

Realizing a return on investment in accreditation

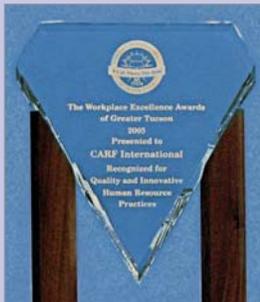
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Many provider organizations consider accreditation as a business strategy to support performance improvement. Anecdotally, they report many benefits of integrating CARF's field-driven standards into the culture of their organizations to continuously improve the quality of their services. Often named benefits of the organization's investment in accreditation include:

- peer review and consultation conducted by an independent, third-party accreditor;
- self-evaluation that discloses policies and procedures in need of improvement;
- increased satisfaction in the organization expressed by the persons served, leadership, and staff; and
- improved employee team communication and interaction.

Although these benefits are important to organizations, at times they are seen as not quantifiable and, thus, not a sufficient impetus to pursue accreditation. However, one company tracked its return on investment (ROI) in accreditation and discovered measurable and positive results of the accreditation experience.

ONE COMPANY'S EXPERIENCE

The Senior Resource Group (SRG) is a network of accredited assisted living residences with 1,000 employees on 13 campuses throughout Oregon, California, and Arizona. The company serves 2,800 residents living in 2,000 units and offers a continuum of support to accommodate its residents' evolving needs—from independent and assisted living services to secured Alzheimer's/dementia care.

CARF and CARF-CCAC asked SRG to measure its performance in key operational areas before pursuing accreditation and to measure them again after its campuses became accredited, taking into consideration any unusual or mitigating circumstances that could skew the data. Since SRG already had measurement systems and internal audit processes to provide reliable information to management, the company was able to easily make clear comparisons of its performance before and after accreditation.

“I think we were already performing at a high level, and we still saw improvement as a result of the survey process.”

SRG measured key indicators in the operational areas of personnel, marketing to potential residents, satisfaction, health and safety, facility and operational audits,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)



ROI for SRG

HERE ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE POSITIVE IMPACTS THAT THE SENIOR RESOURCE GROUP (SRG) TRACKED AS A RESULT OF ACCREDITATION:

PERSONNEL

- Employee turnover decreased 7 percent.
- Workers' compensation claims decreased by 7 percent as a percentage of the employee base.

MARKETING TO POTENTIAL RESIDENTS

- 1,450 more leads were received.
- 1,118 more tours were requested.

SATISFACTION

- Employee and resident satisfaction scores were maintained at a level greater than 4.0 (out of a possible maximum of 5.0), despite opening 3 large communities with more than 500 new residents and approximately the same number of new hires.

RESIDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Resident falls decreased by 2 percent.
- Psychotropic drug administration was halved for residents.
- Medication administration errors decreased by approximately 34 percent.
- Elopements decreased by approximately 15 percent, even with the opening of two new communities.
- State health survey deficiencies decreased by 40 percent.



FACILITY AND OPERATIONAL AUDITS

- Individual sites' performance on internal, unannounced facility audits to review the physical plant exceeded the SRG target by approximately 3 percent after accreditation.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

- Cost of vehicular maintenance decreased by \$831 per campus, despite the addition of 10 vehicles.
- Cost of facility supplies decreased on average by approximately \$2,700 per campus.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

- After implementing CARF-CCAC's performance measurement and information management standards, SRG's database for tracking and trending was strengthened in its reliability and validity and was further enhanced so that management feels more confident in basing decisions on this information.



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CARF WINS BEST PRACTICES AWARD FOR ITS QUALITY SERVICE AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE 2005 WORKPLACE EXCELLENCE AWARDS

CARF International's quality customer service and customer satisfaction won the company the Best Practices Award during the 2005 Workplace Excellence Awards of Greater Tucson ceremonies. In receiving the award, CARF was honored for its "culture that thrives on providing the utmost in quality of product and service."

The Workplace Excellence Awards of Greater Tucson recognize the city's most progressive employers for their approach to human resource management. Two other companies received Best Practices Awards this year for their outstanding areas of practice.

In 2004, CARF International won the Grand Prize award in the small company category for best exemplifying human resource practices in the annual Workplace Excellence Awards. ■■

CARF PREMIERES TWO MONOGRAPHS

Two new monographs have been added to the CARF library in 2005. Both in the area of Employment and Community Services, they are *The Self-Employment Option: An Introductory Guide to Microenterprise for Individuals with Disabilities* and *Strategic Positioning and Planning for the 21st Century*.

The Self-Employment Option hits the high points of small business ownership strategies for prospective business owners and their supporters. *Strategic Positioning* explains the basics of strategic positioning and planning for human service organizations and provides guidance, examples, and exercises an organization can use to implement an effective strategic positioning initiative. Both publications are described and priced in the *CARF Catalog*. ■■

More news about CARF can be read in the CARF news room at www.carf.org/news

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