

Organizational Assessment Part 1 (Jenna Lee)

How easy was it to gather the necessary information for this assessment? What were your sources?

For this assignment, I decided to use the ABC mental health clinic (referred to as "the mental health clinic"). In 1963, ABC opened as a small child guidance clinic in Queens, New York City's most diverse community. Throughout the past few years, ABC has grown into a large non-profit organization providing social services to children and their families. A dedicated staff works in eighty locations, including nine mental health clinics, two substance abuse programs, Headstart programs, after school programs, and youth development programs. My interview was with a senior vice president who has worked at the agency for years. It is a pleasure to work with a social worker who is knowledgeable about the project's goals and functions as well as who has access to the organization's data and reports. It was therefore vital that he provided the necessary information to complete this organizational project. He was able to provide me with the reports and data I needed. His experience and expertise were invaluable in helping me complete the project. I am grateful for his help.

What appears to be the top strengths of the agency? What evidence supports this?

According to their website, reports, and data from the senior vice president, ABC's mental health clinic was established in 1993 as one of its major components. In New York City, the mental health clinic serves the rapidly growing Asian immigrant population, such as the Chinese, Koreans, and South Asians. Among the services offered by the mental health clinic are individual and family counseling, group intervention programs, child abuse intervention

programs, alcoholism and substance abuse services, and community outreach. The top strength of the mental health clinic is that the mental health clinic is one of the few programs in New York City that hire licensed bi-lingual social clinicians and mental health counselors and provide clinical and preventive services in 13 Asian languages, including Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Hindi and Bengali. As a result, the clinic is able to provide culturally competent care to a unique and diverse population that would otherwise be left underserved.

Additionally, the clinic has served vulnerable immigrant populations from Asian countries since its inception. As they left their personal memories and identities behind, these immigrants followed the same path as European immigrants who crossed Ellis Island and were cherished by the words on the Statue of Liberty, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" (The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, n.d.)."

Even though Asian immigrants have different life stories, they share similar trauma experiences, disruptions of attachments, and emotional vulnerabilities. In pursuit of American values: freedom, liberty, democracy, equality, and betterment of life, many of them fled wars, prosecutions, and discrimination. As a result, they are more likely to be terrified by a variety of traumas, losses, and emotional hyper-arousals. As such, it is essential for Asian immigrants to have access to support and resources to help them successfully adapt and integrate into new societies and overcome the psychological impact of trauma.

In Asian American communities, the mental health clinic has been a sanctuary for battered women, abused children, traumatized men, and maladjusted children, and broken families. Asian clinicians serve clients in their own cultures and languages. The clients are encouraged to feel safe and secure in a safe environment. It is possible to heal their sorrows and

fears while restoring their hopes. They come in feeling overwhelmed and broken, but through the unconditional support of the mental health clinic, they leave with a renewed sense of self-worth, dignity and belonging.

What appears to be two or three areas for growth for the agency? What recommendations do you have for engaging this agency in a change process?

The mental health clinic has been under stress both externally and internally for several years. Staff turnover has been widespread during the COVID 19 pandemic, putting the organization's basic safety at risk. In the past two years, 45 % of their staff resigned or were laid off, and four clinicians were relocated to another program within the organization. As compared to the pre-pandemic years, mental health and substance abuse applications have increased dramatically. In the middle of the pandemic, many clients have remained on their waiting list for more than 6 months without receiving vital services they need. In addition, clinicians are more likely to maintain their basic caseload requirements and appointment counts, while outreach activities to venerable Asian American communities have diminished.

Furthermore, communication problems have created walls between management and clinical staff. Clinicians rarely communicate or interact with each other, while supervisors focus more on fault finding on paperwork and use punitive measures against insufficient productivity. Clinicians have not been evaluated on the quality of their performance, but on the number of sessions they have provided. During the pandemic crisis and subsequent organizational changes to adapt telemental health, fears and distrust have swept through the organization. While survival instincts have been a primary concern, passion to learn and enthusiasm to serve better with evidence-based and effective services hasn't been missing.

