



Fourth Semi-Annual Report on Continuous Quality Improvement Initiatives

Submitted by:

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The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston

The RCAB Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) schedule identifies two CQI topics as the subjects of this reporting period. These are:

1. Review accomplishments of previous set of tasks, complete if necessary; and
2. Review/assess structural modifications in directorates, functions, central authority and supporting boards.

The following summary outlines activities and efforts related to both of these topics and lists efforts on the initiatives for the period of December 1, 2007 – May 31, 2008.

1. Review accomplishments of previous set of tasks, complete if necessary

- a. Review 1st year CQI accomplishments and modify CQI schedule as needed for the next two years.

The conduct of regular CQI examination has been productive for RCAB during the first two years of CQI activities and contributes a great deal toward an ongoing, dynamic evaluation of policies and procedures. The CQI process may eventually serve to supplant the formalized review process recommended in the RCAB *Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children (2003)*. Among the activities that have been accomplished during this period are the following:

OCA has established and publicized an annual schedule for training in the various safe environment programs: the VIRTUS® “Protecting God’s Children” (PGC) for clergy, employees and volunteers; “Talking About Touching” (TAT) and “Keeping Children Safe” (KCS) for children in Grades 4-6; and KCS for Grades 7-8 so that all parishes and schools have advanced notice of trainings available for new staff. This schedule is published on the OCA website in late spring for the following academic year.

As a result of the regional Child abuse Prevention (CAP) team meetings described in the last report, a listserv (email list) for CAP team members has been created and maintained by the Office of Child Advocacy social work intern. The listserv has been used to share information and materials with CAP team members that go beyond that available on the VIRTUS® website. The listserv is also used by CAP teams to share experiences, training dates, questions of mutual interest, and implementation issues. As part of this ongoing outreach and update effort, CAP team regional sessions are being planned for the South and Merrimack regions for Fall 2008.

Also during this report period, two additional child personal safety/abuse prevention curricula for children in Grades Pre-K to 3 were selected and adapted for use in the parishes and schools of the Archdiocese: The “Stay Safe Program”, developed by University College, Dublin for use by the Archdiocese of Dublin in the country’s Catholic schools; and “Keeping Children Safe.” adapted from the Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education. Both programs were streamlined and modified for presentation in religious education classrooms by a committee comprised of religious educators and teachers from the parishes and schools.

These additional programs have been designed on the best practices principles of safety education and are intended to give the parishes additional choices regarding the program that best fits their needs. A pilot program is underway in several parishes that will allow us to refine the curriculum based on their experiences and feedback this academic year. After the programs are refined, the Office of Child Advocacy will offer regional information and training sessions to the rest of the parishes in late summer/early fall.

b. Review effectiveness assessment products on outcomes and assess needed improvements.

The final report on an effectiveness methodology was completed and publicly released on March 31, 2008. It can be found at the following address:
<http://www.rcab.org/ChildAdvocacy/EffectivenessAssessment-080330.pdf>.

The methodology was piloted in a small number of parishes and the results of the pilot study were presented at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) National Safe Environment Leadership Conference in Seattle in April 2008. The report was enthusiastically received and spurred discussion and awareness of effectiveness issues for the safe environment coordinators from other dioceses, the Director and staff of the USCCB Office of Child and Youth Protection, and the National Review Board members present at the conference. Several expressed interest in employing the methodology to evaluate their own programs and participating in a possible cross-diocese discussion and evaluation of programs.

c. Assess screening and formation in pastoral education and personal development at Archdiocesan seminaries and recommend changes as needed.

The screening and formation programs at the seminaries were reviewed again as part of the 2007 USCCB audit. They remain in place and were found to be acceptable.

The previous report also described the intention this academic year to incorporate a course on human formation at St. John Seminary that would address – among issues of interpersonal relationships, boundaries, pastoral living, etc. – the effects of the clergy sexual abuse crisis on survivors, parishes, and the priesthood. The course convened once a month during both semesters and was very successful. Guest speakers were brought in to address the seminarians on these topics, and discussion was lively and fruitful. Although the semester is now over, the seminary intends to continue the course during the next academic year.

2. Review/assess structural modifications in directorates, functions, central authority and supporting boards.

In March 2006, the Review Board and the IOAC completed an extensive 2-year review of the Archdiocese's 2003 *Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children* and made a series of recommendations for revision – some of which concerned structural modifications in directorates, certain directorate functions, central authority and supporting boards. The document, entitled “Children First – A Two-Year Assessment of the Implementation of *Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children* (July,

2003)” was posted on the RCAB website on April 7, 2006 and may be reviewed at this address: (<http://rcab.org/ChildAdvocacy/ChildrenFirstPolicyAssessment-060407.pdf>).

The Cardinal continues to take the *Children First* report under advisement and will issue a response after fully vetting the recommendations. Commenting on the current status of this set of recommendations is currently premature. The ways in which the specific recommendations pertaining to the issues outlined above are implemented will be addressed in the next CQI report.

Next CQI report due November 30, 2008.