

ASSOCIATION NEWS

NAHQ's New "Tell A Colleague" Program

Introduce your peers and colleagues to NAHQ through its new "Tell a Colleague" program, which provides details on the many benefits of NAHQ membership. Receive a *\$25 coupon (good on all NAHQ products and services) for each member who joins through your referral. As an added bonus, all members who successfully participate through the end of the year will be entered in a drawing for a complimentary conference registration. To access "Tell a Colleague," visit www.awebsource.com/clients/nahq/ws_tac/index.php, or visit the NAHQ home page and click on the "Tell a Colleague" link, located on the left side of the screen.

**To receive discount coupons and enter the drawing, referring colleagues must be active NAHQ members. There is no limit on the amount of coupons received; they have no cash value and expire 1 year from the printed date.*

Don't Miss These Conference Highlights!

The annual conference is just days away. Here's a quick rundown of highlights you don't want to miss!

Featured Speaker: Mark R. Chassin, MD, president of The Joint Commission, will discuss "Current Challenges in Quality and Safety" on Wednesday, September 17, 9–10:15 am. Chassin will address major barriers to making progress in quality and safety, and The Joint Commission's role in helping healthcare organizations meet these challenges. He also will present ways to deliver robust process improvement and will explain why healthcare organizations worldwide must work together to transform healthcare into a high-reliability industry.

Quality Forum: The following panelists will discuss "Collaboration Across the Continuum: Will It Really Make a Difference?" on Wednesday, September 17, 10:30 am–Noon:

- Helen Burstin, MD MPH, senior vice president, National Quality Forum, Washington, DC
- Kathie Kendrick, MS RN CS, deputy director, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD
- Chuck Mowll, FACHE, executive vice president for business development, government, and external relations, The Joint Commission, Oakbrook Terrace, IL
- David Schulke, executive vice president, American Health Quality Association, Washington, DC
- Moderator: Barbara Corn, CPHQ, director of operations, United Healthcare, Maryland Heights, MO

Book Signings:

- Editors Luc Pelletier and Christy Beaudin will sign your second edition of *Q Solutions* on Sunday, September 14, 5:30–7:30 pm, in the NAHQ booth.
- Featured conference speaker Karyn Buxman, MS RN CSP CPAE, Humor Lab, La Jolla, CA, will sign her book *Amazed & Amused: Surviving and Thriving as a Healthcare Professional*, immediately following her presentation on Monday,

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September 15, 8–10 am (signing until 1 pm). The book is on sale at the NAHQ bookstore.

- Sanjaya Kumar, MD, chief executive officer and chief medical officer at Quantros, Inc., will sign his book *Fatal Care: Service in the U.S. Health System* at the Quantros booth (#303). The book is on sale at the NAHQ bookstore.

Recorded Sessions: The following sessions will be recorded and available for purchase on the NAHQ Web site at www.nahq.org in the online store beginning October 6. The price for one session will be \$69.99 (member) and \$79.99 (nonmember). All three session recordings may be purchased for \$179 (member) and \$229 (nonmember). Continuing education (CE) hours will be awarded.

- 203: “From the Cockpit to the Nursing Unit” by Gary Sculli, MSN RN
- 303: “From the Cockpit to the Nursing Unit, Act 2: Effective Followership” by Anita Louise Garrison, MSN RN CPHQ CMC NFAHQ
- 502: “How to Powerfully View Data When ‘Yucky’ Events are Rare!” by Sandra K. Murray, MS RD

“Celebrate the Spirit” with Healthcare Quality Week October 19–25

NAHQ’s National Healthcare Quality Week aims to increase awareness of healthcare quality programs and the professionals who implement them. The weeklong celebration is a great way to help your colleagues and the community-at-large learn about the role of the healthcare quality professional. Likewise, it benefits healthcare quality professionals by featuring these educational opportunities:

- Free continuing education (CE) hours throughout October can be found at www.nahq.org/journal/ce/ce-list.html
- The Webcast “Using Data to Drive Patient Safety,” on Tuesday, October 21, 2–3:30 pm Central Time, sponsored by NAHQ in collaboration with the American Society for Healthcare Risk Management, will cover the use of publicly reported data to improve patient safety. Presenters are Monica Berry, JD BSN LLM CPHRM DFASHRM, and Paul L. Green, MS RN CPHQ
- Healthcare Quality Management: Review and Study Session for the CPHQ examination, October 23–24, in Chicago at Rush University Medical Center. The instructor is Nancy Claflin, PhD RN CCRN CPHQ FNAHQ
- Order products to use for your celebration. Various items are available such as balloons, pens, notepads, and much more
- Download a free poster, logo, and an activity planning guide

To register for any of the above courses or to purchase products visit www.nahq.org/hqw.

