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

Winners Receive Honor Based on Exemplary Quality Improvement Studies

(Skokie, Ill.) August 2, 2022 – Today during the virtual *Achieving Accreditation* conference, the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) revealed the winners of the *Bernard A. Kershner Innovations in Quality Improvement (QI) Award*, shining a spotlight on health care organizations across the country for their exemplary QI studies.

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 prestigious award program recognizes AAAHC-accredited organizations that successfully implemented meaningful changes in their operations to boost quality of care, patient safety, and overall efficiency through QI. Primary care and surgical/procedural organizations submitted detailed descriptions of completed QI studies for consideration, and an expert panel identified finalists in each category.

“This prestigious award program showcases the unique, model efforts made by organizations and their teams to enhance quality of care and patient safety while improving overall efficiencies through quality improvement,” said Edwin Slade, DMD, JD, AAAHC Board Chair. “We applaud this year’s recipients for their commitment to continuously exemplifying the AAAHC *1095 Strong, quality every day* philosophy and for demonstrating their dedication to enhancing quality improvement throughout the 1,095 days of the accreditation cycle.”

The competitive award program honors the following health care organizations and their innovative work in QI:

2021-22 Bernard A. Kershner Primary Care Winner

University Health Services, University of Oregon

“Towards a Culture of Best Practice Antibiotic Stewardship: Treatment of Acute Bronchitis”

The study addressed antibiotic (mis)use in the setting of uncomplicated acute bronchitis. Using data analysis to establish a measurement baseline, the team instituted strategies including patient education and staff communication. The COVID-19 pandemic serendipitously supported study efforts by increasing awareness of appropriate virus treatment, along with an increased ability to test for specific viruses. These events contributed to the successful cultural shift to one of thoughtful antibiotic stewardship. By the third year of the study, 89% of students were treated for uncomplicated acute bronchitis without the use of antibiotics, reaching the goal.

2021-22 Bernard A. Kershner Surgical/Procedural Care Winner

The Knoxville Ophthalmology ASC, LLC
“Prevention of Endophthalmitis”

The study focused on preventing postoperative surgical site infections and complications. Upon identifying a spike in endophthalmitis cases, the center adopted a multidisciplinary approach to conduct in-depth infection prevention audits in the preop, intraop, and postoperative areas and targeted all potential exposures. Following process improvement and continuous monitoring, the facility surpassed the Quality Benchmarking Report average infection rate of 0.223, achieving zero infections.

“I enjoyed learning about each of these quality improvement studies. You can see how each organization rallied around patient safety and overall efficiency in ambulatory organizations,” said Julie Lynch, MS, BSN, RN, Director, AAAHC Institute for Quality Improvement. “This year’s Bernie winners addressed the question of how to make a difference in patient lives. They demonstrated measurable performance improvement, going beyond simple changes to transform their culture, build teamwork, and improve staff communication.”

To learn more about the exemplary QI studies recognized by the Bernard A. Kershner Awards through the years, please view the easy-to-follow infographic featuring all past Kershner QI Award winners and their results across the surgical/procedural and primary care categories: <https://www.aaahc.org/quality-institute/kershner-qi-award/award-winners/>.

For additional information on QI studies or to register to attend the in-person AAAHC *Achieving Accreditation* conference this December, visit www.aaahc.org.

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About AAAHC

Founded in 1979, AAAHC is the leader in ambulatory health care accreditation, with more than 6,600 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 onsite review. The AAAHC Certificate of Accreditation, along with specialized programs including Advanced Orthopaedic Certification and Patient-Centered Medical Home Certification, demonstrates an organization’s commitment to providing safe, high-quality services to its patients—every day of the 1,095-day accreditation cycle. AAAHC Accreditation and Certification Programs are recognized by third-party payors, medical professional associations, liability insurance companies, state and federal agencies, and the public. For more information on AAAHC, please visit www.aaahc.org.