Last but not least, clinicians have played a critical role in addressing mental health challenges for Asian American clients and their families affected by the pandemic. Clinicians have quickly transitioned to telehealth or hybrid service delivery in order to provide mental health care that was more urgent than ever. Experiencing their own fears of exposing themselves and their families to COVID-19, clinicians have cared for an unusually large influx of mental health patients in the Asian American communities.

Clinicians have thus contributed to the enhancement of mental health and well-being among Asian Americans, although it is known that they also suffered from psychological stress or even mental health problems during the pandemic. In other words, it is likely that clinicians at the mental health clinic may suffer psychological distress and other mental health problems regularly as a result of the mental health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the mental health clinic must devise effective ways to help clinicians with deteriorating mental health and well-being as well as provide vital services to Asian American clients and their families.

For this lesson's assignment, submit your completed checklists and any initial notes that you've taken. Please see attached below.

References

The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation (n.d.). The statue of liberty. Retrieved from <https://www.statueofliberty.org/>

QUICK GUIDE 40 Nonprofit Organizational Assessment

Using an organization with which you are familiar, complete the following assessment:

Internal Assessment

Legal basis, mission, bylaws, and history

The legal basis is clearly stated in appropriate documents. The bylaws are relevant, current, and accurately portray the needs of the organization.

The mission statement is current and accurate and specifies reason for existence and expected outcomes.

Administrative structure and management style

The administrative structure and management style fit the mission and services of the organization.

Clear communication lines exist for dissemination of decisions.

Transparent and structured lines/systems for decision-making exist. A comprehensive, integrated system is used for measuring the organization's performance and progress on a continual basis.

Roles are clearly defined.

Decision-making involves broad participation as practical and appropriate.

Program structure, programs, and service

Continual monitoring and assessment of the structure, processes, and programs occurs.

Programs and services are efficient, effective, and high quality.

Program evaluation data is collected, used, and linked to systematic improvements.

Programs and services reflect evidence-based practice.

The need for programs and services is well documented.

Programs and services are well-defined and fully aligned with mission.

A system is in place to collect data about gaps in the ability of existing programs to meet recipient and community-wide needs.

New ideas are continually offered to meet service gaps.

Organizational culture (i.e., physical surroundings, public relations, language, procedures, social justice/diversity)

Physical infrastructure is well suited to current and anticipated needs. Communications carry a consistent and powerful message.

Physical infrastructure enhances effectiveness.

Informal expectations are clearly articulated and supported by staff.

A communications plan and strategy is in place and updated on a frequent basis.

Marketing materials are professional, used consistently, and are current.

Materials are provided in multiple languages as needed, and reflect diversity.

Personnel policies and procedures

Recruitment, selection, orientation, supervision, training and development, performance appraisal, termination, and grievance processes are identified. Policies and procedures reflect systems that are culturally competent.

Relationships between and among positions and position qualifications are identified.

Diversity is characterized as an asset.

Organizational resources devoted to staff continuing education are sufficient.

Resources (i.e., financial, technological, personnel)

Funding is sufficient, comes from diverse sources, fits the mission, and provides insulation from market instabilities. Technology needs (e.g., computers, phones, etc.) are adequately met.

Board members embrace fundraising as a core role.

v Board fundraising plans are in place.

v Electronic data systems sufficiently gather and report appropriate data regarding clients, staff, volunteers, program outcomes, and financial information.

v The website is sophisticated, comprehensive, interactive, and regularly maintained.

Positions are adequately and appropriately staffed and vacancies are quickly filled.

v Staff are capable, committed, and bring complementary skills and momentum for improvement.

External Assessment

Relationship with funders and potential funders

v Fundraising skills and expertise are adequate for funding needs. _v_ Feedback from current funders is sought and considered.

v Sustainable revenue-generating activities are used.

v A system for regular communication and reporting with current funders is used.

v A system to cultivate potential funders is used and continually updated.

v Ideas for revenue diversification are continually considered.

