

Message from the Board

A Clear Vision

When NAHQ President Thom Smith challenged us to “ride the new wave” earlier this year, I’m sure that some of you, like me, wondered what that phrase meant. Now that we’re approaching midyear, we better understand that vision. Out of curiosity, I recently Googled *healthcare quality* and got more than 5 million hits. It’s no wonder we have trouble defining what it is we do—and why we do it!

If you are a member of the NAHQ Listserv, you’ve read recent posts discussing the role of nurses versus “nontraditional” professionals in quality leadership and within the quality department. Coming from a nontraditional background, I find the debate particularly interesting. Our ability to effectively meet the demands of an ever-changing healthcare environment will depend on our ability to recruit, train, and mentor those who come from nontraditional backgrounds. The first step for those of us in this category is to ensure that leaders within our own organizations know who we are, what we do, and why we are a critical component to our and their organizations’ continued success.

As part of NAHQ’s 2007 rebranding effort, we developed a “business case for quality,” a document that we believe will increase awareness and understanding of who we are and what we do within our organizations. We are developing a fact sheet that outlines a quality professional’s desired strengths and experiences, both personal and professional. We are also devising materials that our members can share with corporate leaders within their organizations and that we can use as we seek to exhibit in new arenas, just as we did last week at the Healthcare Financial Management Association conference. All of these new materials will be available to members via the NAHQ Web site and at state association meetings.

Given the ever-changing landscape of reimbursement, NAHQ members have a perfect opportunity to increase our visibility and to share our vision with other healthcare stakeholders. But our success and strategic placement in the healthcare arena won’t just happen; all of us must collaborate to reach our lofty goal of becoming a universally recognized and leading resource for healthcare quality professionals. Together, we are the essential connection for leadership, excellence, and innovation in healthcare quality.

I look forward to working with each of you as we continue to ride the wave of NAHQ.

Cathy Munn, MPH RHIA CPHQ
NAHQ President-Elect