

Reflection: The Role of Support Service Standards in Meeting Performance-Based Regulations

January 2, 2025

Definition of Performance-Based Regulations

Performance-based regulations refer to **requirements** that mandate outcomes while providing flexibility in how organizations meet them. They focus on achieving desired, measurable results rather than prescribing specific processes or techniques.

Example 1: Aviation Industry - Safe and Dignified Assistance

Recent DOT regulations require airlines to provide safe assistance to passengers with disabilities, ensuring they are not at risk of bodily injury while respecting their autonomy and privacy. For example:

- **For Airline Staff:** A support service standard can guide staff in understanding best practices for safely assisting passengers with disabilities, such as proper handling of mobility aids or respecting personal boundaries during assistance.
- Without these standards, compliance audits primarily rely on passenger complaints, making adherence challenging and inconsistent. Standards serve as a **preventive measure**, reducing complaints and enhancing compliance through well-defined protocols.

Example 2: Human Services - Recognizing and Honoring People's Rights

Under the CQL Basic Assurances accreditation, the performance-based quality objective states that *staff should demonstrate respect for and honor people's rights*.

- **For SEMP Service Provider Staff (e.g., VR Job Coaches):** Support service standards for VR job coaching in maintaining competitive integrated employment should describe rights relevant to employment, such as:
 - The right to fair treatment and non-discrimination at the workplace.
 - Access to reasonable accommodations.
 - Recognition of personal choice and autonomy in performing job tasks, among others.
- These standards outline practical steps to support individuals with IDD at the job site, empowering staff to facilitate self-advocacy and promote an organizational culture that values these rights.

By specifying these rights and linking them to employment practices, the standards ensure a comprehensive understanding among staff, bridging the gap between theoretical objectives and actionable practices. This makes compliance with accreditation requirements not only possible but also effective in improving outcomes for individuals with IDD.

Why Support Service Standards Matter

1. **Guiding Implementation:** Standards accumulate best practices, translating regulatory and accreditation goals into actionable knowledge and skills for staff.
2. **Preventing Complaints:** Standards act as preventive measures, ensuring better service delivery and reducing the likelihood of regulatory violations.
3. **Improving Conformity Assessments:** Without these standards, audits depend heavily on complaints, leading to reactive rather than proactive compliance. Standards provide a structured framework for assessing conformity.

By establishing and adhering to support service standards, organizations in both the aviation industry and human services can enhance compliance, improve service quality, and build trust with the communities they serve.