

International Quitline Institute

WCTOH IQI Workshop 2015: Counsellor Training Roundtable Overview

Quitlines depend on the quality of the counselling staff. The World Health Organization (WHO) produced a series of training manuals that cover the essential elements of counsellor training, "[Training for tobacco quit line counsellors: telephone counselling](#)," and quitline development and improvement, "[Toll-free tobacco quitline services](#)" and "[Strengthening health systems for tobacco treatment; Part IV Principles of Adult Education](#)." This roundtable will focus on practical tips that will support your use of the manuals for counsellor training. Factors to consider include:

- Using best practices for delivering training
- Leveraging a variety of instructional strategies
- Putting lesson plans into action
- Maintaining counsellor skills
- Assessing quality
- Resources to support training design and delivery

Informal vs. Formal Training

Counsellor training can be formal or informal, but both approaches require the same pre and post training planning. Offer informal training when training a few counsellors at a time. Formal trainings are a good solution for established quitlines offering frequent trainings to larger groups of new counsellors.

Best Practices for Delivering Training

Best practices for training ensure that the material engages the learner and meets the course objectives. Use these practices for delivering trainings:

- Apply adult education principles.
 - **Autonomous and self-directed:** Adults prefer to choose when and how they will learn. Adults are less motivated when learning is required.
 - **Experience:** Adults are experienced; leverage trainee's experience by using it as a resource for themselves and for other learners.
 - **Goal-oriented:** Adults have a need to apply the learning immediately.
 - **Relevancy:** Adults want to know why they should learn. They need to know the benefits of learning and the cost of not learning.
 - **Task-oriented:** Education for children focuses on the subject matter; adult training should be task-centered.
- Select trainers, who
 - Are well versed in methods of instruction.
 - Have excellent facilitation skills.
 - Have expert content knowledge about tobacco, health, cessation methods – behavioral strategies and pharmacotherapy.
 - Are able to apply the knowledge to the practice – delivering telephonic counselling, documentation, technical aspects.
 - Can use training delivery tools such as audio visual equipment.
- Provide an environment that allows learners to feel safe when sharing ideas and practicing skills.

Resources to support training design and delivery

Training Delivery

- “Super” Trainers to facilitate train-the-trainer courses
- Training manual/materials for train-the-trainer curriculum

Organization

- Resources to deliver trainings (access to facility for training, projector, etc.)
- Operating quitline or quitline ready to go live
- Staff ready for training
- Plan for trainer supervisions quality assurance
- Plan for continuing education

Trainers

- Skill/experience facilitating groups and/or teaching
- Content Knowledge: Expert knowledge in Tobacco Cessation topics
- Concept Knowledge: Experience with counseling role
- Knowledge of strategies for training adults

Discussion Questions – Consider these items as you design your training program:

- **What are your challenges related to training counsellors and supervisors? What problems do you have to solve?**

The root of a training program is defining the requirements of the job – knowledge and skills.

- **Describe the tobacco counsellor role and job – what are the job functions? What skills does the counsellor need to perform the job?**

Content and structure are essential components of lesson plan and curriculum design.

- **What topics would you include in a training to prepare tobacco counsellors? In trainings you have taken in the past, what are the features that made the training successful? Why?**
- **The modules in the tobacco quitline counsellor training manual uses a 4 step lesson plan – preparation, presentation, practice and feedback. What is the value of using these four steps?**

To deliver a successful training it is important to have the necessary resources.

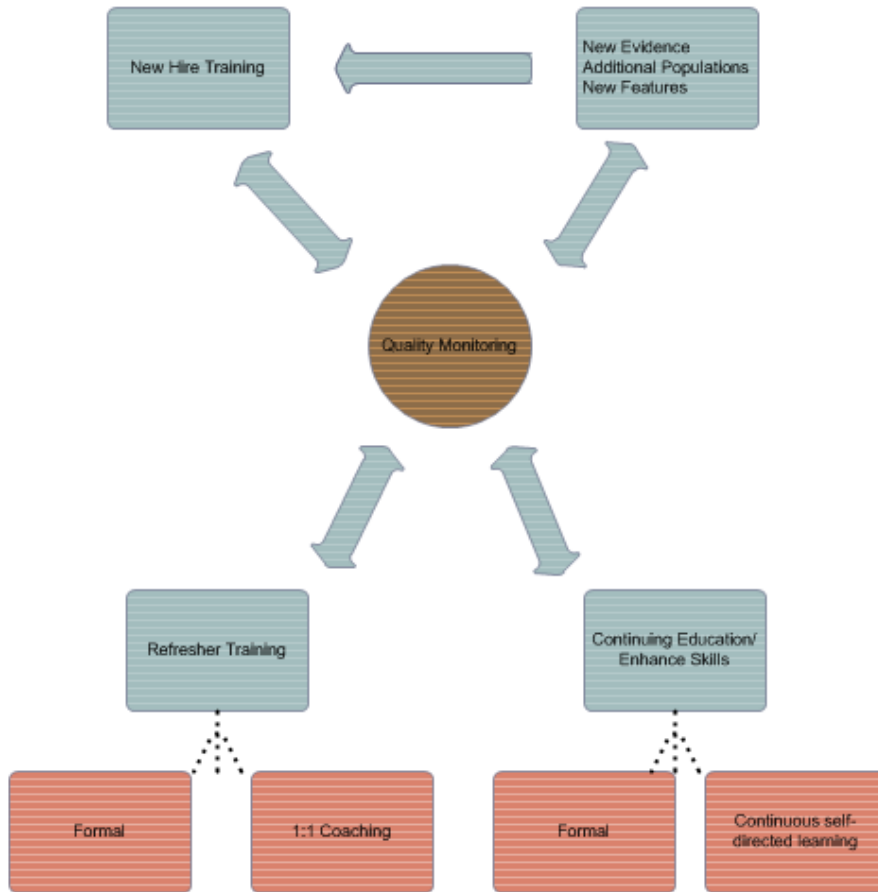
- **What are skills and characteristics of an effective trainer?**
- **What other resources are necessary to deliver an effective training?**

Initial new hire training is a first step to equip a quitline with qualified counsellors; quality monitoring and refresher training are an essential part of the training plan.

- **How would you set up a quality monitoring process? What tools/staff resources do you need?**
- **How can you use the quality monitoring process to improve and grow your quitline?**
- **How would you structure an ongoing training program?**
- **What could trigger the need for ongoing education?**

What are your strengths and gaps? What do you need to prepare to plan and deliver training?

Building a Training Program Based on Maintaining Quality Standards



Process for Curricula Development and Training Delivery

