

## **Developing a Quality-Focused Facility Mission Statement**

Developing and effectively transmitting to all staff your facility's Mission is an important component of a Quality Management System. To help you create a new mission statement, enhance your existing mission statement, or to make your mission statement more meaningful, we have pulled together some resources to help you build from where you are. If you already have a great mission statement you're happy with, write down how you keep it "alive".

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### ***Why Spend Time on a Mission Statement?***

Excerpt from *Guidelines for Developing a Quality Management System (QMS) For Long Term Care Providers*:

Member facilities practice visionary leadership starting with a clear mission statement that is focused on customer satisfaction as well as other stakeholder interests. Effective mission statements incorporate a facility's purpose (its reason for being) and core values (guiding principles that describe expected behavior at all times). Whereas business strategies and markets will constantly change, the purpose and core values do not. The vision described in the mission statement challenges a facility to boldly embrace progress while always adhering to core values. Member facilities identify their mission statement and describe how they systematically communicate it to their employees and constituents, including direct care staff and nursing assistants as a guide for decision-making. The message is simple and communicated in multiple forums, such as large and small meetings, memos, newsletters, informal discussions, and printed material. The key is to embed the mission firmly into the facility's culture.

## ***What Should a Mission Statement Look Like?***

- It communicates your facility's purpose in a way that generates support and commitment from others.
- It is grounded in principles.
- It motivates and inspires others who are linked to the facility.
- It contains positive action words to describe what you do.
- It is focused enough to be accomplished.
- It is genuine.

## ***Questions a Mission Statement Should Ask***

- What is our main function?
- Why does our facility exist?
- Who are our clients?
- What makes us special?
- Who makes up our group, or belongs to our facility family?
- How are we organized?
- What is our style?
- Do we have an ethical responsibility?

## ***Writing a Mission Statement***

1. List several of your facility's strengths (i.e. strong clinical experience).
2. List your facility's main customers, both internal and external. Be as detailed as you need to be (i.e. resident).
3. Link (or pair) how each of your customers relates to each of your facility's strengths.
4. Write down a short phrase describing each of those customer/strength's pairing.
5. Combine those phrases that are mainly the same.
6. List the phrases in order of importance to the facility's principles.
7. Take the top three to five phrases and combine them into a paragraph.
8. Take the paragraph to your customers and ask them if they would feel comfortable being involved with an organization with this kind of mission statement.
9. Show your employees the paragraph and ask them if they know what it means and if they can support it and carry it out.
10. As you get feedback from your customers, employees, and stakeholders, edit the paragraph incorporating their comments as it makes sense to you.
11. Finally, roll out your new mission statement to everyone!

## ***Sharing the Mission***

A living Mission Statement is not a piece of paper that is retrieved from a file when asked for. It must be communicated to direct care staff, administrators, housekeeping, therapists in such a way that it can guide their work and the decisions they make. Talk about your Mission Statement in small and large meetings, in memos, informal discussions, printed material, newsletters, and in-services. Breathe life into the Mission Statement and use it to guide your facility's energy along the right paths.

A Mission Statement should not have to be changed every few years. It is your short term goals and objectives that will help you meet the overarching objectives in the Mission Statement. The Mission Statement will assist you in planning, allocating resources, establishing goals, and providing a foundation for community trust.

## ***The Big Ideas***

A Mission Statement should address these big ideas:

1. The opportunities that we need to address  
(The *purpose* of the facility)
2. The actions are we taking to address these opportunities/needs  
(The *activity* of the facility)
3. The values or beliefs guide us in our work  
(The *principles* of the facility)

## ***References and Reading Resources***

Abrahams, J. *The Mission Statement Book: 301 Corporate Mission Statements from America's Top Companies*, Ten Speed Press, 1999.

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