

Gold Star Assessment Cover Sheet

Include this cover sheet in your application to the Gold Star Council. Attach a copy of the Goal Chart, Work Planning Chart, Challenges and Needed Assistance Form.

Name of Home Health Agency: _____

Contact Person: _____

Telephone: _____ Email address: _____

Best Practice areas we will pursue:

Members of our Assessment and Planning Team(s):

| Name | Position | Assessment Team Member | Planning Team Member |
|------|----------|------------------------|----------------------|
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Return appropriate forms either by e-mail to: vahha@comcast.net
or mail completed application to:

**Vermont Assembly of Home Health Agencies
10 Main Street
Montpelier, VT 05602**

Staff Recruitment Practices

| Staff Recruitment Practices | Strongly Disagree | | Strongly Agree | | Don't Know |
|---|-------------------|---|----------------|---|------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| <i>A. Community outreach & involvement:</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We use many different ways to reach new employees. | | | | | |
| 2. We have relationships with community-based organizations. | | | | | |
| 3. We have partnerships with schools or other organizations to introduce career options. | | | | | |
| <i>B. Collaboration with other agencies:</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We strategize with other organizations about ways to increase the work force (e.g., mutual referrals, sponsor career fairs and community education). | | | | | |
| 2. We contract with hospitals, and non-medical home care providers to use their staff. | | | | | |
| <i>C. Screen for successful employees.</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We have a picture of the ideal new hire based on the qualities (knowledge, skills, and traits) of employees we know tend to remain on the job. | | | | | |
| 2. We schedule interviews in two parts so that candidates are asked to return for a second interview. | | | | | |
| 3. We use a standard set of interview questions to gather information about the applicant's skills and values. | | | | | |
| <i>D. Honest description of job duties and expectations.</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We have clear expectations and accurate job descriptions, especially for high turnover positions. | | | | | |
| 2. We use realistic job previews to give possible new staff a correct idea of the job. | | | | | |
| 3. We give new staff realistic information about stresses of the job. | | | | | |
| 4. We give candidates an opportunity to ask questions of present employees about the job. | | | | | |
| 5. Candidates have an opportunity to complete a pre-employment job shadowing before we offer employment. | | | | | |
| <i>E. Involve direct care workers in recruitment, interviewing.</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We have an effective employee referral bonus system. | | | | | |
| 2. Employees know how to recruit and refer people that we might hire. | | | | | |
| 3. We involve direct care workers in creating the outline of an ideal new employee. | | | | | |
| 4. Direct care workers are part of the interview process. | | | | | |
| <i>F. Other staff recruitment practices we use or would like to use (describe – use separate sheet if necessary):</i> | | | | | |

Selecting Staff Recruitment Practices:

Look back at your scores for Staff Recruitment Practices. Items with scores of 1 or 2 should be considered first for your Gold Star Plan. Mark these items (use a highlighter or other mark).

To help you choose at least one item to include in your Gold Star Plan, answer these questions for each item you have marked. The top priority should go to the item with the most “yes” responses.

Practice 1: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 2: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 3: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

We have selected the following Staff Recruitment Practice(s) to address in our Gold Star Plan:

Orientation

| Orientation Practices | Strongly Disagree | | Strongly Agree | | Don't Know |
|--|-------------------|---|----------------|---|------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| <i>A. Standardized orientation</i> | | | | | |
| 1. All new staff goes through the same orientation that covers information needed to understand all parts of the organization. | | | | | |
| <i>B. Regular follow-up with new staff</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We schedule 4 to 6 meetings with new employees and their supervisors during first three months of employment. | | | | | |
| 2. We conduct post-hiring evaluations on the interview, hiring, and orientation process. | | | | | |
| <i>C. Hands-on training specific to required tasks & responsibilities</i> | | | | | |
| 1. New staff "shadow" experienced staff to be prepared for the job. | | | | | |
| 2. Before new staff members in all positions (e.g., LNA, PCA, RN, etc.) are working on their own, we develop and implement a plan to ensure appropriate level of competencies. | | | | | |
| <i>D. Mentoring and support for new staff</i> | | | | | |
| 1. New staff members are paired with a mentor or long-term employee to provide ongoing support and information | | | | | |
| 2. We carefully select and match mentors with new staff members. | | | | | |
| <i>E. Other orientation & training practices we use or would like to use</i> (describe): | | | | | |

