NCQA



CASE STUDY

VIP Community Services:

Using NCQA's CCBHC Accreditation to Advance Quality, Excellence and Better Outcomes

Earning NCQA Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHC) Accreditation instills a continuous quality improvement mindset throughout the organization and better positions VIP for success in value-based contracting.

Headquartered in the Bronx and with facilities across New York City, VIP Community Services (VIP) provides a comprehensive support network for individuals facing complex health and social challenges. More than 70% of its patients are enrolled in Medicaid and have incomes below the federal poverty level. VIP serves a diverse, multilingual population, including Spanish-speaking and African immigrant communities.

As a multi-service organization, VIP provides integrated primary and specialty care, behavioral health services, housing and shelter care, job training, addiction treatment services and residential substance use disorder programs.

WHY VIP CHOSE NCQA ACCREDITATION

As the organization looked ahead, leadership wanted a way to formally demonstrate the quality of care it provides and create a framework for ongoing improvement. VIP had already experienced the value of partnering with NCQA by earning Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Recognition for its federally qualified health center program.

"We had been operating our CCBHC since 2017, and I thought it was time for us to really demonstrate the quality work that we are doing and the outcomes that we are getting for our patients," says Debbian Fletcher-Blake, President and CEO.

At the same time, VIP recognized that healthcare is increasingly moving toward value-based care models, making quality measurement and continuous improvement more important than ever.



"When NCQA was developing its standards, they reached out and got community input and involvement in the process. Having an accrediting body reaching out to the providers to get on-the-ground feedback about all of the considerations was admirable. It showed me that this is the organization I wanted to certify us because NCQA was taking into consideration the outcomes and the challenges and everything else that goes into a successful program."

DEBBIAN FLETCHER-BLAKE, *President and CEO, VIP Community Services*

VIP'S CCBHC ACCREDITATION JOURNEY

VIP leaders describe the CCBHC Accreditation process as both rigorous and highly supportive. According to the team, Accreditation provided an opportunity to examine workflows, strengthen documentation and identify areas where practices could be improved.

"The process challenged us," says Darcia Bryden-Currie, Senior Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer. *"It was really an educational process, but it also challenged us to examine our workflows and our documentation."*

While VIP was already doing much of the work required by the CCBHC standards, the Accreditation process helped align its policies and documentation with its operational practices. The VIP team particularly valued the hands-on support they received from NCQA throughout their journey.

"I can't say enough about how helpful they were," says Barbara Salcedo, Director for Quality Improvement Informatics. *"They facilitated great conversations."* She also highlighted the office hours, email support and ongoing engagement that helped VIP successfully navigate the process.



"I would recommend that folks don't just see it as another regulatory process, but really see it as an investment in the organization to impact and improve the lives of the people in the communities that they are serving."

DARCIA BRYDEN-CURRIE, *Senior Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer, VIP Community Services*

POSITIVE IMPACT OF ACCREDITATION

For VIP, NCQA Accreditation is not simply a credential—it is a catalyst for organizational transformation. Here are just a few of the benefits:

Creates a culture of quality. Accreditation fosters curiosity, accountability and a commitment to continuous improvement. "Quality is all about asking questions and being curious and that curiosity is fostered by the fact that we are nationally Accredited," says Fletcher-Blake.

Boosts employee engagement. Accreditation provides a structure and guidelines for how the organization operates, which helps employees feel more connected. "It supports staff engagement because it provides them with clear standards and establishes a shared commitment to excellence as a critical part of the process," says Bryden-Currie.

Enhances the patient experience. Accreditation helps establish a standard of excellence that impacts the care for each patient. "Not only do they understand that they're coming to a center that's nationally recognized for quality, but I think it enhances the service that we provide to further improve their outcomes," says Bryden-Currie.

Builds upon VIP's reputation. One unexpected benefit of Accreditation has been VIP's growing role as a mentor for other organizations. As a result, colleagues increasingly reach out for guidance on improving their own programs. "They're calling VIP because we are an Accredited organization that has gone through the rigor," says Fletcher-Blake. "We are pulling our colleagues along so that, collectively, we are all serving people at a higher standard."



"Accreditation is not just going through a process. It is about making transformative changes in your organization. It's not just a nice thing to do; it is the right thing to do if you really want to improve the care and services that are provided to the people and the communities you serve."

DEBBIAN FLETCHER-BLAKE, *President and CEO, VIP Community Services*

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