



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Sara Tatay
L.C. Williams & Associates
800/837-7123 or 312/565-4612
statay@lcwa.com

**AAAHC Announces Winners of the Bernard A. Kershner
Innovations in Quality Improvement Award**

Winning Studies Address Measles Vaccinations and Regulated Medical Waste

(Skokie, Ill.) Sept. 17, 2020 – Today, AAAHC announces the 2019-2020 winners of The Bernard A. Kershner Award. Presented at the inaugural virtual *Achieving Accreditation* conference, the prestigious *Bernard A. Kershner Innovations in Quality Improvement Award* recognizes AAAHC-accredited organizations that successfully implemented meaningful changes in their operations to enhance quality of care, patient safety, and overall efficiency. The award is named in honor of the late Bernard A. Kershner, a leader in ambulatory health care and distinguished past Chair of the AAAHC Institute Board of Trustees.

This year, AAAHC recognizes an Orlando primary care provider and a Connecticut surgery center for their successful contributions to Innovations in Quality Improvement.

In summer/fall of 2019, AAAHC-accredited primary care and surgical/procedural organizations submitted detailed descriptions of completed quality improvement studies. From the numerous submissions, an expert panel selected six finalists and identified one winner in the categories of primary care and surgical/procedural.

Nemours Children’s Primary Care was named the winner in the primary care category, focusing on increasing vaccination rates for measles in efforts to achieve herd immunity. The surgical care award winner, Surgery Center of Fairfield County, focused its study on decreasing cost and environmental impact related to regulated medical waste and the use of sharps containers and bio-medical waste bags.

“The Kershner Award recognizes organizations that commit themselves to continually improving the quality of patient care that they provide,” said Chair of the AAAHC Institute Quality Advisory Committee (IQAC), Girish P. Joshi. “Importantly, these studies focus on issues that facilities must keep top of mind in the ongoing COVID era, that of common childhood vaccine-preventable infectious diseases and safe disposal of medical waste. We are pleased to honor these innovative studies and strategies, as both the primary care and surgical center winners exemplify AAAHC’s *1095 Strong, quality every day* philosophy.”

2019-20 Bernard A. Kershner Primary Care Winner

Nemours Children’s Primary Care – Orlando, FL

“Increasing Measles Vaccination Rates in at Risk Populations”

The goal of Nemours Children’s Primary Care’s quality improvement effort was to increase the measles vaccination compliance rate among children ages three to 18 within a two-month time

frame. During this time, the team conducted outreach to those who were in need of a measles vaccine and, at the end of the project, they were able to successfully vaccinate 7.3% of the patients they reached, exceeding their goal of 2.5%.

2019-20 Bernard A. Kershner Surgical/Procedural Care Winner

Surgery Center of Fairfield County – Fairfield, CT

“Sharps and Bio-Medical Waste Disposal at Surgery Center of Fairfield County: Improving Environmental Impact and Cost”

To determine whether sharps containers and bio-medical waste bags were used appropriately, the team studied what was placed in sharps containers and bio-medical waste bags in a randomly selected operating room and recovery room at the Surgery Center of Fairfield County. After finding that they were being used inappropriately as generic garbage receptacles in some instances, the team delivered a presentation and created educational handouts describing proper disposal of medications, sharps and bio-medical waste. This resulted in a 43.4% reduction in sharps and biomedical waste containers generated from the facility, exceeding the surgery center’s goal of a 25% reduction.

Throughout the *Achieving Accreditation* conference, AAAHC highlighted Facing the future together... *1095 Strong*. The Kershner Award winners exemplify the *quality every day* philosophy and demonstrate leadership in the future of high quality health care.

For more information on the winning QI studies please click [here](#) or visit

<https://www.aaahc.org/quality/2018-2019-innovations-winners-finalists/>

About AAAHC

Founded in 1979, AAAHC is the leader in ambulatory health care accreditation, with more than 6,100 organizations accredited. We accredit a wide range of outpatient settings, including ambulatory surgery centers, office-based surgery facilities, endoscopy centers, student health centers, medical and dental group practices, community health centers, employer-based health clinics, retail clinics, and Indian/Tribal health centers, among others.

AAAHC advocates for the provision of high-quality health care through the development and adoption of nationally recognized standards. We provide a valuable survey experience founded on a peer-based, educational approach to on-site review. The AAAHC Certificate of Accreditation demonstrates an organization’s commitment to providing safe, high-quality services to its patients—every day of the 1,095-day accreditation cycle. It is recognized by third-party payers, medical professional associations, liability insurance companies, state and federal agencies, and the public. For more information on AAAHC, please visit www.aaahc.org.

###