



Backgrounder



Understanding Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a process of measuring an organization's internal processes then identifying, understanding and adapting outstanding practices from other organizations considered to be best-in-class. Performance comparisons to peers are described using the following terms – worst quartile (bottom 25 per cent), median, best quartile (top 25 per cent) and minimum.

Through the operational improvement process, Central Health was “benchmarked” against other similar health care organizations nationally, particularly in Ontario, to compare processes and expenses to determine whether Central Health is operating as efficiently as like organizations. Comparisons to peers were typically made on a department, program or unit specific basis.

Central Health provided financial and statistical data relevant to such areas as finances, worked hours, paid hours and number of visits/encounters. That data was compared to that of other similar organizations and those that are considered top performers in the country – not only from an efficiency perspective but also in terms of quality and safety of patient care. The data comparisons were shared with managers who were asked to review the data to determine whether there were opportunities and/or initiatives that would bring their operations in line with the top ranked peer groups. The recommended initiatives could not include reductions in services and programs or compromise quality and safety.