

# CQI Community Mentorship Program Information Session



# CQI Community Mentorship Steering Committee



**Kristina Slacum Jones**  
Thresholds



**Melissa Villegas**  
Jewish United Fund



**Yolanda Green-Rogers**  
Chapin Hall

# CQI Community Professional Mentorship Program Theory of Change

## IF WE...

Connect and facilitate relationships between mentors and mentees around CQI skill-building and professional development

## AND...

Provide opportunities for mentors and mentees to connect 1:1 and in larger cohort groups...

## THEN...

Mentees will...

- Feel supported and heard
- Gain knowledge in CQI area(s) of interest
- Gain confidence in their ability to apply CQI concepts to their work

Mentors will...

- Reflect on their own growth and development in this field
- Broaden their awareness of CQI approaches across different human service areas

## ULTIMATELY...

Mentees receive the foundation necessary to be successful and empowered to remain in the CQI and human services field

Enhance the work of CQI practitioners across the country

Be connected to a larger community of CQI practitioners

What is one word that describes your experience in this mentorship program?



# Key Program Components

- **1:1 Mentorship Pairs** (Meeting at least Monthly April-September)
- **Mentorship Program Kickoff:** March 19, 2026 (1-2:30 PM CDT)
- **Mentor and Mentee Small Group Meetings**
  - Mentees: May 19 and August 18 (11-Noon CDT)
  - Mentors: May 21 and August 20 (1-2 PM CDT)
- **All Cohort Session:** June 23 (11-12:30 PM CDT)
- **Closing Celebration:** September 23 (1-2:30 PM CDT)

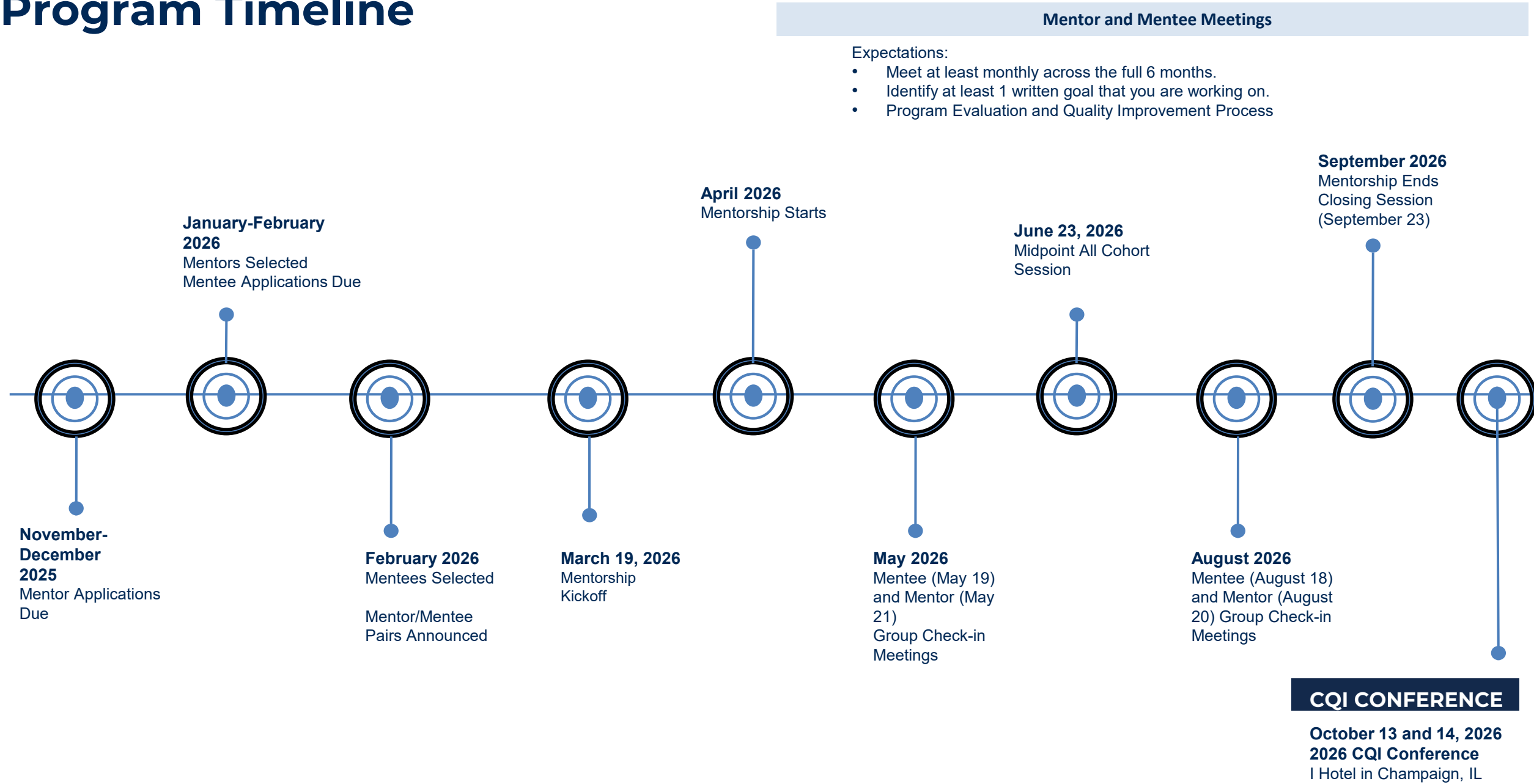
**Estimated Meeting Time Commitment:** ~12.5 Hours+

