Code of Conduct – Team Exercise

Introduction to the Code of Conduct:
The members of every team and work group develop particular ways of interacting with each other over time. Effective interpersonal communication among members and successful communication with managers and employees external to the team are critical components of team functioning. How a team makes decisions, assigns work, and holds members accountable determine team success. With the potential power of the impact of these interactions on team success, why leave team members interaction to chance. This is an opportunity to form team relationship guidelines or team norms. The discussion that the PHC team is within the facility and the team concept needs to be inclusive of all staff within the facility is a great step.

Team norms are a set of rules or guidelines that a team establishes to shape the interaction of team members with each other and with employees who are external to the team. Team norms can be developed initially and than added or adapted as the team sees the need. Once developed, these team norms are used to guide team behavior, and used to assess how well teams are interacting. Team norms enable team members to call each other out on any behavior that negatively affects the success of the team.

Team norms can encompass as many topics as the team deems necessary for successful functioning. They need to be written and posted and team members have an opportunity to discuss commitment – build in a review process. Here are some topic areas; team members as coworkers, team communication, interaction at meetings, organization and function, problem solving and decision making.

(Have the headings and some of these available on chart paper as examples)

Team Norm essentials: Important aspects of interpersonal and team interaction:
- **Team membership as coworkers** – all team members are equal; every team member's opinion will be thoughtfully considered; each team member will keep all commitments by the agreed upon due date; each team member agrees to constantly assess whether team members are honoring their commitment to the team norms.

- **Team member communication**: team members will speak respectfully to each other; will not talk down to each other; will positively recognize and thank each other for team contributions.
- **Team member interaction in meetings**: team members will listen without interrupting; hold no side or competing conversations; follow the rules for effective meetings; attend the meetings on time; always work from an agenda; minutes will be recorded at each meeting; end meetings on time.
- **Team organization and function**: leadership will rotate monthly; the team management sponsor will attend the meetings, at least, monthly.
- **Team communication with other employees including managers**: team members will make certain they have agreement on what and when to communicate; complaints about team members will be addressed first in the team.
- **Team problem solving, conflict resolution and decision making**: team members will make decisions by consensus, but majority will rule if timely consensus is not reached; conflicts will be resolved directly with the persons in conflict.

Say to group: with effective team norms in place, your team will be able to focus on its business purpose. The team has been founded to work together, continuously improve and achieve strategic goals. Don't let ineffective relationships and interactions sabotage the team's work.

(Have statement and 3 bullets on chart paper and share/discuss with group)

Successful team building, that creates effective, focused work teams, requires attention to each of the following:

- **Clear Expectations**: for the team's performance and the expected outcomes.

- **Context:** do members understand why they are participating on the team? Do they understand how the strategy of using teams will help the organization attain its goals? Does the team understand where its work fits in the total context of the organization's goals, principles, vision and values?

- **Commitment:** do team members want to participate on the team? Do team members feel the team's mission is important? Are members committed to accomplishing the team mission and outcomes? Do team members expect their skills to grow and develop on the team? Are team members excited and challenged by the team opportunity?

Group Exercise:
Developing the Teams Code of Conduct

Large group: Ask the group: Consider a meeting that they have attended that did not go well. – Then ask 'what was it about the meeting that made it difficult? 'What would you do differently if you had this meeting again?'

Than ask – consider a meeting that you have attended that went well. What are the things that happened that made the meeting flow, what rules were in place or implied?
Note these on chart paper.

1. Put into groups of 2 – 3 team members.
Have the statements written out to hand to small groups and later place back up on wall;
- **Team membership as coworkers**
- **Team member communication**
- **Team member interaction in meetings**
- **Team organization and function**
- **Team communication with other employees including managers**
- **Team problem solving, conflict resolution and decision making**

2. Give them each 1 or 2 topics group and ask them to consider statements that could help their group with establishing effective relationships and interactions that will assist their team focus on its work or business purpose. The team has been founded to work together, continuously improve and achieve strategic goals.

Directions – Statements should describe behaviors and listening habits that promote trust among team members.
(Write directions on chart paper)

3. Note the FC on the wall: **What are some rules of engagement that guide this team as we work together? What do we want others to know when they come to work with us?**

Have them jot down these on cards ensuring that they cover the topics assigned them. Put their cards up on the wall - For each topic 2 – 3 statements.

Identify with dots – 1st green, 2nd red, 3rd yellow choices based on priorities.

4. Now back to large group – let's look at the statements that have been identified. Go back to focus question – emphasize it throughout the small and large group work.

Questions to help sort and determine the code of conduct:

O   Read out the list of statements - Have we missed anything? Do we need clarification? Are there some that are similar that we could put together? Any that does not work for you?

R   Do these statements reflect how this team operates? Do these statements ring true for you?

I   What does this say about this team? What values do these hold for you – for the team? Are there some that are similar and we could put together. Which one is most important to you? Do these guide us as we work together? What will others say about how this team works together?

D   We have # of statements. Can we personally commit to these?

Closing:

O   read out the statements for last time.

R   reflects on the session how people felt.

I   meaning and purpose (wanted rules for teams interaction, wanted others to understand how this team works together).

D   Future – others that join this team will understand how you work together and can determine for them if this is a good fit for them and they are a good fit for our team.

Wanda Miller
PHC Facilitator
SCHR
May, 2011