CQI SYSTEM SELF-ASSESSMENT: RATE AND PRIORITIZE

Participant rating form

This form covers the key components of an effective CQI system: Organizational Commitment; Data Structure and Processes; and CQI Plans, Policies, and Procedures.

Rate each component twice. First, rate where your organization stands today. Then rate how important it is to strengthen that component over the next twelve months. Answer from what you actually observe, not from what is written in a policy or plan. There are no wrong answers, and disagreement across the table is useful information.

Use the anchors under each component to place your rating. If you do not have enough visibility to judge a component, mark DK rather than guessing.

Name (optional): Role / Program: Date:

Scale 1: Current state

To what extent is this in place in your organization today?

RATING	LABEL	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE
1	**Not in place**	Not present, or present only as an idea or intention.
2	**Emerging**	Informal, inconsistent, or limited to pockets of the organization.
3	**Established**	Documented and applied consistently across most programs or units.
4	**Embedded**	Routine, resourced, monitored, and periodically reviewed and refined.
DK	**Don't know**	You do not have enough information to rate this component.

Scale 2: Priority

How important is strengthening this over the next twelve months?

RATING	LABEL	WHAT IT MEANS
1	**Low**	Strengthening this is not a focus for the coming year.
2	**Moderate**	Worth improving, but other components matter more right now.
3	**High**	Should be an explicit focus of improvement work this year.
4	**Critical**	Progress on other priorities depends on addressing this first.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTMENT

A. CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Leadership fosters an environment that supports innovation, evidence-based decisions, and collaboration.

1 Not in place	2 Emerging	3 Established	4 Embedded
Leaders rarely reference data in decisions. Raising problems feels risky.	Individual leaders model learning, but practice varies widely by unit.	Leaders regularly use evidence in decisions and create space to test ideas.	Learning from both success and failure is expected, protected, and visible in how decisions get made.

CURRENT STATE	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ DK
PRIORITY	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	

Evidence for your rating:

B. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Roles and responsibilities for CQI activities across the organization are clearly outlined.

1 Not in place	2 Emerging	3 Established	4 Embedded
No defined CQI roles. Improvement work depends on whoever volunteers.	Roles exist for some staff or programs, but they overlap or are unclear.	Roles, responsibilities, and decision rights are documented and widely known.	Governance is documented, staffed, tied to leadership decisions, and reviewed as the agency changes.

CURRENT STATE	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ DK
PRIORITY	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	

Evidence for your rating:

C. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Agency-wide outcomes and shared goals for improvement are established and understood across the organization.

1 Not in place	2 Emerging	3 Established	4 Embedded
No shared improvement goals. Priorities shift with funding or crisis.	Goals exist at the program level but are not aligned agency-wide.	Agency-wide outcomes are set, and most staff can name them.	Shared goals drive resource allocation and cascade into program and team measures.

CURRENT STATE	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ DK
PRIORITY	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	

Evidence for your rating:

DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND REPORTING

D. DATA COLLECTION

Data collected is fully aligned with agency and/or program objectives, and data collection methods are well documented.

1 Not in place	2 Emerging	3 Established	4 Embedded
Data is collected mainly to satisfy reporting requirements. Methods are undocumented.	Some measures connect to objectives. Collection methods vary by site or staff person.	Most measures map to stated objectives, and collection protocols are written and followed.	Every measure traces to an objective. Protocols are documented, trained, and reviewed for burden and fit.

CURRENT STATE	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ DK
PRIORITY	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	

Evidence for your rating:

E. DATA ANALYSIS

Appropriate methods are in place for analyzing qualitative and quantitative data to ensure reliability and accuracy.

1 Not in place	2 Emerging	3 Established	4 Embedded
Little analysis beyond counts. No one checks the data for errors.	Basic analysis happens, often by one person. Quality checks are informal.	Defined methods for both qualitative and quantitative data, with routine accuracy checks.	Methods are matched to the question, documented, replicable, and limitations are stated openly.

CURRENT STATE	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ DK
PRIORITY	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	

Evidence for your rating:

F. DATA REPORTING

Reports are available to different audiences, user friendly, and actionable.

1 Not in place	2 Emerging	3 Established	4 Embedded
Reports go to funders only, or are not produced on any schedule.	Reports exist but are dense, late, or built for one audience.	Reports are tailored to audience, released on a schedule, and readable without a data background.	Reports are timely, accessible, and structured so each audience can see what to act on and does so.

CURRENT STATE	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ DK
PRIORITY	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	

Evidence for your rating:

CQI PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

G. CQI PLAN

There is a written CQI plan that provides clear procedures and tools to guide improvement efforts.

1 Not in place	2 Emerging	3 Established	4 Embedded
No written plan. Improvement work is reactive and ad hoc.	A plan exists on paper but is out of date, unknown, or not used in practice.	A current written plan with procedures and tools that teams actually use.	The plan guides day-to-day practice, is reviewed on a set cycle, and is updated based on what teams learn.

CURRENT STATE	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ DK
PRIORITY	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	

Evidence for your rating:

H. RESOURCES

Sufficient time is allocated for staff to participate in CQI activities.

1 Not in place	2 Emerging	3 Established	4 Embedded
CQI is added on top of full caseloads with no time set aside.	Time depends on the supervisor. It is the first thing cut when demand rises.	Protected time for CQI participation is built into schedules for most roles.	Time is budgeted, protected in practice, and participation counts as core work rather than extra.

CURRENT STATE	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ DK
PRIORITY	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	

Evidence for your rating:

I. TRAINING

Resources and opportunities are provided to all staff to understand their role and to support active participation in CQI activities.

1 Not in place	2 Emerging	3 Established	4 Embedded
No CQI training offered. Staff learn the language but not the practice.	One-time or onboarding-only training, reaching some staff or levels.	Role-specific training available to all staff, with materials they can return to.	Training is ongoing and paired with coaching, so staff apply CQI methods in their own work.

CURRENT STATE	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ DK
PRIORITY	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	

Evidence for your rating:

Summary: transfer your ratings

Copy your two ratings for each component below, then subtract to find the gap. A larger positive gap signals higher leverage. Leave the gap blank for any component you marked DK.

	COMPONENT	CURRENT STATE	PRIORITY	GAP (P – C)
ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTMENT				
A	Continuous Learning			
B	Governance Structure			
C	Strategic Priorities			
DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND REPORTING				
D	Data Collection			
E	Data Analysis			
F	Data Reporting			
CQI PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES				
G	CQI Plan			
H	Resources			
I	Training			

Plot your priorities

Write the letter for each component (A through I) in the quadrant that matches your two ratings.

	CURRENT STATE: LOW (1–2)	CURRENT STATE: HIGH (3–4)
PRIORITY HIGH (3–4)	**Act first** *Biggest gap between where you are and what you need.*	**Sustain and deepen** *Strength that still matters. Protect and extend it.*
PRIORITY LOW (1–2)	**Monitor** *Underdeveloped, but not where the leverage is this year.*	**Maintain** *Working well. Keep it running without added investment.*

Discuss and commit

DISCUSSION

1. Which component did our group rate most inconsistently, and what does that disagreement tell us?
2. Where is the largest gap between current state and priority, and what is the first observable step toward closing it?
3. Do our highest priorities cluster in one domain, and if so, what does that suggest about sequencing?
4. What evidence would convince us that a component had moved up one level within twelve months?

Our top three priorities for the coming year, in order:

RANK	LETTER	COMPONENT	FIRST OBSERVABLE STEP
1			
2			
3			