Selecting Orientation Practices:

Look back at your scores for Orientation Practices. Items with scores of 1 or 2 should be considered first for your Gold Star Plan. Mark these items (use a highlighter or other mark).

To help you choose at least one item to include in your Gold Star Plan, answer these questions for each item you have marked. The top priority should go to the item with the most “yes” responses.

Practice 1: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 2: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 3: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

We have selected the following Orientation Practice(s) to address in our Gold Star Plan:

Staffing Levels and Work Hours

| Staffing Levels and Work Hours Practices | Strongly Disagree | | Strongly Agree | | Don't Know |
|---|-------------------|---|----------------|---|------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| <i>A. Stable, reliable hours</i> | | | | | |
| 1. At least quarterly, we review staff hours to assess our ability to provide stable and reliable work hours. | | | | | |
| <i>B. Flexible scheduling</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We work with staff to create schedules that work best for them and address clients' needs. | | | | | |
| 2. We gather staff member input to assign work and hours for each staff member. | | | | | |
| <i>C. Overtime is not coercive, not pressured or frequently requested</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We track overtime hours, looking at patterns to see if there are problem areas. | | | | | |
| 2. We work to keep a low number of overtime hours | | | | | |
| <i>D. Safe work assignments</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We figure out staffing levels needed to provide high quality of care and maintain staff safety. | | | | | |
| <i>E. Other staffing level & work hours practices we use or would like to use</i> (describe): | | | | | |

Selecting Staffing Levels and Working Hours Practices:

Look back at your scores for Staffing Levels and Working Hours Practices. Items with scores of 1 or 2 should be considered first for your Gold Star Plan. Mark these items (use a highlighter or other mark).

To help you choose at least one item to include in your Gold Star Plan, answer these questions for each item you have marked. The top priority should go to the item with the most “yes” responses.

Practice 1: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 2: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 3: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

We have selected the following Staffing Levels and Working Hours practice(s) to address in our Gold Star Plan:

Professional Development and Advancement Practices

| Professional Development & Advancement Practices | Strongly Disagree | | Strongly Agree | | Don't Know |
|---|-------------------|---|----------------|---|------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| <i>A. Career lattices</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We raise wages and add responsibilities for staff through promotions within job categories (e.g., advanced certification or other job growth opportunities). | | | | | |
| 2. We have programs for all staff positions that include training in mentoring, coaching and leadership skills. | | | | | |
| <i>B. Cross disciplinary training</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We have training that helps staff build skills for different programs, enabling workers to float across programs within our agency. | | | | | |
| <i>C. Mentoring programs</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We have a mentor program that includes training for experienced staff to learn mentoring skills. | | | | | |
| 2. We match trained mentors with newer employees. | | | | | |
| 3. Mentors are peers who are trained for skills in active listening, leadership, conflict resolution, and providing feedback. | | | | | |
| 4. The mentoring system is evaluated and changed as needed. | | | | | |
| <i>D. Training in specialized care</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We provide opportunities for staff to learn specialized care. | | | | | |
| <i>E. Ongoing training opportunities on site or through financial support</i> | | | | | |
| 1. Staff are encouraged and supported in obtaining additional training and education. | | | | | |
| 2. We provide tuition assistance for college or technical school courses. | | | | | |
| 3. We provide in-house continuing education for staff members to meet licensing requirements. | | | | | |
| <i>F. Other practices we use or would like to use (describe):</i> | | | | | |

Selecting Professional Development and Advancement Practices:

Look back at your scores for Professional Development and Advancement Practices. Items with scores of 1 or 2 should be considered first for your Gold Star Plan. Mark these items (use a highlighter or other mark).

