The New Jersey Department of Children and Families highlighted continuous quality improvement (CQI) as a key area of focus in its 2014-2016 Strategic Plan and has been working since that time to develop a robust and fully functional system. CQI is defined as "a systematic approach that applies a scientific method to 1.) define processes and outcomes of a system or program, 2.) measure the processes and outcomes, and 3.) test the changes aimed at improving the system or program" (McCabe, Potash, Omohyundro, Taylor, 2012). DCF is implementing a CQI system that applies this approach at all levels of the Department.

**Example Application of DCF’s CQI Approach Within The County PIP Process**

The County CQI Team consists primarily of CP&P Staff. Staff from the Office of Quality provide support in the PIP development process.

### What is the problem?

**Identify Problems**
- DCF reviews data to assess strengths and challenges.
  - Use data to identify the problem
    - QR
    - Data Stories
    - ChildStat
    - Case Record Reviews
    - Safe Measures
    - KPI data
    - Outcome data
    - Literature Reviews
    - Feedback from Stakeholders

### What are we doing about it?

**Explore Solutions**
- In the PIP process, the County CQI team meets to identify strategies to address important problems.
  - Choose a problem to focus on and identifies the outcome that the team’s efforts will improve
  - Establish a shared understanding for why the problem exists
  - Develop a theory of change
  - Explore solutions that map onto the theory of change

### How do we know its working?

**Develop PIPs**
- The County CQI Team finalizes the implementation and measurement plans.
  - Develop an implementation plan
  - Develop a measurement plan
  - Finalize the PIP

### How will we share and use what we’ve learned?

**Implement and Evaluate**
- The County CQI Team monitors the implementation of the PIP activities and partners with PMA to measure program success.
  - The County CQI Team implements the PIP with support from CPLs and other Area and Local Office staff
  - PMA supports the area office in implementing the measurement approach and analyzing and interpreting results

**Learn and Plan**
- The County CQI Team prepares follow-up reports and submits them to a representative in the Office of Quality. PMA aggregates results across areas and shares findings with multiple stakeholders.
  - The AQCs partner with Office of Quality to establish a reporting process
  - Office of Quality shares results with leaders throughout the department
  - Office of Quality ensures that AQCs and County CQI Teams stay informed about CQI activities throughout the Department