



Health and Recovery Services Administration

Addressing Employee Concerns

Action Plan Progress Report

August 31, 2007

FOCUS AREAS:

- Building confidence in senior leadership and their decisions
- Enhancing communication across the administration and finding new avenues of feedback for the staff
- Rebuilding the employee recognition system to stress local accomplishments and interdivisional appreciation



Major actions by HRSA Senior Leadership and Staff:

- Communications and Workforce Advancement offices held a third series of focus groups with HRSA employees in August – this time randomly sampling employees instead of relying on an open invitation. (See Page 2 for a more complete accounting of August focus groups.)
- Each office within HRSA drew up a “Business Plan” in mid-2007 to better reflect the view and responsibilities of the line staff and to recognize the contributions of every employee toward the function, mission and interdependence of the different offices. This was a project that grew out of the 2006 self-assessment review by a diagonal cross-section of HRSA divisions.
- The Business Plan theme was incorporated into the annual “Bite of HRSA” employee recognition event. Each employee was given a chance to create a “puzzle piece” (see above) that reflected their job, their individual personality, talents and commitment. The resulting huge puzzle is being turned into a mural for display in the Cherry Street Plaza lobby. The “Bite of HRSA” has been an enormously popular and morale-building event, and staff reacted very positively to the 2007 theme.
- Communications continued to upgrade the popular iHRSA Intranet, reposting regular EC reports, and upgrading the administration’s Web site for easier access and navigation for both clients and providers. The focus groups were very supportive of these efforts.
- HRSA created “apple cart” breaks with top division and administration executives. This has been extremely well received by employees, who enjoyed the opportunity to chat both socially and professionally with representatives of Senior Leadership.
- HRSA is launching training classes for supervisors in meeting management and employee recognition best practices. These are also being promoted on the training iHRSA site.





Health and Recovery Services Administration

Addressing Employee Concerns

Action Plan Progress Report

August 31, 2007

August 2007 focus groups: Staying in touch



FOCUS AREAS:

- Building confidence in senior leadership and their decisions
- Enhancing communication across the administration and finding new avenues of feedback for the staff
- Rebuilding the employee recognition system to stress local accomplishments and interdivisional appreciation



- The final HRSA focus groups were selected at random, representing all areas of the administration, and provided a more general discussion of their jobs, how they regard the administration today, and changes they would like to see in the workplace. The groups were joined by Assistant Secretary Doug Porter for the final 20 minutes of each session, both to listen to their comments and answer their questions. This segment was very well received.
- **Communication with staff is improving:** The HRSA intranet (iHRSA) is very popular – with an attractive mix of personal, business and professional news. Open Communication Forums are a good venue for the staff – those who don't go say they can't spare the time, but wish they could attend. Publications like the EC Reports, the ProviderOne E-News and INSIDE DSHS get good reviews from staff. The HRSA budget crunch at mid-year should have been handled better, however – employees felt they did not get the full story. Staff are hungry for news about ProviderOne because they understand its importance to HRSA's future.
- **Revamp of employee recognition was an improvement:** The new division-level system is still new and hasn't fully caught on, but the division picnics and ceremonies this year were very popular. Employees are aware that funding was a problem this year, and they are waiting to see that resolved next year. The Cause for Applause staff awards should be automated and placed on iHRSA for maximum exposure, but there is also concern that awards should not be trivialized – saluting perfect attendance, for example, instead of more substantive achievements.
- **Visibility of Senior Leadership has improved:** Employees recognize that HRSA executives are making an attempt to be more visible and to communicate more openly – especially in advance of major decisions or developments. The apple carts won rave reviews from both line staff and supervisors, and the Bite of HRSA once again reinforced the bottom-to-top, top-to-bottom lines of loyalty and responsibility that tie us together.



Health and Recovery Services Administration *Addressing Employee Concerns*

Action Plan Progress Report *August 31, 2007*

FOCUS AREAS:

- Building confidence in senior leadership and their decisions
- Enhancing communication across the administration and finding new avenues of feedback for the staff
- Rebuilding the employee recognition system to stress local accomplishments and interdivisional appreciation



Plans for the future:

- The new employee recognition system brought a sense of reward and accomplishment back to the local level – keyed to a supervisor telling an employee he or she has done a good job. We need to resolve budget issues and continue to stress everyday recognition and good performance.
- Self-Assessment: Last year's self-assessment was led by the Chief Medical Officer and provided a great model. The same participants are being invited back and given the chance to assess the administration a year later on the same terms they used in 2006.
- We will continue to involve Directors and other managers in apple cart- and Bite of HRSA-type activities that humanize HRSA leaders and let staff see them participating in the workplace. An updated profile of directors will be posted on iHRSA.
- ProviderOne: HRSA will continue to increase communication efforts as staff, provider and client readiness efforts pick up steam heading into 2008.
- The four new HRSA steering committees are producing strong results and deserve a brighter spotlight. Staff who have participated are very positive about these committees and their potential for the future.
- We need to bring staff more up to date on building moves and the long-range plans to bring DASA and MHD into Cherry Street Plaza. This plan was stalled but is back in motion now.
- Communications is working with DSM to put together an automated Cause for Applause application on the administration's Intranet (iHRSA).