To help you choose at least one item to include in your Gold Star Plan, answer these questions for each item you have marked. The top priority should go to the item with the most “yes” responses.

Practice 1: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 2: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 3: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

We have selected the following Professional Development and Advancement Practice(s) to address in our Gold Star Plan:

Supervision: Training and Practices

| Supervision: Training & Practices | Strongly Disagree | | Strongly Agree | | Don't Know |
|---|-------------------|---|----------------|---|------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| <i>A. Training for all supervisory staff</i> | | | | | |
| 1. Supervisory staff receive training and feedback in all the following areas | | | | | |
| a. Communication skills (active listening & conflict resolution) | | | | | |
| b. Staff management skills | | | | | |
| c. Time and resource management | | | | | |
| 2. We use a variety of ways to train current and potential supervisors, including onsite seminars and tuition to off site training programs. | | | | | |
| <i>B. Provide supervisory staff with tools needed to succeed</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We provide staff with enough time to mentor direct care workers. | | | | | |
| 2. We provide supervisory staff with sufficient time to coach direct care workers. | | | | | |
| 3. Administrators in our organization support management decisions. | | | | | |
| <i>C. Accessible management and supervisory staff</i> | | | | | |
| 1. All agency managers and supervisors have an “open door” policy, meaning that the office door really remains open. | | | | | |
| 2. Direct care staff can easily talk to program managers and supervisory staff. | | | | | |
| <i>D. Demonstrate/model attitudes and behavior</i> | | | | | |
| 1. Leaders of our agency have good communication skills and support development of those skills in others. | | | | | |
| 2. Supervisory staff use and support good coping skills. | | | | | |
| 1. Supervisory staff know and use employees’ names. | | | | | |
| 2. Supervisory staff wear nametags. | | | | | |
| <i>E. Treat each worker as important to achieving agency mission</i> | | | | | |
| 1. Employees understand that they are valuable and useful to the organization | | | | | |
| <i>F. Specific, measurable job descriptions used to conduct performance reviews of supervisory staff</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We evaluate supervisors’ skills by assessing them, reviewing records, and getting feedback from clients and families, their peers and direct caregivers. | | | | | |
| 2. We look at the performance of supervisors by using measures of service quality and staff absenteeism and/or turnover rates. | | | | | |
| <i>G. Other practices supervision and training practices we use or would like to use (describe):</i> | | | | | |

Selecting Supervision Practices:

Look back at your scores for Supervision Practices. Items with scores of 1 or 2 should be considered first for your Gold Star Plan. Mark these items (use a highlighter or other mark).

To help you choose at least one item to include in your Gold Star Plan, answer these questions for each item you have marked. The top priority should go to the item with the most “yes” responses.

Practice 1: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 2: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 3: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

We have selected the following Supervision practice(s) to address in our Gold Star Plan:

