

CQL Accreditation – Setting the Bar for Quality The *Personal Outcome Measures*® National Database

What is the status of health, safety, and security for people with disabilities?

Are people with disabilities making real choices in where they live and where they work?

Which outcomes present the greatest challenges?

The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL) reports the latest findings from the National *Personal Outcome Measures*® Database. Based on over 6,400 people interviews conducted during CQL Accreditation visits, we are learning more about the strengths and continuing challenges in our service delivery system – and demonstrating how CQL Accreditation is making a difference.

CQL — The National Database on *Personal Outcome Measures*[®]

A central component of the CQL Accreditation process, the *Personal Outcome Measures*[®] contains 21 items that define quality from the individual's perspective. These are the key factors and experiences that people with disabilities and their families have said are most important to them.

The chart on the next page presents the results of 14 years of data collection – 1993-2006. Over 6,400 people with disabilities were interviewed. CQL determined the presence of each outcome measure for those individuals as part of the CQL Accreditation process. We recognize that the provider organizations in the database are not necessarily a representative sample of the entire service system. Many of these organizations have worked with CQL over many years, adopting and putting into practice the principles and values from CQL's standards and quality measures.

What we learned:

Strengths

- *Basic Assurances*[®] are in place for the CQL Accredited organizations in this data base. Outcomes in the following areas were found to be present for three-quarters or more of the people receiving services:
 - People are safe
 - People are free from abuse and neglect
 - People have continuity and security
 - People have the best possible health
- *Community Relationships are happening*. Outcomes in the following areas were found to be present for one-half or more of the people receiving services:
 - People participate in the life of the community
 - People interact with other members of the community
 - People are connected to natural supports
 - People have friends
 - People have intimate relationships

Challenges

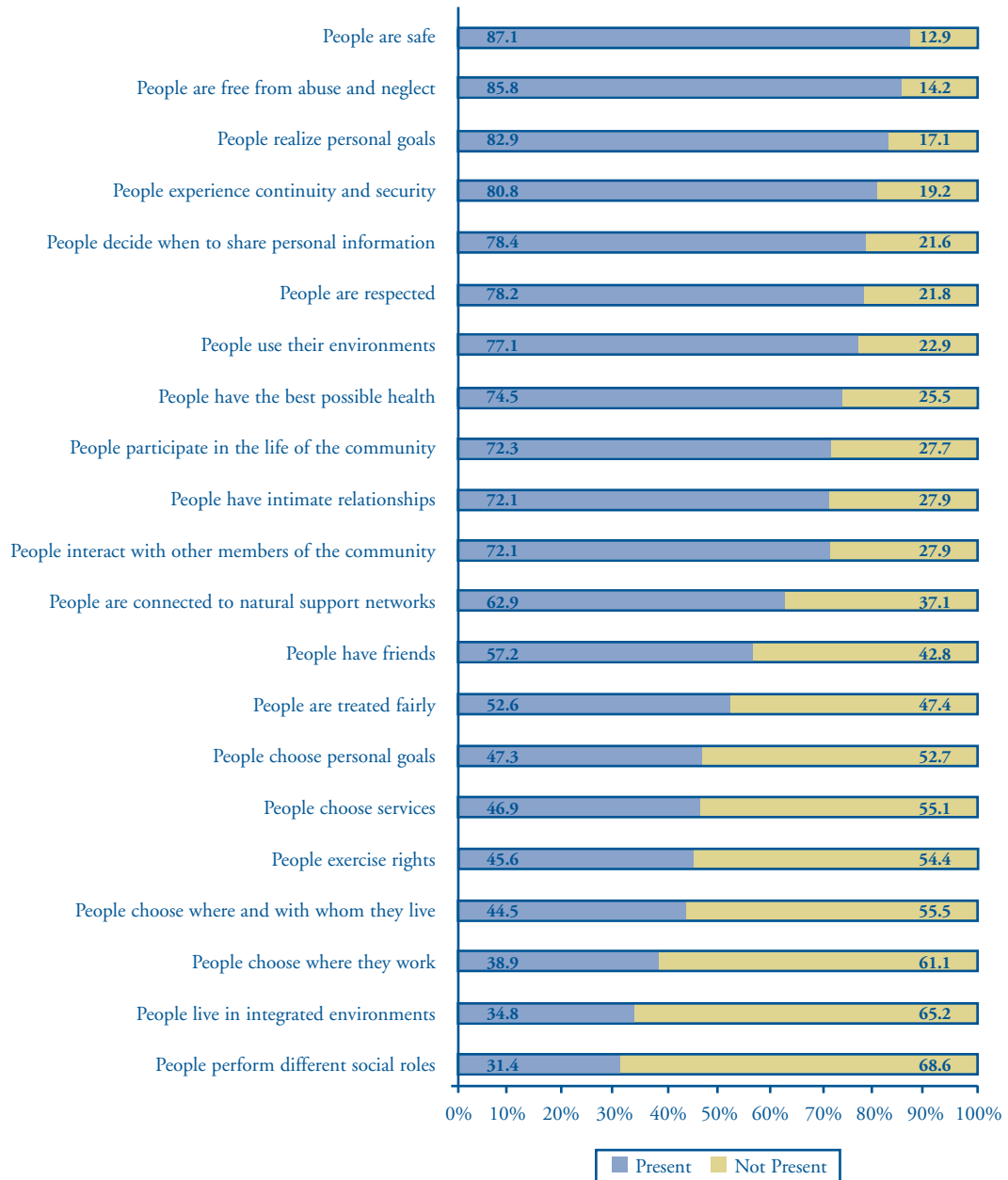
- *Social Roles are still lacking*. Less than one-third of people in the database have realized the following outcome:
 - People perform different social roles
- *Integration into community is not a reality for most*. Only one-third of the people interviewed have this outcome present on their lives:
 - People live in integrated environments
- *Choice in services, work options and living arrangements is not readily available*. Less than one-half of the people interviewed have achieved these outcomes:
 - People choose where and with whom they live
 - People choose where they work
 - People choose services