**Estimated Preparation Time:** ~30 minutes in advance of each 1:1 mentor meeting

*Other Components: CQI Steering Committee Point Person Check-ins, Mentorship Program Evaluation*



# Program Timeline



# Application and Matching Process

## Staggered Application

**Mentor Application:** October - December 2025

**Mentee Application:** January - February 8, 2026

**Matches Made:** February 2026

## Matching Process Considerations

Compare mentee goals and mentor expertise areas

Geographic meeting preferences (in-person, virtual, hybrid)

Type of organization (size, field, focus areas, spread)

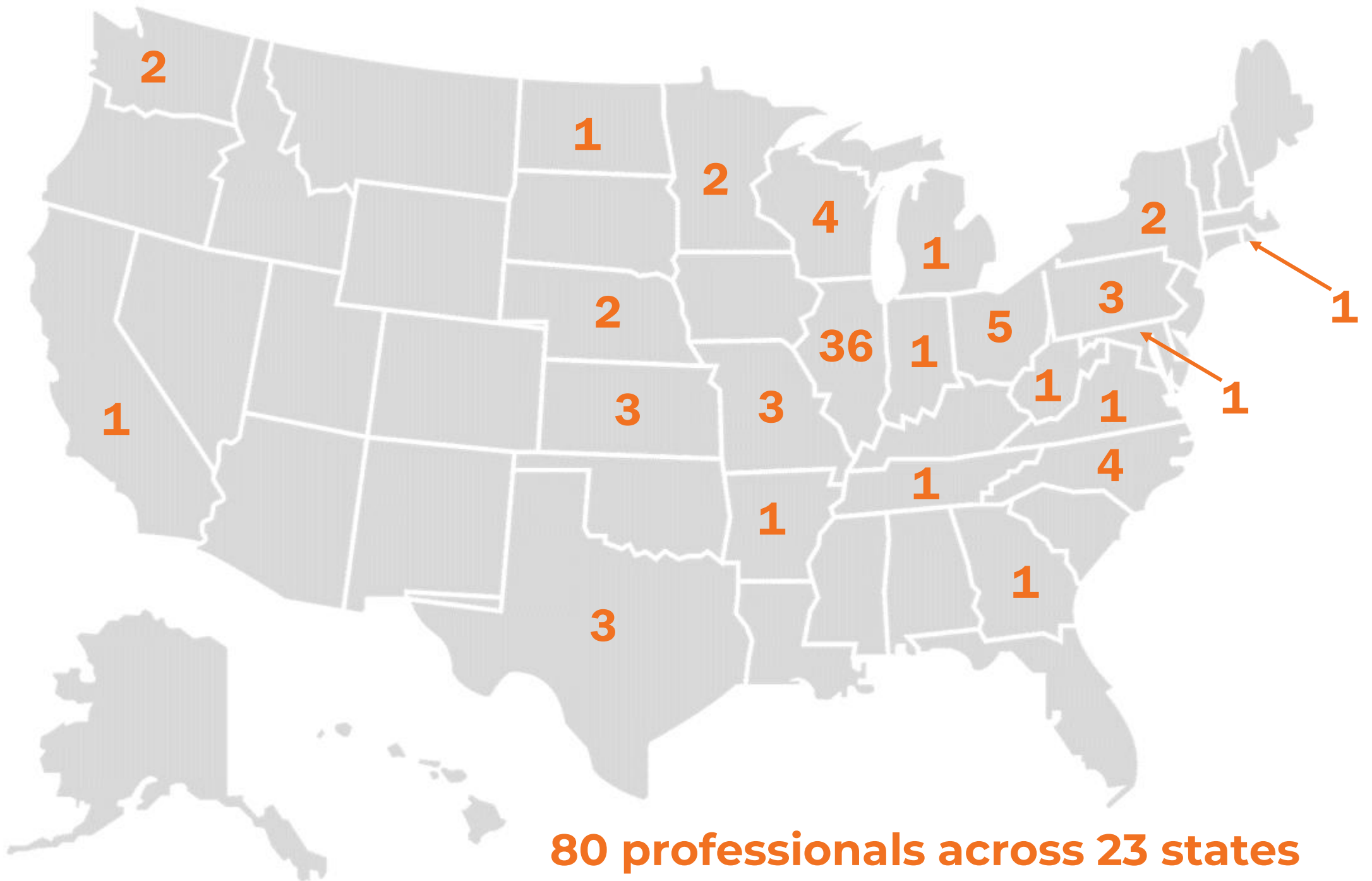
Mentee ranking of top 3 potential Mentors that match interest (NEW)\*

*\*Not everyone will be matched who applies. Dependent on the number of mentors available and skillsets needed based on goals.*

**Who has participated in this program?  
(3 Cohorts)**

**Demographic Characteristics**





# Work Experience and Educational Background

## Mentors

## Mentees

Years in the Workforce

Average: 22.3 years  
Range: 10-40 years  