Team Approach

| Team Approach Practices | Strongly Disagree | | Strongly Agree | | Don't Know |
|---|-------------------|---|----------------|---|------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| <i>A. Direct care worker involved in patient care planning</i> | | | | | |
| 1. Direct care staff is always part of patient care planning. | | | | | |
| <i>B. Shared responsibility for patient care and outcomes</i> | | | | | |
| 1. Job descriptions indicate that employees will help one another and work with a “one team” approach. | | | | | |
| 2. Supervisors spend time with direct support staff to better understand issues of clients and staff. | | | | | |
| 3. Supervisory staff work with direct care staff in the field to get the job done, as needed. | | | | | |
| <i>C. Consistent assignments</i> | | | | | |
| 1. Employees are consistently assigned to work with clients or work teams, as appropriate. | | | | | |
| <i>D. Regular, mandatory team building activities</i> | | | | | |
| 1. “Maintaining a positive working relationship with co-workers” is included in all job descriptions and is a clear expectation of all staff. | | | | | |
| 2. We have a policy that spells out expected and acceptable staff behavior. | | | | | |
| 3. We conduct regular events to help teams work together. | | | | | |
| <i>E. Regular meetings and communications to share information</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We have an agency-wide communication plan to guide the exchange of information and ideas. | | | | | |
| 2. The communication plan addresses: | | | | | |
| a. Management and board decisions | | | | | |
| b. Opportunities for advancement | | | | | |
| c. Cost of benefits | | | | | |
| d. Quality improvement plans | | | | | |
| e. Progress on agency action plans | | | | | |
| f. Client and employee satisfaction data | | | | | |
| 3. We have a formal feedback loop so employees have a means for providing input into agency decisions, policies, and practices. | | | | | |
| <i>F. Staff involvement in problem solving and decision making</i> | | | | | |
| 1. Direct support staff are part of every committee in our agency. | | | | | |
| 2. We use teams to solve problems and create suggestions. | | | | | |
| <i>G. Other team approach practices we use or would like to use (describe):</i> | | | | | |

Selecting Team Approach Practices:

Look back at your scores for Team Approach Practices. Items with scores of 1 or 2 should be considered first for your Gold Star Plan. Mark these items (use a highlighter or other mark).

To help you choose at least one item to include in your Gold Star Plan, answer these questions for each item you have marked. The top priority should go to the item with the most “yes” responses.

Practice 1: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 2: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 3: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

We have selected the following Team Approach Practice(s) to address in our Gold Star Plan:

Staff Recognition and Support

| Staff recognition and support practices | Strongly Disagree | | Strongly Agree | | Don't Know |
|--|-------------------|---|----------------|---|------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| <i>A. Strategies to express appreciation and respect</i> | | | | | |
| 1. Staff often gets positive feedback from many different people. Feedback is immediate, earned, specific and personal. | | | | | |
| 2. We have many ways to thank staff for excellent work (e.g., bonuses, plaques, certificates, gifts, etc.) | | | | | |
| 3. We use a variety of ways to express appreciation for staff (e.g., staff appreciation events, birthday celebrations, brag boards). | | | | | |
| <i>B. Reward years of service</i> | | | | | |
| 1. At specific times of employment (for example, 1, 2, 5, 10 years), we give staff members recognition, gifts or bonuses. | | | | | |
| <i>C. "Personal Touch"</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We use many different ways to recognize the individual in each staff member (e.g., staff profiles in agency newsletter). | | | | | |
| <i>D. Fun at Work initiatives</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We have a committee to develop and organize events and activities for staff. | | | | | |
| 2. We have specific traditions that add a touch of humor to our work days (e.g., costumes at Halloween). | | | | | |
| <i>E. Counseling resources</i> | | | | | |
| 1. We have an employee assistance program to support staff in finding counseling services, self-help groups, childcare, financial counseling | | | | | |
| 2. We provide general support in small groups or one-to-one. | | | | | |
| 3. We provide child care or benefits to help employees pay for child care. | | | | | |
| <i>F. Other practices</i> (describe): | | | | | |

Selecting Staff Recognition and Support Practices:

Look back at your scores for Staff Recognition and Support Practices. Items with scores of 1 or 2 should be considered first for your Gold Star Plan. Mark these items (use a highlighter or other mark).

To help you choose at least one item to include in your Gold Star Plan, answer these questions for each item you have marked. The top priority should go to the item with the most “yes” responses.

Practice 1: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 2: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

Practice 3: _____

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Are we interested in using this practice? | Yes | No |
| Are there models of this practice easily available? | Yes | No |
| Is this a practice that would be easy to implement now? | Yes | No |
| Would we be able to implement this practice without too much cost? | Yes | No |
| Would use of this practice provide enough benefit to be worth the effort? | Yes | No |

We have selected the following Staff Recognition and Support Practice(s) to address in our Gold Star Plan:
