Responsible Individual training - Welcome back!

Session 4

Today we look at QA and the child's voice. We are also covering challenging Ofsted as requested.

The RI standard-quality assurance

The RI must satisfy themselves that the RM oversees the welfare of each child in their care through observation and direct engagement with each child, each member of staff, family /carers for each child (if appropriate), professionals involved in the care or protection of each child i.e. SW, IRO, teachers, clinicians, other health professionals.

The RI should ensure that the Reg 44 and Reg 45 are fit for the purpose of ensuring continuous development of the home. The RI should test out the skill of the RM in anticipating difficulties, reviewing incidents, learning from placement breakdown, implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice

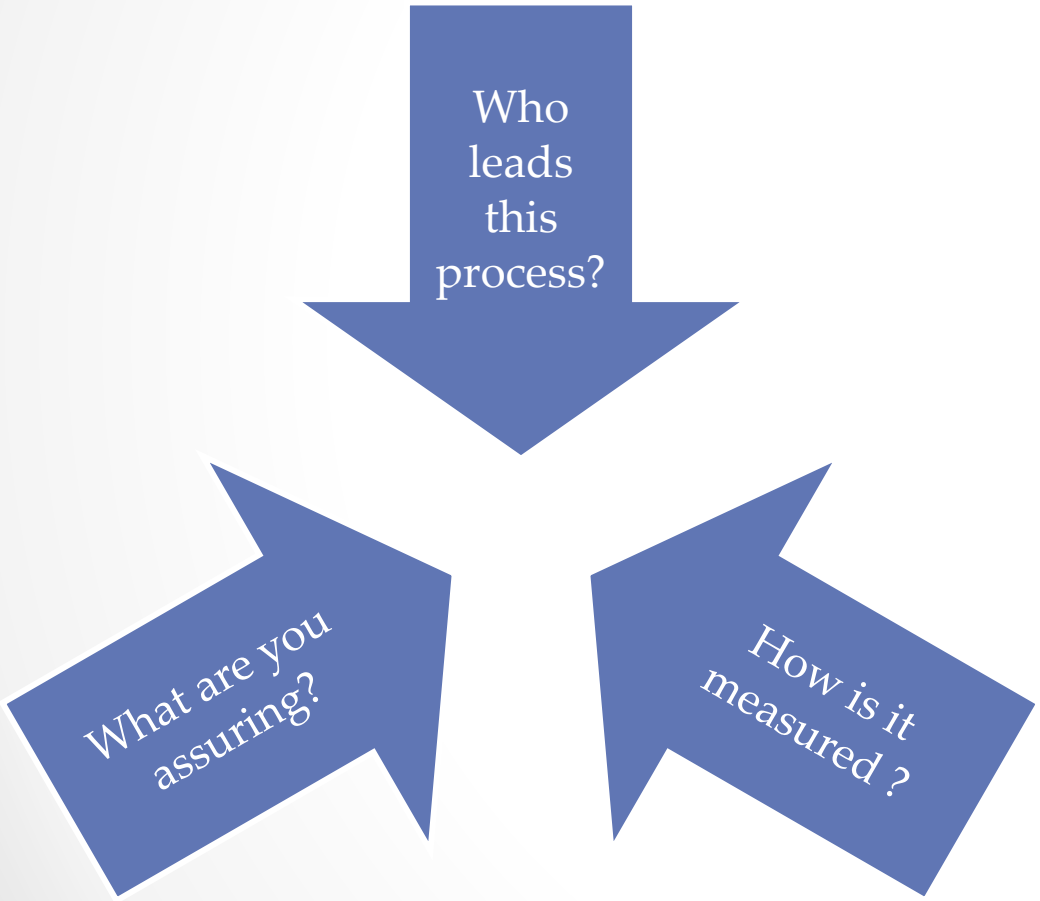
Cross references to quality and purpose of care, children's views, wishes and feelings, education, health and well-being, enjoy and achieve, PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, health and well-being, positive relationships, care planning

What is QA and where does it come from?

It comes from the manufacturing sector originally particularly manufacturing such as Toyota , Nissan and has been adapted to fit all sectors – industrial , service , professional etc.



The QA process



- Whose responsibility is this process?
- Do you know why it has to be “checked out”? What’s the purpose?
- What do you do with the findings?
- To whom are you giving feedback-and why-what will they do with it?
- Does it have any impact?

KPIs

- Measurable values that track progress towards a specific goal
- Outcomes enable organisations to make informed decisions
- Used to evaluate the success of businesses, teams or individuals
- Should reflect the goals of the organisations
- Identify strengths, weakness, areas of improvement, promote accountability

- Purpose:
- Track performance
- Support decision making
- Hold people/teams to account
- Promote continuous improvement

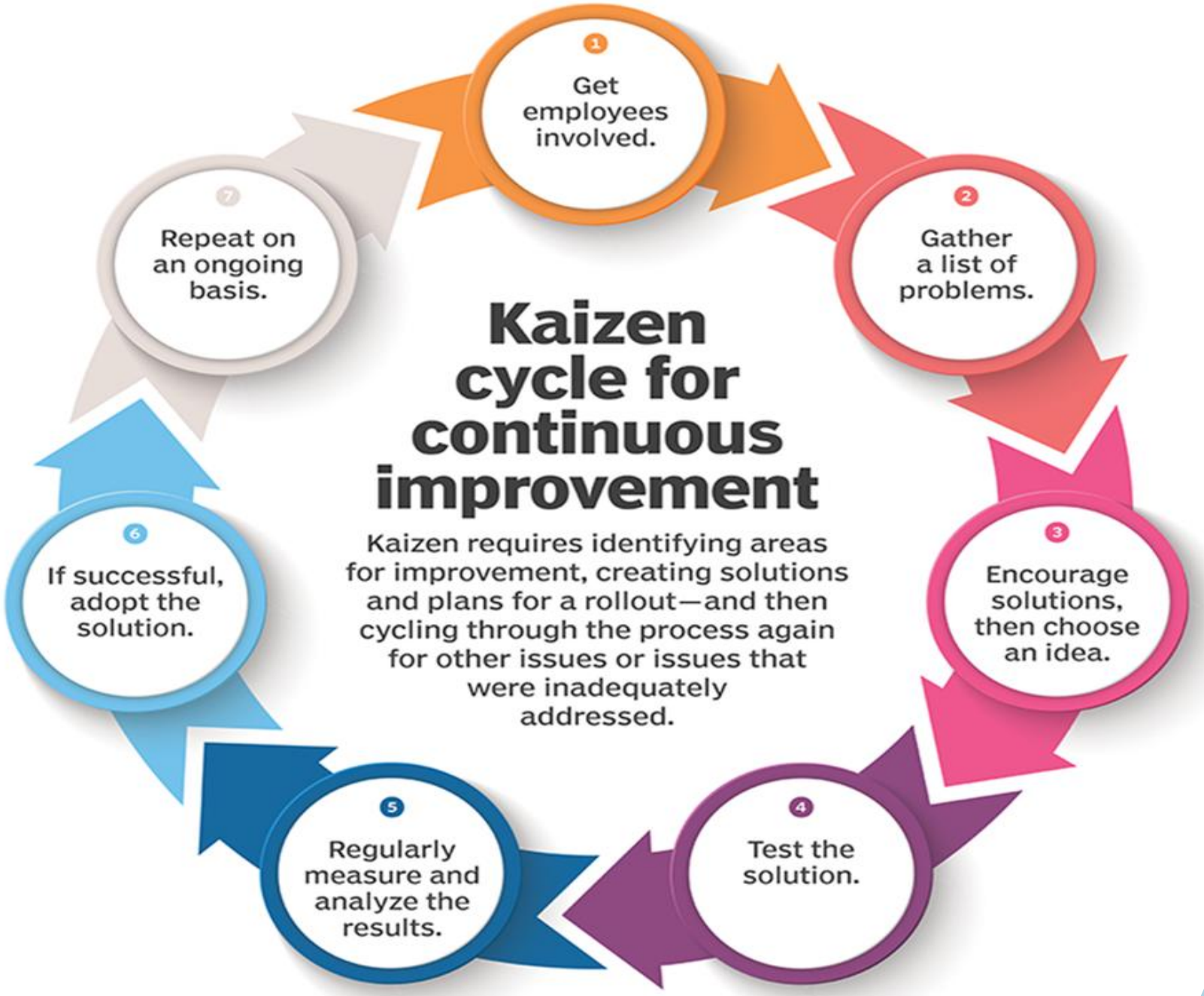
Typically follow SMART principles

The RI standard-quality assurance evidence base

Potential evidence:

- Reg 44 & 45 evidence-patterns and trends
- RM meetings, supervision and appraisal
- Home Development plan, Statement of Purpose/contents
- Children's views, response to grumps/grumbles/complaints
- Ofsted reports & LA monitoring reports
- Care plans and supporting documents
- Staff views/stakeholder views
- Regular visits to the home, observations
- Approachable – evidence by direct communication with staff and observation of relationships in the home.
- Supervision/appraisal records for staff

Root cause analysis and findings


1
Get employees involved.
2
Gather a list of problems.
3
Encourage solutions, then choose an idea.
4
Test the solution.
5
Regularly measure and analyze the results.
6
If successful, adopt the solution.
7
Repeat on an ongoing basis.
Kaizen cycle for continuous improvement
Kaizen requires identifying areas for improvement, creating solutions and plans for a rollout—and then cycling through the process again for other issues or issues that were inadequately addressed.

Ten principles of Kaizen

- Let go of assumptions.
- Be proactive about solving problems.
- Don't accept the status quo.
- Let go of perfectionism and take an attitude of iterative, adaptive change.
- Look for solutions as you find mistakes.
- Create an environment in which everyone feels empowered to contribute.
- Don't accept the obvious issue; instead, ask "why" five times to get to the root cause.
- Cull information and opinions from multiple people.
- Use creativity to find low-cost, small improvements.
- Never stop improving.
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Kaizen cont'd

- Kaizen is based on the belief that everything can be improved and nothing is status quo. It also rests on a Respect for People principle. Kaizen involves identifying issues and opportunities, creating solutions and rolling them out -- and then cycling through the process again for other issues or problems that were inadequately addressed. The next slide shows the seven steps to create a cycle for continuous improvement and give a systematic method for executing this process.
- KEY UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES:
- RESPECT: We respect others, make every effort to understand each other, take responsibility and do our best to build mutual trust.
- TEAMWORK: We stimulate personal and professional growth, share the opportunities of development and maximize individual and team performance."

QA and the personnel- how do you quality assure the Manager/ team/ culture/ practice?

- Small groups
- How you capture and assure some of the most difficult to pin down evidence?



As the RI how does quality assurance ……

- Inform your feedback to the Manager and RP?
- Inform the supervision and appraisal for the Manager?
- Support the development of the home?
- Sustain good practice in the home?
- Improve outcomes for children and young people?

SO :-

- Is your model clear? Is it too focussed / narrow?
- Are you assuring a broad range of topics/ issues?
- Are you capturing the right evidence?
- Are your findings being applied or blocked?

The RI standard- the child's voice

For the RI this is seen as the standard which captures the views of children and can give a clear picture of the child's voice in the home, if it is heard and acted upon in their home and lives. The RI has clear examples of children being heard and their wishes being acted upon. If not they are offered a clear explanation as to why it cannot happen.

The RI should support the RM and team in the practice of listening to children taking their views , wishes and feelings into account when planning and undertaking their care as well as in the further development of the service in the short , medium and long term.

Cross references to : leadership and management, quality of care , education , health and well being , enjoy and achieve, PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, health and well being, positive relationships, care planning

- Embedded in legislation-Children Act 1989-embeds rights to Independent Visitors amongst other things Become an Independent Visitor | National IV Network
- Advocacy: 5414-DfES-AdvocacyServices txt
- QS7 Views wishes and feelings-Do you know it?
- Eg: Do you keep the Childrens Guide and complaints policy under review-and seek the child's views as part of the process (7.2.c)
- UN Convention on the rights of the child-Article 12
- The voice of the child: learning from case reviews | NSPCC Learning
- Children's social care questionnaires 2025 - GOV.UK
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Principles of practice

- Giving **children a voices** promotes self esteem and self worth
- Giving **children a voice-** choice, opinion, feelings and emotions can be expressed
- **Giving children a voice** keeps them safe
- **Children** can develop and learn that they are **important** and valued.
- Feeling valued plays a large role in how a **child** develops and relates to others

Feedback from children? Are we asking the right questions ? Are we listening/hearing?

Areas that children and young people reflect upon:

- *Coming into care and what that feels like*
- *Wanting to feel safe*
- *Honesty about families and siblings*
- *Honesty about placement changes*
- *Don't give me a "survey".....*
- *Don't just ask me what I want- listen to me ?*
- *Being made to feel different. Stigma education , home ....*
- *Being surrounded by "care " language and processes*
- *Needing people to be honest about their past and help them fill in the gaps*
- *Ask me what I want to talk about- don't assume*

Quotes- pauses for thought……..

