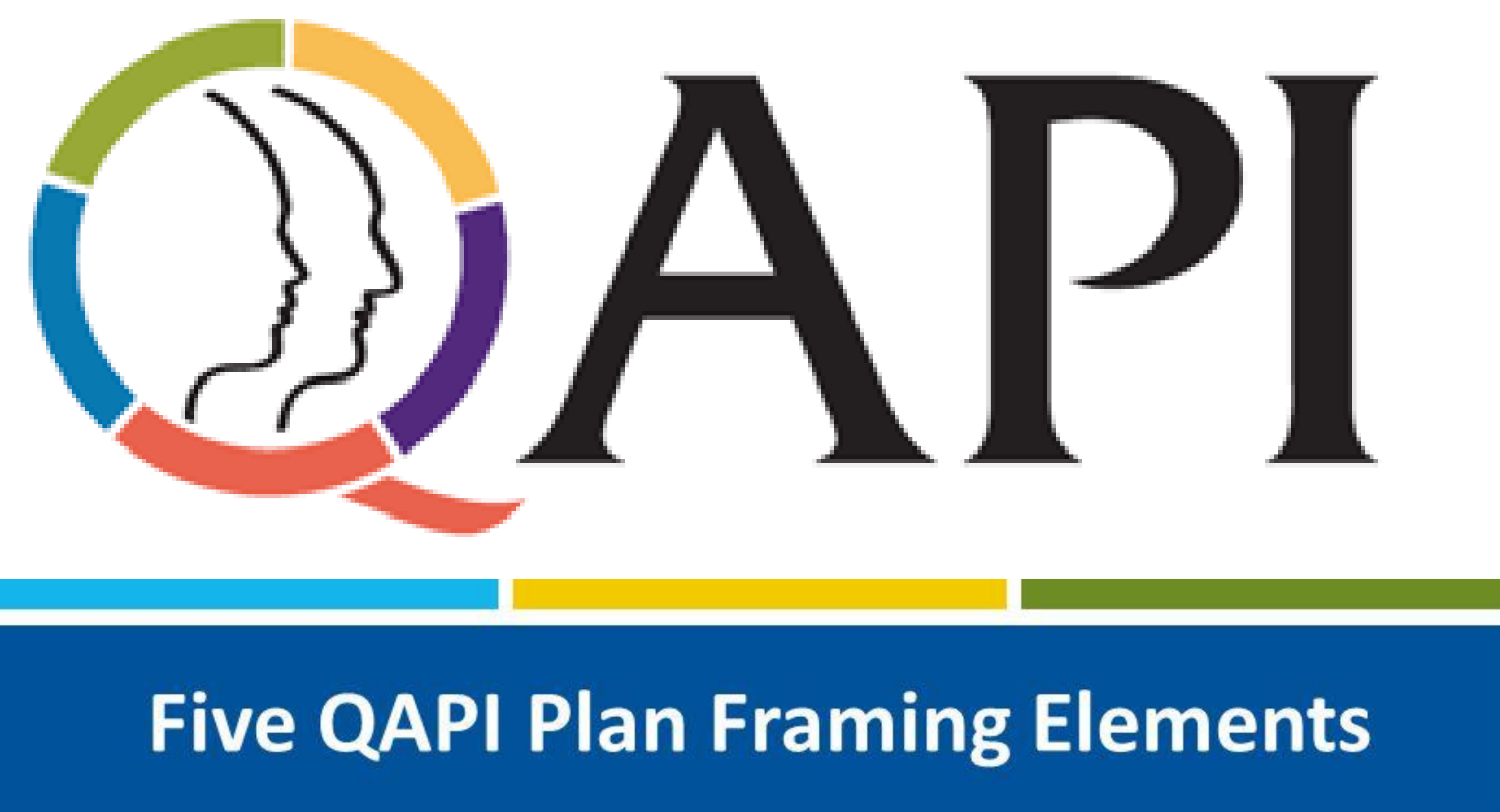
- Required to be a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provider (CMS, 2021)
- Required to maintain Community Health Accreditation Partner (CHAP) accreditation (CHAP, 2022)
- Required to meet organizational standards

Goal: to provide safe, high-quality, cost-effective healthcare

Purpose

Develop and implement a QAPI program that:

- Meets CMS requirements to maintain provider status
- Meets CHAP requirements to maintain accreditation
- Maintains organizational standards
- Addresses trends to improve patient outcomes



Method

- Designed according to CMS guidelines (Element 1)
- QAPI team developed using CMS-required roles (Element 2):
 - Administrator
 - Alternate Administrator
 - Nursing Supervisor
 - Alternate Nursing Supervisor
- Data reported from field nurses to office staff to Metric Stream - company-wide data collection software (Element 3)
- QAPI team data analysis (Elements 4 and 5)
 - Team met quarterly to review Metric Stream data
 - Analyzed data for trends
 - Created performance improvement plan (PIP) based on analysis
 - Specific action to be taken
 - Specific staff member(s) to complete the action
 - Deadline for the action to be completed
 - Subsequent quarter review began with previous PIP evaluation so QAPI plan is ongoing and comprehensive (Element 1)

Results

QAPI plan evaluation:

- Compared to CMS requirements to ensure standards were met
- Evaluated by stakeholders to ensure company standards upheld
- Aggregate data collected over two quarters

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) evaluation:

- Quarter 1
 - Data analysis:
 - Increase in wounds noted
 - PIP:
 - Education provided to nurses on wound care and documentation
 - Next quarter's evaluation:
 - Only 1 wound, promptly reported and treated
- Quarter 2
 - Data analysis:
 - Increase in COVID-19 exposures noted
 - PIP:
 - Education provided to nurses on PPE requirements
 - Next quarter's evaluation:
 - Equal number of exposures with no conversion to illness

Discussion

Additional benefits:

- Addressed problems
 - Medication errors identified and corrected promptly
 - Equipment recalls addressed quickly
- Education
 - Identified education needs on PPE and equipment use
 - Provided a process to evaluate education efficacy
- Staff nurses' response
 - Overwhelmingly positive
 - Appreciated improvement focus
 - Valued opportunity to strengthen practice

Conclusion

- Office maintained CMS provider status & CHAP accreditation
- Office continued to align care with the company's values
- Patients received (and continue to receive) safe, high-quality, cost-effective care
- QAPI plan is currently operational with goal to continue