

QI Spotlight

February 2004

FAQ's on NCQA Accreditation

1. What is NCQA?

NCQA is the National Committee for Quality Assurance. It is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality. NCQA evaluates health care in 3 different ways:

- **Accreditation** – a rigorous on-site review of key clinical and administrative processes. NCQA began accrediting managed care organizations (MCOs) in 1991.
- **Health Plan Employer Data and Information Set (HEDIS)** – a tool used to measure performance in key health plan areas, both physical health and behavioral health.
- **Comprehensive Member Satisfaction Surveys** – for behavioral health this is the ECHO survey.

2. Does CBHNP have NCQA accreditation?

No, but CBHNP-Capital Area has undergone what are known as delegation oversight audits completed by Health America / Health Assurance of Pa. (HASPA) due to our contractual relationship with HASPA. These annual audits are based on a full review of the current NCQA standards and guidelines for managed behavioral health organizations (MBHOs). CBHNP has recently made a corporate-wide commitment to obtaining NCQA accreditation.

3. What do the Standards involve?

Currently, NCQA accreditation is based upon satisfactory attainment of 14 Quality Improvement (QI) standards; 16 Utilization Management (UM) standards; 13 Credentialing and Recredentialing (CR) standards; 8 Members' Rights & Responsibilities (RR) standards; and

5 Preventive Health (PH) standards. Within each of these Standards, there are multiple “elements” to meet. In many cases, compliance for the standard is the lowest assessment that any element receives, making for very rigorous scoring.

In summary, “NCQA” will be a common refrain heard at CBHNP over the course of the upcoming year. For further information, please consult the NCQA website at www.ncqa.org.