

# triangleimestoday



2024 Kershner QI Award Primary Care winners: Tanana Chiefs Conference's Vanessa Ketzler, quality management director (l) and Jennifer Prewitt, quality analysis/quality improvement specialist (m), with AAAHC's Julie Lynch, director, Institute for Quality Improvement (r)

## Spotlight Success: Submit for a Bernie Award Today

Has your organization conducted quality improvement studies that demonstrably improved patient outcomes, streamlined processes, or enhanced safety? If so, share your success and inspire others by submitting your study for the prestigious *Bernard A. Kershner Innovations in Quality Improvement Award*.

The award, first established in 2004 by the AAAHC Institute for Quality Improvement, recognizes organizations that have tackled a known and measurable clinical, service, safety, or operational problem or opportunity with impactful results. AAAHC is seeking studies that showcase real-world improvements guided by data-driven strategies and a commitment to excellence.

Winning this award not only celebrates an organization's achievement but also provides a platform to share best practices with the wider ambulatory care community. Innovative solutions could become a blueprint for others striving to enhance patient care and organizational efficiency.

What kind of studies is AAAHC looking for? The possibilities are vast, but here are some examples for inspiration.

- **Clinical Improvements:** Did you implement a new protocol that significantly reduced unplanned transfers? Did you develop a program that improved patient adherence to asthma management? Perhaps you pioneered an approach to managing diabetes screening, leading to better patient outcomes. We want to hear about your success in improving clinical care.
- **Service Enhancements:** Have you transformed the patient experience by implementing an innovative communication strategy? Did you find a way to reduce in-facility wait times and improve patient satisfaction? Perhaps you created a more accessible and user-friendly system for patients to schedule appointments. Tell us how you have elevated the patient experience.
- **Safety Initiatives:** Did your organization successfully reduce the incidence of surgical-site infections? Have you implemented a program that minimized medication errors? Perhaps you developed a safety protocol that improved patient falls? Share your impactful safety improvements with us.
- **Operational Efficiencies:** Have you streamlined processes to reduce costs without compromising quality of care? Did you implement technology that significantly improved operational efficiency? Perhaps you developed an approach to supplies management that decreased the number of expired medications. We encourage you to highlight your achievements in optimizing health care operations.

### Conferences & Exhibits

#### Southern College Health Association 2025 Annual Meeting

March 10–12, Athens, GA

#### Progressive Surgical Solutions 5th Annual ASC Nurse Leadership Conference

April 3–4, Dallas, TX

#### ASCA Affiliate Pre-Meeting Session

*Enhancing Quality: A Practical  
Workshop on Quality Improvement  
Methodologies*

April 30, Denver, CO

#### ASCA 2025 Conference & Expo

May 1–2, Denver, CO

[Learn more](#)

### 1095 Learn

#### 2025 Achieving Accreditation

- March 20–21  
Renaissance Orlando  
SeaWorld, Orlando, FL
- September 15–17 Virtual
- December 11–12  
Red Rock Casino Resort and Spa,  
Las Vegas, NV

[Learn more](#)

## Spotlight Success: Submit for a Bernie Award Today (continued)

The study submission process is straightforward. AAAHC encourages organizations to visit the **Kershner Award Submissions webpage** and download the submission agreement for detailed guidelines. The AAAHC Expert Panel will review the criteria and choose six finalists who will be notified in June. All finalists receive a \$500 honorarium, a certificate to post in their organization identifying them as a finalist, and free registration to

present their poster LIVE at AAAHC's flagship *Achieving Accreditation* Conference in Las Vegas in December, where the winners will be announced.

The deadline for submissions is April 11, 2025, at 11:59 PM CT. We encourage you to submit today!

