**Region 3 Learning Collaborative CQI Tools**

**“5 Whys” Table Top Exercise**

**Definition:**

The 5 Whys is a technique that does not involve data segmentation, hypothesis testing, regression or other advanced statistical tools, and in many cases can be completed without a data collection plan. **By repeatedly asking the question “Why” (five is a good rule of thumb), teams can peel away the layers of symptoms which can lead to the root cause of a problem**. Very often the ostensible reason for a problem will lead you to another question. Although this technique is called “5 Whys,” you may find that you will need to ask the question fewer or more times than five before you find the issue related to a problem.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Directions:**

Select two specific/ unique DSRIP project at your table. You will first focus on project 1, and then repeat the process for project 2. For these projects, follow the following steps:

1. Write down the specific problem. Writing the issue helps you formalize the problem and describe it completely. It also helps a team focus on the same problem.

2. Ask “Why” the problem happens and write the answer down below the problem.

3. If the answer you just provided doesn’t identify the root cause of the problem that you wrote down in Step 1, ask Why again and write that answer down.

4. Loop back to step 3 until the team is in agreement that the problem’s root cause is identified. Again, this may take fewer or more times than five Whys.

**Worksheet:**

**Topic/ 1115 Waiver Project:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Question 1: | Answer 1: |
| Why?: | Answer 2: |
| Why?  | Answer 3: |
| Why?  | Answer 4: |
| Why?  | Answer 5: |

**Did you identify a root cause for the problem? What is it?**

**Can you address it….?**

1. Source: iSixSigma http://www.isixsigma.com/tools-templates/cause-effect/determine-root-cause-5-whys/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)