SD: 8 years

Average: 15.6 years  
Range: 3-37 years  
SD: 9.0 years

Years in Quality Improvement

Average: 12.8 years  
Range: 3-26 years  
SD: 7.0 years

Average: 3.3 years  
Range: 1-13 years  
SD: 2.9 years

67% in the CQI field for 10+ Years

60% in the CQI field for 1-2 Years  
(32% 1 Year, 28% 2 Year)

Highest Level of Education

Bachelors: 15%  
Masters: 67%  
Doctorate: 19%

Bachelors: 26%  
Masters: 66%  
Doctorate: 8%

# Organization Types (2025 Only)

	Mentors	Mentees (Applicants)
Size of Organization	Large (\$10-25M): 50% (3) Very Large (>\$25M): 50% (3)	Very Small (Under \$1M): 11% (3) Small (\$2-5M): 14% (4) Medium (\$5-10M): 18% (5) Large (\$10-25M): 29% (8) Very Large (>\$25M): 29% (8)
Type of Organization	Human Service Agency: 83% (5) Government Agency/Department: 17% (1)	Human Service Agency: 61% (17) Government Agency/Department: 18% (5) University/College: 4% (1) Other: 18% (5)
Region/Area	Local: 17% (1) Statewide: 50% (3) Multi-state: 33% (2)	Local: 43% (12) Regions: 14% (4) Statewide: 39% (11) Multi-state: 25% (7) Other: 4% (1)

