



# **Quality Improvement: An Important Opportunity for Psychology**

**Bruce L. Bobbitt, Ph.D.,LP**

**VP Quality Management and Improvement  
Optum, Behavioral Solutions**

**Plenary Session, Educational Leadership Conference  
American Psychological Association  
Washington, D.C.  
September 9, 2012**

## Quality – Some associated words and concepts

---

- **Is universally desired – but is not universally defined**
- **We know it when we see it – maybe**
- **Features of things, processes or people that imply excellence**
- **Meets a standard**
- **Is a process**
- **Can (needs to?) be defined**
- **Can be measured**
- **Can be improved**

# Quality – Healthcare Meanings

---

- Meeting standards as defined by voice of the customer (who is the customer?)
- Meeting universally agreed upon standards within a professional domain or business – a benchmark (who defines and based on what?)
- Quality Assurance – checking against a standard
- Quality improvement – a process
- Reducing variation in achieving a standard
- A set of processes and activities designed to achieve an agreed upon standard that reduces variation
- Achieving statistical process control
- A set of skills and techniques
- Individuals who have acquired certified skills and techniques

# Quality and Psychology: Challenges and Opportunities

---

- What is the goal or purpose of understanding and embracing quality concepts and methodology? Is there agreement that something needs to improve or be different? Motive to change?
- What is the current state of affairs in psychology? What are other professions doing?
- Is there a market? Is there internal resource competition?
- How do quality processes differ from outcomes and research?
- What is the desired goal or outcome? Define
- Is there a defined process to get to the outcome? Can it be specified in a process flow?
- What are the barriers to achieving the goal?
- How will success be measured? What are the metrics?
- What is the cost? What is the benefit? ROI?
- What are the implications for education and training in psychology?