STAR-QI
FAQ's
Issue 3

This handout is intended for all OASAS providers currently using the STAR-QI data collection system in New York. This handout will cover:

1. **Flex Items**
2. **Collecting Discharge Dates.**

Flex Items

STAR-QI now includes **four optional flex items** that enable providers to track data not already collected by the system. Providers can customize use of these items to examine information that will inform their future practices. Some agencies have used flex items to track:

1) *Referral Source* – Parole, self, etc.

2) *1st Appointment dates*

3) *Special Client Groups or Demographics of interest* – Veterans, MICA, etc.

What might be helpful for your agency to track?

Flex items can be up to 10 characters in length (letters or numbers). The search and find function will only pull those flex items that **exactly** match the search term entered.

We have found, therefore, that **numeric** flex items are best! This is because when searching for data, you may miss records that differ slightly but represent the same cohort (i.e. "Self" vs. "self" vs. "SELF"). In this example, instead of using **"self"** to track a referral type, why not use a code of **1**?

Flex Items Cont'd

STAR-QI now provides a Flex Item Overlay Indicator Report which can be used to break out data for any Flex Item reported[see FAQ #4 for details]. You also can export flex item data, sorted by flex item, into EXCEL and conduct further analysis.

For example, if you want to count your parole admissions (flex item=1):

1) Sort your data in the episode list by the flex item

Discharge Date	Discharge Status	Completion Status	Flex Item 1 △
03/14/2008	Not Complete: No goals met	Done	1
		In Process	1
		In Process	1
		In Process	1
		In Process	1
03/10/2008	Not Complete: No goals met	Done	1
		Done	1
04/04/2008	Not Complete: No goals met	Done	1
03/28/2008	Not Complete: No goals met	Done	1
		Done	1
04/11/2008	Not Complete: No goals met	Done	1

2) Export to excel

3) Delete all records not containing the flex item of interest in the excel sheet.

O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Second Da	Third Date	Fourth Dat	Discharge	Discharge	Completior	Flex Item 1
					0	1
			6/2/2008	5	1	1
					0	1
					0	1
			3/18/2008	5	1	1
					1	
					1	
2/20/2008			2/20/2008	5	1	
2/21/2008	2/22/2008	2/26/2008			0	
2/21/2008	2/26/2008	2/28/2008			0	
2/21/2008	2/26/2008	2/28/2008			0	

Delete These

4) Now count the number of admissions you have in your "Admission" column.

Discharges

Why is capturing Discharge Information in STAR-QI Important?

Both types of discharges will provide critical information. In order to find out if client outcomes are improving, capturing the discharge date and disposition (that tells us if a client's treatment goals were met) is key.

Capturing discharge information also helps you to build your **Business Case**. A positive economic position is a better leverage point for clinical and/or organizational change.

The average outpatient client length of stay for a NIATx provider in NY is roughly 180 days or 6 months. Therefore, there can be a long time lag between the 4th date of service and the discharge date/disposition reported in STAR-QI. You may be experiencing difficulty capturing discharge dates/dispositions **as they occur** because of this.

How can your change team make sure you are not missing this critical piece in STAR-QI?

You may have heard this before, but make sure there is a **PROCESS** in place!

To get started, as a team step through the worksheet below:

Discharges (cont'd)

Discharge Data Collection Process Worksheet:

How timely are discharges entered into the Client Data System?
(i.e. how long after a discharge date occurs is it entered into the system?)

1. **Within One Week** ☐

2. **Within One Month** ☐

3. **1-2 Months** ☐

If Within One Week:
Reconcile STAR-QI with CDS

Make sure that your CDS Data Entry Person *&* NIATx Data Coordinator are communicating to coordinate timely entry of discharges.

If Within One Month:
Reconcile STAR-QI to CDS or Create a DISCHARGE PROCESS (below)

If 1-2 Months:
Create a DISCHARGE PROCESS:

Some Examples:
1) Once a counselor discharges a client, have them submit that information to the NIATx Data Coordinator.

2) Have a centralized feeder form where discharges are entered by hand as they occur.

3) For clients that have been in STAR-QI for at least 6 months or more, double check if they have been discharged.

Any other ideas for a Discharge Process?