Office of Developmental Programs, Division of Quality Management

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QM Spotlight

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Data Analysis - What? How?

Data analysis is simply defined as the process of inspecting and transforming data information for decision-making. There are different types of data analysis including descriptive and trend analysis.

Descriptive Analysis—uses metrics like averages, percentages, totals and distributions to summarize data, within a timeframe, to understand what happened.

How To Do Descriptive Analysis?

- ✓ Use basic calculations: determine totals and percentages for each category
- ✓ Spot trends and outliers: look for high/low performance categories, big gaps, or unexpected results
- ✓ Summarize what you see: describe results simply

Below is an example of descriptive analysis based on a made-up scenario and data collected.

Scenario: An oversight body tasked with monitoring service quality across regions identified a spike in noncompliant incidents during routine audits, from July-December 2025. Data analysis was done to uncover patterns, assess regional and waiver performance, and to guide corrective actions.

Performance Measure: Number and percentage of individuals with restrictive procedures where proper procedures were followed.	**Waivers (July-December 2025)**							
	Region 1				**Region 2**			
	A	**B**	**C**	**TOTAL**	**A**	**B**	**C**	**TOTAL**
Numerator = Number of individuals with restrictive procedures where proper procedures were followed.	406	5	14	425	360	11	20	391
Denominator = Total number of unduplicated individuals with a restrictive procedure plan and those without a plan who had an improper procedure applied.	427	6	14	447	375	13	20	408
Compliance by Waiver and Region	**95.1%**	**83.3%**	**100%**	**95.1%**	**96.0%**	**84.6%**	**100%**	**95.8%**

Descriptive analysis: This dataset analyzes how well restrictive procedures were correctly applied across 3 waivers—A, B, and C—in Regions 1 and 2, during July-December 2025. In both regions, C waiver achieved 100%, showing consistent and ideal protocol adherence. A waiver performed strongly, with Region 1 at 95.1% and Region 2 slightly higher at 96.0%. B waiver had the lowest scores in both areas—83.3% in Region 1 and 84.6% in Region 2—suggesting a need for further review and potential improvement efforts. Overall, both regions show high compliance, with Region 2 edging out Region 1 slightly, and the C waiver emerging as a clear best-practice model across the board. The A waiver contributes about 93.5% of total incidents and is the primary driver of the overall compliance score. B and C waivers together represent about 6.5% of total incidents, and variation in small datasets can disproportionately affect performance.

In the next issue, we'll discuss analyzing how things are changing over time—**Trend Analysis**.