Relationship with clients

A system to actively recruit and involve clients in offering feedback is used. When possible, clients work collaboratively with staff in important roles, such as volunteer positions of leadership.

A system to actively involve clients in making decisions is used.

Relationship with organizations in network (i.e., referrals and partnerships)

Strong, positive relationships with similar and related organizations exist. Reciprocity is sought with relevant organizations.

Presence on relevant partnerships is evident, and leadership roles are appropriately taken.

Relationships with political figures

Strong, high-impact relationships using regular communication with a variety of political entities (i.e., local, state, and federal government) and community leaders exist. Proactively and effectively influences policy-making at the local, state, and/or national level.

Participates in substantive policy discussions with opinion and political leaders.

Source: Adapted from: Netting, Kettner, McMurtry, ... Thomas, 2017; Marguerite Casey Foundation, 2012

QUICK GUIDE 41 Organizational Policy Advocacy Activities

Complete the following tool about organizational policy advocacy activities using an organization with which you are familiar. Completing this assessment can shed light on the degree to which organizations use opportunities to engage in policy activities for the benefit of their clients and organization.

Organizations that engage in few of these could consider expanding their policy advocacy activities to more opportunities, such as those listed here.

In the past, our agency has:

(Organizational Activities) (Activities with Clients and Community Members)

— Testified at public hearings held by the city council, state legislature, or other decision-making body.

— Participated in legislative or policy working groups with government officials.

— Engaged in nonviolent civil disobedience (i.e., deliberately broke a law to draw attention to unjust government policies, programs, or actions).

— Sent unique letters, emails, faxes, or texts to the city council, the mayor, local government agency directors, or senior staff members regarding legislation, government policies, government programs, or other issues that affect our clients.

v— Participated in rallies, protests, vigils, and/or demonstrations to draw attention to an issue that affects our clients.

v— Attempted to engage television, radio, print, or web-based media reporters to give attention to legislation, government policies, government programs, or other issues that affect our clients.

v— Submitted letters to the editor or op-ed pieces to the local media regarding legislation, government policies, government programs, or other issues related to our client population.

— Helped draft legislation.

— Sponsored or co-sponsored forums or other community events to educate the general public about legislation, government policies, government programs, or a social issue.

— Submitted formal comments on rules, regulations, strategic plans, or other administrative governmental documents.

v— Met with the city council members, the mayor, and/or local government agency directors or senior staff to discuss legislation, government policies, government programs, or other issues that affect our clients.

v— Contacted city council members, the mayor, and/or local government agency directors or senior staff to discuss legislation, government policies, government programs, or other issues that affect our client populations.

— Participated in letter-writing campaigns, “sign-on” letters, “call-in days,” postcard drives, petition drives, or email drives to contact public officials about legislation, government policies, government programs, or other issues that affect our clients.

— Submitted articles in our newsletter about legislation, government policies, government programs, or other issues that affect our clients.

— Posted fact sheets, issue briefs, articles, and/or testimony about legislation, government policies, government programs, or other issues that affect our client population on our website.

— Invited council members and/or the mayor to visit our program(s) to educate them about the issues that affect our clients.

v— Actively participated in coalitions related to our area of service or issue of concern. (Actively participated means attended and gave input at coalition meetings, joined and actively participated in coalition committees, attended coalition events, etc.)

— Met with and/or distributed written information to clients and community members to

educate/inform them about legislation, government policies, government programs, or upcoming public policy activities, (e.g., meetings, public hearings).

—— Solicited input from clients and community members to inform our agency's advocacy priorities.

—— Included clients and community members when making visits to the city council, state representatives, or other decision-makers.

—— Provided skill-building workshops to clients and community members to encourage their public policy participation. Skill building may include writing and giving testimony, writing letters, making phone calls, meeting with decision-makers, and other tactics.

—— Met with clients and community members to help them formulate direct action strategies around issues of their choice.

—— Conducted voter registration drives.

—— Facilitated transportation for clients and community members to encourage their participation in public policy activities and/or to vote at the polls.

Source: Adapted from Plitt ... Shields, 2009