Future reports from the CQL National *Personal Outcome Measures*[®] Database will explore some of these findings in greater depth.

Note on CQL measurements. CQL's measures are more comprehensive and rigorous than those typically required by, or reported to, public officials. CQL includes in all its Basic Assurance[®] outcomes those items identified by the individuals themselves. These self-identified outcomes pertain to the individual (and often include individual priorities for health, safety, and security outcomes) and would not have application for other individuals.

Attainment of *Personal Outcome Measures*® 1993-2006

(n=6,424)



Inspired by a vision of a world of dignity, opportunity, and community inclusion for all people,

The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL) is an international leader in the definition, measurement, and improvement of quality of life for people with disabilities. CQL has demonstrated that valid and reliable quality of life measurement can be incorporated in community-based human services.

In the 1990s, CQL changed human services when it redefined quality as responsiveness to people rather than compliance with standards. After conducting focus groups throughout North America, CQL published the *Personal Outcome Measures*[®] offering people with disabilities an opportunity to define their own quality of life outcomes and exert choice and self-determination. In 1993, CQL published the *Personal Outcome Measures*[®] as an alternative to both its traditional quality indicators and assessment methodology. CQL signaled a new era in quality measurement with a re-definition of quality from organizational compliance to responsiveness to people. The Personal Outcomes focus on the items and issues that matter most to people. Organizations committed to Personal Outcomes recognize the connections between the service and intervention and the whole person. Learning about Personal Outcomes results from talking to people and discovering what is important to them and why.

In 2005, CQL introduced the *Quality Measures 2005*[®], including the 2005 edition of *Personal Outcome Measures*[®]. This new edition contains 21 Personal Outcomes, organized into the following factors:

My Self: Who I am as a result of my unique heredity, life experiences and decisions.

My World: Where I work, live, socialize, belong or connect.

My Dreams: How I want my life (self and world) to be.

CQL recognizes that large-scale adaptation of a person-centered approach to Basic Assurances[®] and quality of life assessment is strengthened by an evidence-based quality model. To that end, we established the *Personal Outcome Measures*[®] Database in 1993. The database now contains data collected during interviews with over 6,400 individuals receiving services from CQL Accredited organizations, between 1993 and 2006. These organizations are not a random sample of the disability service system. They are instead a group of highly motivated service/support providers who have adopted the principles and practices of the *Personal Outcome Measures*[®]. They represent a range of community service providers delivering residential, vocational, service coordination, case management and other supports, and are found across the United States in small rural communities, as well as suburban and metropolitan areas.

During the CQL Accreditation process, individuals with disabilities meet a CQL staff member for a personal outcomes interview and follow up is done with others who know the person best to further evaluate the presence of outcomes and supports for each person. People in the CQL database represent the range of intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as mental illnesses.

CQL has studied and published findings from the data in peer-reviewed journals (see references below). We have demonstrated and reported on the validity of the *Personal Outcome Measures*[®] as an instrument and the reliability of the review and interview methodology.

This is one of series that reports key findings from the CQL National *Personal Outcome Measures*[®] Database. We encourage readers to consider the lessons learned from our data in the movement toward a meaningful quality of life for people with disabilities in community.

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References

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