# Mentor Expertise

## Mentee Areas of Growth



# CQI Mentorship Areas



- **Essential/Professional Skills** (e.g., building relationships and buy-in to quality improvement, working with teams, facilitating difficult discussions, conflict resolution)
- **Management Skills** (e.g., supervising/managing people, managing projects and processes, training)
- **Equity and Inclusion** (e.g., engaging stakeholders and communities, identifying and addressing disparities, creating inclusive measurement tools)
- **Assess Administrative Structures** (e.g., IT or database systems, CQI policies & planning, infrastructure, quality improvement teaming)
- **Identify Strategic Priorities and Outcomes** (e.g., develop theories of change, develop logic models)
- **Measure Performance** (e.g., performance improvement/measurement/evaluation planning, surveys and other data collection tools, data analysis methods, data reporting , dashboards and other data visualizations)
- **Implement the Improvement Planning Process** (e.g., PDSA, LEAN Six Sigma, Results Based Accountability, improvement cycles)
- **Accreditation** (e.g., COA (Council on Accreditation), CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities), Joint Commission)
- **Other**

# Expertise and Areas of Growth

*“Do not have to be experts in all things CQI”*

## Mentors

**Measure Performance:** 100% (27)

**Essential/Professional Skills:** 89% (24)

**Management Skills:** 78% (21)

**Identify Strategic Priorities and Outcomes:**  
70% (19)

**Implement the Improvement Planning  
Process:** 67% (18)

**Assess Administrative Structures:** 56% (15)

**Equity and Inclusion:** 37% (10)

**Accreditation:** 87% (13)

## Mentees

**Implement the Improvement Planning  
Process:** 81% (42)

**Measure Performance:** 79% (41)

**Equity and Inclusion:** 54% (28)

**Essential/Professional Skills:** 52% (27)

**Identify Strategic Priorities and Outcomes:**  
50% (26)

**Assess Administrative Structures:** 44% (23)

**Management Skills:** 38% (20)

**Accreditation:** 18% (6)





[illegible]

- Annual project and one quality plan indicator was updated, better than it would have been had I not had her guidance.
- Create a presentation based on CQI successes around staff retention and recruitment.
- Develop a meeting structure and standing agenda items for CQI workgroups.
- Feel more confident and have more resources/strategies for leading teams through the improvement planning process, including but not limited to executing PDSA cycles and defining measures of improvement.
- Get more buy in around QI importance (completing surveys, turning in tools on time, etc.)
- Learn at least 3 techniques for engaging stakeholders successfully that will help to inform her program evaluation projects.
- Continually building the CQI infrastructure at the organization where I work. [Mentor] provided me with tools that our organization is considering for adoption.
- We accomplished goals two and three together. We are currently making progress with goals one and four.
- Working to create a simple logic model: we created a sample/simple logic model, walked through the steps around this and dug deep into setting the foundation for this work.
- Working effectively in an environment where there is weak or no agreement on project evaluation approach, procedures or measures

# **What Have We Learned from past Cohorts?**

## **Outcome Achievement**

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Mentors will...

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## ULTIMATELY...

