

INCREASING PARTICIPATION IN BLOOMFIELD'S BI-ANNUAL RABIES CLINIC



TOWNSHIP OF BLOOMFIELD DEPT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES (NEW JERSEY)

FTEs: 18 / POPULATION SERVED: 53,000

PLAN

Identify an opportunity and Plan for Improvement

1. Getting Started

Based on an internal self assessment, the QI team decided that it would focus on the bi-annual rabies clinic and see if they could increase participation by increasing the quantity/quality of the advertising. This would also help The Department address accreditation measures 9.1.3B-9.1.5B.

2. Assemble the Team

The team consisted of the Health Officer, Health Educator, and Clerk-Typist. The rabies clinic is near and dear to the Health Officer's heart. The Clerk-Typist is the official record keeper of the Department. The Health Educator (Accreditation Coordinator) has received extensive QI training. Additionally, he is responsible for the Department's advertising.

3. Examine the Current Approach

The QI Team staff developed a flow chart to describe the current approach to advertising the clinic, which is pretty simple. The team decided on the time/date of the clinic, confirmed that a location was available, and then advertised and held the clinic.



4. Identify Potential Solutions

The team chose to focus on the quality and quantity of advertising. They realized that not enough attention had been given to ensuring that enough residents knew about the clinic. The team also realized that it would be fairly simple to determine how residents learned about the clinic, thus allowing staff to measure results accurately and pinpoint what specifically was improving participation.

5. Develop an Improvement Theory

If The Department increases the quantity of its advertising for the fall rabies clinic, then it should realize at least a 50% increase in participation over the fall clinic held on 10/24/2009.

Aim Statement: By October 23, 2010, increase by 50% (from 24-36) the number of rabies vaccinations administered at the Department's bi-annual Rabies clinic.

DO

Test the Theory for Improvement

6. Test the Theory

Different types of advertising were used to increase clinic attendance. This chart shows some of them.

Intervention Strategy	2009	2010
Clinic flyer e-mailed to a member of the Board of Education for distribution to Board of Ed & neighborhood contacts	NO	YES
Flyer e mailed to the head of Human Services in Caldwell & liaison to Bloomfield who contracts with Caldwell to handle public health to distribute to Caldwell residents	NO	YES
Clinic advertised on Channel 35 (Bloomfield's local cable access channel)	NO	YES
Flyers distributed at Harvest Fest, an annual Bloomfield event held for an entire weekend every September	NO	YES
Notification through Nixle (94 users; Bloomfield residents) via text message and e mail. Nixle could be likened to a form of Twitter where residents receive messages informing them of health department events	NO	YES

CHECK

Use Data to Study Results of the Test

7. Check the Results

Unbeknownst to the QI Team, one of the Health Department staff decided to perform a direct mailing of the rabies clinic flyer to individuals whose pet licenses would soon be expiring. This resulted in an overwhelming response. This response was unexpected since the QI team did not decide that this would be one of the methods utilized to advertise the clinic. Nevertheless, it did

prove to be serendipitous as it was certainly the best form of advertising for this clinic. The team learned a valuable lesson in that: *All processes have to be approved and accounted for so that an accurate test can be performed and accurate information can be gathered for a QI Project.* The second best advertising method was the press release in the local papers. The data that was collected was sufficient to conclude that the improvement was effective. The Department's electronic forms of advertising (NIXLE, website, Channel 35) are by far ineffective at increasing participation, at least in the Rabies Clinic.

ACT

Standardize the Improvement and Establish Future Plans

8. Standardize the Improvement or Develop New Theory

With the above points in mind, the QI Team decided to go back to the Plan step and evaluate how to more effectively use contact information that it has for residents. Since the most effective form of advertising was the direct mail of the rabies clinic flyer to those whose pet licenses would soon be expiring, the team decided that it would be advantageous to obtain and utilize e-mail addresses of the pet owners to determine if that would be an effective (and free) means of informing them. To that end, staff created a sign-in sheet for the next Rabies Clinic, where they will obtain this information. The Department may also place a line on the Pet License Applications for e-mail addresses.

9. Establish Future Plans

Since the press release in the papers was the second most effective means of advertising, staff decided to explore the possibility of paying for ad space (which is bit more prominent and eye-catching than a press release) to compare results. The project was started with the intent of using the findings to increase participation in ALL of Bloomfield's clinics. Thus, the team continues to look for ways to incorporate these best practices across the board.