**Submit your exemplary study here.**

## Credentialing, Privileging, and Peer Review among High Deficiencies

Credentialing, privileging, and peer review are not just administrative tasks; they are vital safeguards that protect patient safety and enhance the quality of care provided in health care organizations. Deficiencies in any of these areas can lead to increased risk of liability and providers performing services or procedures for which they need additional qualifications, more experience, and/or performance improvement. Credentialing, Privileging, and Peer Review is among the common standard deficiencies cited in the 2024 AAAHC *Quality Roadmap*.

### Intent of Standards

The purpose of AAAHC Standards for credentialing, privileging, and peer review is to confirm that during the appointment and reappointment processes, the governing body ensures that health care professionals are qualified to provide services offered by the organization and that those services are appropriately staffed and supervised. This includes ensuring that reappointments take place at least every three years, or more frequently if state or organizational policies require. Conducting verification of current state license, Drug Enforcement Administration registration, and medical liability coverage which meets governing body requirements and the National

Practitioner Data Bank information are also required. During reappointment, the governing body must consider this verification, along with a complete reappointment application and results of peer review activities.

Peer review primarily confirms a provider's competence and is, therefore, a vital component of providing high quality and safe patient care. By fostering a proactive approach to these critical areas, health care administrators not only mitigate risk but also promote a culture of quality improvement that aligns with best practice.



**Click here to download the 2024 AAAHC *Quality Roadmap* for complete results and analysis.**

## Sleep Awareness Week Mar 9-15



 / 1095STRONG

## How to Prepare a Practice for Allergy Season

As health care providers prepare for the upcoming spring allergy season, implementing a comprehensive strategy is necessary for optimal patient care. Start with understanding the latest allergy trends and allergy management best practices through research and collaboration with allergists. Next, update clinical protocols in line with guidelines and any structured templates for in-person/virtual assessments, allergy action plans, and patient education materials. Finally, complete an inventory review to ensure that appropriate medication and diagnostic supplies, including peak flow meters and spirometry equipment, are available.

Sometimes patients need a little help getting ready and early intervention through patient education is an effective tool in managing seasonal allergies. Consider reaching out to high-risk patients 4–6 weeks before the peak pollen season, providing guidance on environmental modifications and medication timing.

AAAHC Standard CRD.200 outlines the documentation requirements of allergies, sensitivities, and other reactions in the medical record. Stay tuned for next month's *Triangle Times Today* for more insights into allergy documentation. By implementing these preparatory measures, health care providers can ensure optimal patient care during allergy season while maintaining practice efficiency and staff satisfaction.

## Quality Improvement Connected to Student Health

The correlation between student health and student achievement is strong and direct. Healthier students tend to perform better academically and, conversely, poor health impacts learning success. This, along with the positive connection between quality improvement (QI) and employee satisfaction, warrants a commitment to build greater capacity for QI in student health settings.

Since 2005, student health has had a strong presence in the *Bernard A. Kershner Innovations in Quality Improvement Award* program, with quality improvement studies receiving the award for improving antibiotic stewardship, improving functional outcomes related to treatment for depression, increasing vaccination rates, and reducing medication errors. Over the last year, Surveyors in the field have reported student health excellence in preventive care, reducing wait times for mental health appointments, and improving medication adherence.

Student health facilities that have performed a successful QI study should consider submitting their work for a “Bernie.” Sharing the value it has brought to their health facility can inspire, motivate, and challenge other campuses to address and find their own solutions using QI studies.

## AAAHC to present hands-on quality improvement workshop at ASCA Affiliate Pre-Meeting Session



Continuous quality improvement (QI) is critical for your team to deliver effective ambulatory care every day. That's why our expert AAAHC Institute for Quality Improvement faculty are hosting an exclusive onsite QI workshop, *Enhancing Quality: A Practical Workshop on Quality Improvement Methodologies*, at ASCA 2025 in Denver.

**What:** AAAHC ASCA Affiliate Pre-Meeting Session

**When:** Wednesday, April 30, 2025, 4:00–5:30 PM, MT

**Where:** ASCA Conference and Expo 2025 in Denver, CO  
Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center, Room CREST 4

Seats are limited! **Learn more about the workshop here.**