Mentees receive the foundation necessary to be successful and empowered to remain in the CQI and human services field

Enhance the work of CQI practitioners across the country

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# Mentee Outcomes

## Mentees...

- **Feel supported and heard**
- **Increase competence/capacity in CQI areas of interest**
- **Gain confidence in their ability to apply CQI concepts to their work**
- **Feel connected to resources**

# Mentees

## Feel supported and heard

- **97%** (35 of 36) report *often/always*...
  - Mentor offered advice and encouragement with respect to their goals and objectives
  - Feel supported and heard

## Gain confidence in their ability to apply CQI concepts to their work

- **92%** (33 of 36) report at least one action that they have done or plan to do as a result of their participation
- **64%** (23 of 36) increased their confidence rating in their ability to apply CQI concepts to their work before compared to after the mentorship program

## Increase competence/capacity in CQI areas of interest

- **98%** (41 of 42) made progress/accomplished at least one goal

## Feel connected to resources

- **89%** (32 of 36) reported a specific resource their mentor shared

# Mentor Outcomes

## Mentors...

- Reflect on their own growth and development in this field
- Broaden their awareness of CQI approaches across different human service areas



# Mentors

## Reflect on their own growth and development in this field

- **97%** of mentors (34 of 35) reflected one thing that they learned about themselves as a result of the mentorship program

## Broaden their awareness of CQI approaches across different human service areas

- **97%** (35 of 36) reported at least one knowledge, skill, or attitude change
- **89%** (32 of 36) reported at least one action they plan to do more as a result of their participation



# **Words of Wisdom from the Pilot Cohorts**

# Advice from Our Mentors and Mentees



- **Be consistent** with meeting, **open to sharing**, build trust, and have an understanding of what each of your capacities are in re: to experience, differing organizational cultures and time.
- **Be intentional with communication. Set clear expectations** early, and check in often. Even small updates or quick conversations can build trust and keep the relationship strong. Focus on mutual learning. Mentorship is not one-sided. Both mentors and mentees bring knowledge and insight, and both should leave the experience with new skills and perspectives.
- Communication is key! When in doubt, **ask questions**, check in to see how the other person is feeling, and **keep revisiting goals to ensure you're making progress**. While I believe this program is appropriately mentee-driven in the goal-setting process, I think the onus is on mentors to take the lead on ensuring time is well spent and seems useful to the mentee.
- **Don't feel like you have to have all the answers**. And **don't be concerned when you have to switch goals** mid-way through the mentoring relationship. Be flexible.
- **Lean into the soft skills** and normalize the fact that in QI work things often do not go as intended, regardless of how much planning is done. **Keep expectations realistic** and acknowledge that CQI work is ongoing and culture change is long-term.

# Advice from Our Mentors and Mentees



- Be open to new ideas and feedback, **share your experiences good and bad and seek feedback**
- **Show up fully** and **prepare** for meetings!
- Use the mentorship model to the fullest, **make time to meet and use that time in between** to work on goals.
- Work with your supervisor, if applicable, to **ensure you will have time to devote not only to the mentoring sessions but the work to be done toward your established goals**. Be flexible and open. Vulnerability will be appreciated and welcomed, as it has a way of creating a more level playing field.
- **Really spend time in that initial planning session!** It is ok to have vague skills, but **try to make them SMART goals with dates** you will go over the topics. I think this helped us stay on task when work gets so busy and helped us communicate with each other about where we are in the process.
- Having **a plan is key**. Encourage the mentee to **be specific**. Focus on CQI processes and tools that can work for multiple roles or organizations. One of my mentees needed more concrete feedback and the other needed more validation and supervisory support. I think **it's important to note that mentees may approach the experience differently** and mentors should be prepared for that.
- Meeting **more often for shorter amount of time** worked for us.



"A mentor is someone who allows you to see the hope inside yourself."  
*-Oprah Winfrey*

In order to be a mentor, and an effective one, one must care. You must care... Know what you know and care about the person, care about what you know and care about the person you're sharing with.  
*-Maya Angelou*

"A mentor is someone who sees more talent and ability within you, than you see in yourself, and helps bring it out of you."  
*-Bob Proctor*

"If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."  
*-Isaac Newton*

"Show me a successful individual and I'll show you someone who had real positive influences in his or her life. I don't care what you do for a living—if you do it well I'm sure there was someone cheering you on or showing the way. A mentor."  
*-Denzel Washington*





**Questions?**

**CQICommunity@gmail.com**