



Providing quality healthcare services through NSQHS and ISO 9001

“BSI’s knowledge and expertise helped ATSICHS to improve in the areas identified through the assessment process – such as conducting Internal Audits. The process of achieving certification to NSQHS with BSI meant we’ve reduced our costs and improved the quality of our services”

Nadine Bellear

Quality and Safety Coordinator

Customer Objectives:

- To ensure a smooth and seamless transition from the RACGP standards to the National Safety and Quality Health Standards (NSQHS)
- To implement a best practice ISO 9001-based quality system
- To ensure systems and procedures are in line with NSQHS
- To provide ATSICHS with the ability to conduct regular internal audits of the modified system
- To train staff on the new standards
- To obtain third-party certification with a highly-recognized certification body
- Minimize interruption to business during the transition

Customer Benefits:

- Gives clients and stakeholders confidence
- Builds brand reputation
- Addresses quality and safety liability issues
- Ensures ATSICHS can apply international best practice quality management to their healthcare services
- Supports the continuous improvement of healthcare services
- Meets Government requirements, allowing them to continue operating

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Customer Background

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service Mackay Ltd (ATSICHS Mackay) is a self-governing, independent, community-controlled Indigenous organization providing primary healthcare services to Indigenous people within the local region.

ATSICHS Mackay was developed from the need to provide and deliver primary healthcare services to Indigenous communities in the local Government areas of Mackay, Isaac, Whitsunday and Central Highlands.

The organization offers a large number of primary healthcare services including dental, podiatry, drug and alcohol education and support, immunization, social health and chronic disease management. Their mission is to deliver quality healthcare services to their regional community, tailored to meet the needs of the indigenous community.

Why certification?

As an organization that offers healthcare services, certification is a critical point of their operation. According to Government regulations, all healthcare providers must be certified to the National Safety and Quality Healthcare Standards (NSQHS), and in some cases, ISO 9001. In addition, ATSICHS wanted to be recognized for their commitment to safe, quality healthcare services.

Implementation

At the start of the process, ATSICHS already had a quality management system in place that was aligned to the RACGP (Royal Australian College of General Practitioners) standard. There were a number of elements that crossed over which the organization was able to fit into ISO 9001. ATSICHS then added the NSQHS framework, completing their systems.

ATSICHS was referred to BSI's services through industry connections, who all had dealings with BSI before. Positive customer service combined with a strong industry reputation allowed BSI to become an easy recommendation.

BSI's expertise in the area of healthcare safety and quality is unrivalled, making them the natural choice to undertake ATSICHS's third-party certification assessment. BSI wrote the original quality management standard, BS 5750 and then helped cultivate its development into the international version, ISO 9001. In addition, BSI has certified many hospitals, day surgeries and community healthcare organizations providing unique expertise in this sector.

After initial discussions with BSI, ATSICHS identified the need for training in this area. Rather than send one or two members of staff on a public training course, ATSICHS decided that it would be more beneficial to host the course in their own offices and have a large number of their staff members trained.

BSI conducted lead auditor training at the ATSICHS premises in Mackay, spending five days teaching staff members about the standard and how to lead an audit against it. Thirty-three staff members attended the training, ensuring that the standard was clearly communicated and that they were prepared for the upcoming audit.

During the audit process, ATSICHS's systems were evaluated. The expert client manager assigned to the project conducted a comprehensive analysis on the organization's management systems, working with ATSICHS to identify areas of improvement. From this, the organization was able to further develop the system and improve the way they conduct their day-to-day activities.

After the entire audit process, certification was awarded to ATSICHS, making ATSICHS Mackay the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health service to achieve certification. BSI now conducts annual assessments to ensure that ATSICHS

remains compliant, and the organization uses those audits as opportunities to identify weaknesses and improve their services.

Benefits

The lead auditor training on the standards allowed ATSICHS staff members to learn more about the national standards, and ensured that the organization was prepared for the audit. It ensured that all staff members bought into the concepts of quality and safety, in addition to confirming that all staff had a strong grasp on the concepts.

While the certification overall allows the organization to comply with Government regulations, ATSICHS chose BSI to conduct third-party assessments for the other benefits. Certification under BSI allowed them to build their reputation, assisting them to promote their adherence to safety and quality in healthcare.

The certification also gave ATSICHS peace-of-mind about their operations, assuring them that their management system was aligned to national and international best-practice.

Moving Forward

ATSICHS will continue their commitment to quality management and are committed to providing safe, quality healthcare for the local indigenous population.

By conducting their own internal audits, ATSICHS will be able to observe and maintain their own quality management system. In addition, because their employees have been properly trained, these internal audits will ensure that the system is kept in line with best practice.

In continuing with their certification with BSI, ATSICHS acknowledges their need for an expert certification body to be conducting their third-party assessments. This not only allows them to continue to meet Government regulations, it allows them to provide assurance to their customers and continually improve their services.

For further information about the National Safety and Quality Health standards, visit:

bsigroup.com/en-au/NSQHS



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