- "*we just want to be treated like normal kids*" – do we do this? Do we ask them what they think that is?
- "*telling someone you are being removed is like telling someone you have cancer*" – young person reflecting on coming into care
- "*in care children should be given the best education and the best environment*"
- "*… be there, be consistent and available*"

We say we hear the voice of children, but do we?

- discuss in your groups how we say we hear the voice of children
- Ask yourself:

does this really give us a true picture?

do we hear what we want to ?

do we represent what we find honestly?

what do we do with the information?

do children and adults really influence change in their homes?



Voice of the child.....

Very much a point of focus after the various reports e.g. sexually harmful behaviour , Hesley /CSPR 1 and 2.

Not hearing children's voices has played a major part in most (if not all) major inquiries (pindown/ leictercshire, Jimmy Saville, Catholic Church)

- Point of review / RI's are you happy that this active and reactive listening is in place?
- Do children influence change in the home ?
- Are they actively involved in decisions about their care?
- Have you seen the evidence of this ?

Voice of the child evidence base

Potential evidence :

- Reg 44 & 45 evidence-patterns and trends
- Children's Guide
- Care plans, transition plans & other documents
- EHCP/PEP /IEP documents / plans
- Observation-positive relationships , advocacy.
- Children's views- formal and informal
- Daily reports
- Accidents/incidents/PIs
- RM supervision and appraisal, meetings with RI
- Team meetings
- Handovers
- Home Development plan
- Ofsted reports
- LA monitoring reports
- Complaints
- Staff views/opinions/attitudes

pause for thought….revisit these challenges

- How would you describe the culture of hearing children in your service?
- Have you tested it yourself?
- Do your findings align with what the children and team say, as well as records, observation, conversation?
- Do you need to make any changes, speak with the team / RI about change?
- Most importantly do you need to speak with the young people about their views and ideas? Are they core to this process?

Challenging Ofsted

- Try and resolve informally
- Take your feelings out of the picture and be respectful
- Be very specific and clear about what aspects/issues you are challenging.
- Use facts
- Use regulation and legislation to support your argument
- Always involve senior leaders
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Challenging Ofsted

- Complain about Ofsted - GOV.UK
- **Informal**
- Respond/raise concerns in a timely manner. Better as soon as It arises although you may want time to think about your argument
- "senior leaders can telephone Ofsted during or after an inspection to speak with a senior inspector independent of the inspection."
- Safeguarding concerns about the inspector must be raised immediately



- **Making a formal complaint**
- Wait until you have the draft report.
- You have 5 days from when Ofsted issues the draft. This makes the window VERY limited
- Ofsted "will only accept complaints about an inspection from the most senior leader in your provision, or the individual named in the inspection report as the responsible person, or their representative."
- "If you have previously chosen to highlight minor points of clarity or factual accuracy when you received your draft inspection report, Ofsted will not normally accept any formal complaint or challenge later."
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Complaining about any other Ofsted interactions/visits

- Again, you have 5 days-from the time any *outcome* of the visit has been published
- Or: 5 days from the date of the visit or interaction
- Again, it should come from the RI/Provider
- You will normally have a professional discussion with the investigating inspector-it may get resolved then
- Ofsted usually respond in writing within 30 days
- If you're unhappy with the response, you can appeal to ICASO (Independent Complaints Adjudication Service for Ofsted) and then to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
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ICASO

- The ICASO adjudicators can investigate complaints into:
- alleged failure to follow Ofsted's complaints procedures;
- alleged failure to respond to complaints in a timely manner;
- alleged discrimination in complaints handling;
- alleged discourtesy in complaints handling;
- alleged failure to apologise or accept mistakes in complaint responses; and
- alleged failure to handle concerns about inspector/staff conduct
- In 2025, they accepted **3 referrals from Children's Homes**-They cannot overturn Ofsted's findings-just make procedural recommendations ICASO_Annual_Report_2025.pdf

What next?

- Review your role and how you monitor , review and comment on the home or service using a quality assurance process.
- Does this form a key element of your supervision and meetings with the Manager?
- Do you hold a developmental view with the Manager on the progress in the home?
- Anything else…?

