VITAL STATISTICS (VS) QI PROJECT 2023-2024

Clermont County Public Health — Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Mascot = Mouse
Attributes: careful use of resources, quick, fly under the radar.

Quality Improvement Storyboard

Team Lead: Amanda Myers
Team Members: Julianne Nesbit (Facilitator), Ariel Fronsoe (Minutes), Kimmy Williams (Subject Matter Expert), Keith Robinson, Sarah Thomas, Brianna Wolken, Danielle Dunkman
Target Population:
Internal - Permit Central Front Office Staff
External - Funeral Homes and other Lobby Customers

Plan

Problem Statement

CCPH is the sole issuer of death certificates in Clermont County. VS staff issued 6,086 Death Certificates (DCs) in 2022 and 5,257 in 2023. The current process is inefficient, and there is no workflow control, which can cause disruptions in staff workload and longer wait lines for other customers in the lobby.

AIM Statement

By 12/31/2023, we will increase the efficiency and sustainability of the VS workload within staffing limitations by reducing staff interruptions by 40% and the median time per customer for death certificates by 40%.

Process Outline and Relevent Data

The current process has Funeral Homes (FHs) bring in paper requests or email them and send a runner. FHs order significant numbers of copies that take time to process. An initial time study revealed 63% of the time other customers were in the lobby, 84% of the time staff were interrupted when doing other tasks, the median time per customer was nine minutes, and only 42% (5 out of 12) FHs were sending DCs electronically.

Potential Cause

Several tools were used to determine potential causes. A fishbone diagram was developed and a control and influence matrix was simultaneously completed.

Potential Solution

Multiple brainstorming sessions were held to discuss potential solutions. Since the VS program is a state-run program, solutions focused on what could be done at the local level. CCPH could not change state policies and systems but could work on influencing them. A SWOT analysis was done, and the control matrix was reviewed. Potential Solutions focused on electronic options for submitting requests that would allow staff to control their daily workflow and provide excellent service to all customers.

Prioritization/Selection of Solutions for Implementation

Solutions included electronic submission of requests, an online portal for ordering and credit card payment, upgrades needed to software systems, and participation in stakeholder groups for the state system. CCPH prioritized solutions based on what could be controlled and implemented locally without the support of other agencies (e.g., no county webmaster at the time).

Do

Test of Possible Solution

FHs were notified that effective September 4, 2023, all DCs must be e-filed, no requests would be taken at the counter, all records would be processed in 24 hours (business days), and an email confirmation would be sent when records are ready for purchase.

Check

Study of Results

The Pre and Post-Time Study Results show a 45% decrease in staff interruptions and a 44% decrease in the median time per customer.

Act

Standardize Improvement Theory

Standard Operating Guidelines were developed and provided to FH on how to e-file and for internal CCPH procedures on checking the email box and processing orders. Staff provided training and support to FHs to ease the transition. After a brief period, staff started to refuse lobby requests from FHs.

Performance Metrics

Quality Improvement Performance Metrics will include doing an annual post-assessment in 2025 to ensure the institutionalized changes continue to have a positive impact. Metrics will continue to be monitored around staff interruptions and median time per customer.

OPERATION PERMIT PROGRAM (OPP) 2022 (PHASE 1)

Clermont County Public Health — Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Quality Improvement Storyboard

Team Lead: Tyler Braasch, Robert Wildey, Julianne Nesbit
Team Members: Amanda Myers, Tim Kelly, Kimmy Williams, Ariel Fronsoe, Paul Sanders, Meranda Tripp, Mark Owens
Target Population:
Internal - Water & Waste Staff, Permit Central Front Office Staff
External - Clermont County property owners with onsite septic systems

Plan

Problem Statement

CCPH permits almost 22,000 existing onsite septic systems. With current economic growth, new systems are being added annually. The staff has indicated that the current workload is not sustainable long-term, and the OPP procedures and policies have a significant administrative burden.

AIM Statement

By 1/1/2024, we will develop a plan to revise the OPP to be sustainable, efficient, and financially sound. The program will incorporate inspections, permit issuing, collecting fees, data entry, enforcement, and public education.

Process Outline and Relevent Data

The project is being broken into phases due to its size. The current process uses a 19 and 38-month rotation with a skipping process. Significant amounts of data exist in EnerGov. Data for this phase include the cost of mailing postcards and properties waived as vacant.

Potential Cause

Several tools were used to determine potential causes. A fishbone diagram and a process map with swim lanes were developed.

Potential Solution

Multiple brainstorming sessions were held to discuss potential solutions. Initial solutions focused on immediate changes that could be implemented without board approval or that required rewriting of local regulations. The initial solutions focused on what could be done within internal processes to have an immediate impact and could quickly implement. Phases 2 and 3 of the project would focus on long-term solutions to the problem, which would require rewriting local regulation 415.

Prioritization/Selection of Solutions for Implementation

The following elements were selected for phase 1 of the project as they could be quickly implemented with minimal changes to internal processes:

- Outsourcing of Postcards
- Loss of Revenue from:
  - Waiving "vacant" properties
  - Maintaining outstanding fees with the proper
  - Making changes to the collections process for fees

Do

Test of Possible Solution

Legal opinions were sought from the county prosecutor's office on fees, property transfers, and collection processes. A definition of "vacant" was defined internally, and a vendor was found to outsource postcard mailings potentially.

Check

Study of Results

The percentage of properties waived for vacant fees was reduced from 5.7% in 2022 to 3.9% for the first quarter of 2023. Approximately $13,000 in fees were waived for property transfers from 2019-2022. No fees will be waived for property transfers in the future. The average cost for outsourcing postcards was reduced from $460 to $420 per month, making it cheaper to outsource and regain staff time.

Act

Standardize Improvement Theory

Standard Operating Guidelines were developed addressing vacant properties. The collections SOG was updated, and report changes were implemented. Internal procedure changes were implemented on property transfers. A formal contract was executed on outsourcing postcards.

Performance Metrics

Phase 1 performance metrics include comparing the cost of outsourcing postcards, the number of vacant code violations cited, the transition from waiving all transferred property fees to waiving none, and the percentage of tax liens placed annually.