Quality Management System in the Colombian Association of Psychiatry (ACP)

When revising the literature on Quality Management Systems (QMS) we are referred to the pioneering works of Shewhart, Crosby, Juran, and Ishikawa, among other authors, who pawed the way to what has become a valuable tool for organizations. A name that always keeps appearing during any QMS implementation is that of W. Edwards Deming, an American mathematician, defender of the use of statistics in quality management, and who contributed in a very important way to the economic recovery of the industry in post-war Japan with his ideas on quality control. While in the rest of the world the interest was focused on producing more so as to satisfy the massive demand of goods, in this country other concepts were beginning to be applied, such as doing things well in the first place, to minimize costs, to satisfy the customer and to be competitive. Thus the need to inspect the entire production process so as to comply with the technical requirements for the product was made clear; the systems and procedures were put to the service of quality.

According to Deming, 80% of quality problems in companies have its origin in the established system. As such, the solution corresponds, by 80%, to the top and middle management. This author considers customer-oriented approach and continual improvement as fundamental, and states that the system determines the quality and that the outcome is determined in the long term. These concepts have developed into what is now known as “total quality” the theory of administration focused on satisfying inside and outside customers, on continual improvement and competitiveness. On the other hand, quality management is, in its turn, an organizational strategy and management method that requires the participation of all persons involved to fulfill its objectives.

**Principles of Quality Management**

1. Customer-oriented Approach: understanding and responding to the current and future needs of the customers and surpassing their expectations.
2. Leadership: favoring the commitment of every person, assuring that the objectives and goals are fulfilled and linking the objectives with the management.
3. Staff participation: facilitating that in all settings the skills and abilities of the staff shall benefit the system.
4. Process-based approach: achieving results in a more efficient and effective way when activities and resources are managed as a process.
5. Management system approach: improving effectiveness and efficiency by identifying, understanding and managing a process system.
6. Continual improvement: the permanent objective of management.
8. Mutually beneficial relationships with suppliers: a beneficial and balanced relationship improves the capacity of both the organization and its suppliers.

The objectives of a QMS are to prevent risks, detect deviations, correct defects, improve efficiency and effectiveness, and to obtain national or international acknowledgement. For this standards must be unified.

To facilitate international exchange of goods and services and to stimulate cooperation in intellectual, scientific, technological and economic fields, in 1947 the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) was founded in Geneva, Switzerland. Its mission was to promote the development of activities related to standardization. ISO established a bridge between the public and private sectors and its standards allow a consensus regarding solutions aimed at satisfying the requirements of companies and the wider needs of society.

**What does ISO 9001 mean?**

The ISO 9000 family gathers quality and continual improvement of management standards, established by ISO and applicable to any type of company or systematic activity dedicated to the production of goods or services. It is made up by standards and guidelines relative to management systems and specific tools such as auditing methods, i.e. the process of verifying that the management systems comply with the standard. It implementation means a great effort, but offers great advantages.

Adopting international standards is equivalent to develop and offer products and services that comply with internationally accepted speci-
fications in each sector, and this allows competing in markets all over the world. For governments this provides the technological and scientific bases that support health, security and the environmental legislation, and for developing countries these standards represent an international consensus on the state of technology and constitute an important source of technological knowledge.

**Benefits of the Quality Management for ACP**

- Fulfillment of objectives
- Satisfaction by the members
- Increase in the degree of satisfaction with rendered services by the concerned parties
- Formalization, optimization and measuring of service providing processes.
- Continual improvement of processes

**Expected Impacts**

- Trained staff committed to the aspects of quality management
- Change in ACP’s management approach
- Prompt reaction in the face of eventualities
- Control on processes to achieve effectiveness

**Mission**

To contribute to the evolution of psychiatry by stimulating its study, teaching, spreading and research, in order to favor the competent exercise by the professionals of this specialty.

To attend to the representation needs of psychiatrist in this country.

To promote the design of policies, plans, programs and projects in subjects related to mental health, its attention and care.

**Vision**

To maintain the national acknowledgement and to obtain the international by 2018, thanks to the scientific, social and professional contributions to the country’s mental health.
ACP’s Quality Policy

ACP is committed to the continual improvement of its management, stimulating the study, teaching, spreading and research in psychiatry, so as to contribute to the professional and academic development of its members, promote their social responsibility and contribute towards the country’s mental health.

Quality Objectives

• To contribute to the professional development of its members
• To consolidate the professional representativity
• To increase the participation of ACP’s members in committees and their activities
• To continuously improve ACP’s management.

The implementation and maintenance of quality management systems have become increasingly important in the country, in different sectors of production, services, and the State itself. In fact, official entities have been demanding quality certifications of the proponents in order to sign contracts. Several medical associations have been participating in this process, some of them already with important experience and success in this area. Through the quality management system, we hope to improve ACP; the participation and contributions of the members are very important.

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