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AGREEMENTS FOR EXCELLENCE: RESULTS OF A SURVEY OF MANAGERS

FINAL

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Prepared for:
Organization/Staff Development
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

Organization/Staff Development of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) engaged PRA Inc. to conduct a survey of managers whose teams had participated in the Agreements for Excellence (AFE) program. The purpose of the survey was to gather information related to the managers' perceptions of their teams' overall experience with AFE and its ongoing value. In total, PRA completed telephone interviews with 46 leadership and frontline managers. Of those managers interviewed for this study:

- 93% rate their experience with the AFE program as positive.
- 91% agree that the Agreements for Excellence process helped their team establish clear directions and plan to support enhanced team performance in the future.
- 93% agree that their team was able to move forward with its plan developed during the Agreements for Excellence process.
- 96% would recommend using the Agreements for Excellence to others.

Benefits of AFE

- Almost all (98%) say that the Agreements for Excellence system has been somewhat (37%) or very (61%) beneficial.
- As identified by respondents, the most common benefits of the AFE system are:
 - **Focus.** The system created a focus for their team, and got them to identify the priorities, and the important tasks, that would help accomplish these priorities.
 - **Team building.** The AFE system is said to have helped strengthen their team. Managers report that their group came together as a team or that they developed consensus within the team.
 - **Involvement in the process.** Managers also suggest that a main benefit is that the process allows for the inclusion of the whole team, particularly related to interactions and collaborative problem solving within the team.

Positive results. Many say that the benefits of the AFE system are the results achieved, demonstrated by progress on plans and accomplishment of goals. **Barriers**

- While 93% of managers report that their team was able to move forward with its plan developed during the AFE process, many (65%) report that their team encountered barriers that prevented or limited it from achieving the progress the team had intended.

- The barriers cited by managers tend to focus on issues independent of the AFE system. The most common barriers cited by managers are: lack of time and workload that prevented the desired progress; changes to their group or departmental priorities; and, changes in the members of their team. Some say their team was not equipped to achieve the goals they established, not realizing that they were taking on too much.
- Some supports suggested by managers, which may help overcome these barriers are: more time; additional outside assistance to facilitate the process and help keep the team on track; and, more support or leadership from senior management.

Making AFE more beneficial

- Most managers (72%) could suggest something that would have made AFE more beneficial. Respondents say AFE would be more beneficial if there was on-going support or coaching following the two-day AFE session. Some also suggest they could have used more help identifying and clarifying priorities and objectives. This is not necessarily a result of the AFE system, but rather problems internal to a particular group or department. Others recommend that AFE be modified, in specific ways, to meet their team's needs. However, no consensus about these modifications emerged from the survey respondents.

Current and future use

- Most managers responding to the survey (74%) report that their team is currently using the Agreements for Excellence system. They continue to use the Agreements for Excellence system because it keeps them focussed by helping them stay on track with priorities, and also because it is supported by their team.
- Most managers (87%) report that they will continue to use the Agreements for Excellence system, or will use it again in the future.
- As mentioned, almost all managers report (96%) either that they would probably (33%) or definitely (63%) recommend using the Agreements for Excellence to others. They say they would recommend it because it works. Managers reiterated that their experience with the AFE system indicates that key benefits are that it brings focus to a group, unit or department; it helps build stronger teams; and, it provides the structure and support needed to accomplish the established goals.

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For a full copy of this document please contact Rilla Edwards, Manager, Organization & Staff Development at 787-1083.