2009 Call for Abstracts

Here’s your opportunity to shape the field of healthcare quality! NAHQ’s conference planning team invites applications to present at NAHQ’s 34th Annual Educational Conference. Next year’s conference, “NAHQ: Deep in the Heart of Quality,” is scheduled for September 13–16, 2009, in Grapevine, TX, at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center. Visit www.nahq.org/conference for more information or to submit an abstract. The deadline for submissions is Friday, October 31, at 11:59 pm Central Time. Abstract notification will be made by February 2009. If you have

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questions, please contact Jacki Van Oort at jvanoort@connect2amc.com or at 480/706-1923.

IN OTHER NEWS ...

NQF Endorses National Health Information Technology Standards

The National Quality Forum (NQF) recently endorsed nine new national voluntary consensus standards for health information technology (HIT) in electronic prescribing, electronic health record interoperability, care management, quality registries, and the medical home. These measures are intended to help providers assess the efficiency and standardization of current HIT systems and identify areas where additional HIT tools can be used.

According to the NQF, adoption of HIT by clinicians has been shown to reduce medical errors by increasing access to information, thereby improving response times to abnormal results, eliminating repetitive testing, and providing clinical decision-support tools to facilitate evidence-based care. NQF reports that, when clinicians use HIT, there is a decrease in medication errors of up to 20% and a decrease in per admission costs of more than 12%.

“If we hope to achieve high-quality, patient-centered care, we need interoperable HIT that can help us share information electronically and track patients throughout the delivery system—all of which can reduce errors and overuse and increase measurement across the continuum of care,” said NQF President and Chief Executive Officer Janet Corrigan. “These newly endorsed measures can provide important information on effective use of HIT for both early adopters of HIT and those who are just beginning to implement these systems.” For more information, visit www.qualityforum.org.

CMS to Hold Town Hall Meeting on RAC

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will hold a town hall meeting Sept. 22 in Baltimore and via conference call on fee-for-service Medicare policy and operational issues. Topics include the Medicare recovery audit contractor program and HIPAA standards for Medicare claims. Registration for the meeting closes Sept. 17. To register, visit https://registration.intercall.com/menu.php?short_name=cms2. For more information, e-mail MFG@cms.hhs.gov.

IHI’s “Web&ACTION” Program Targets the Emergency Department

On Thursday, October 9, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) will begin its new “Web&ACTION” or interactive distance-learning program titled “Using Data to Assess and Improve Operational Performance in the Emergency Department.” According to IHI, the program will “enable teams to assess effectively the most significant emergency department statistical operational measures affecting flow and throughput.” Visit www.ihl.org/IHI/Programs/AudioAndWebPrograms/UsingDatatoAssessandImproveOperationalPerformanceintheEmergencyDepartment.htm for more information on the Web&ACTION.

PSO Common Formats Version 0.1 Beta Now Available

HHS' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has released "common formats" for collecting and reporting patient safety information, including adverse events, near misses, and unsafe conditions. The common formats, now available for download through AHRQ's PSO Web site (www.pso.ahrq.gov), provide common definitions and reporting formats that healthcare professionals can use to collect and track patient safety information. Authorized by the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005, the common formats facilitate Patient Safety Organizations' (PSOs) collection of patient safety work product in a standardized manner from providers. The formats will be used by providers and PSOs to report a comprehensive range of patient safety concerns, capturing both structured and narrative information. AHRQ has contracted with the National Quality Forum (NQF) to assist with gathering and analyzing feedback that will guide future versions of common formats.

Does Streamlining Administrative Requirements Affect Quality?

According to an American Hospital Association (AHA) *ex* report, administrative requirements could be streamlined or reduced to lower healthcare spending without sacrificing the quality of patient care. Many administrative requirements are duplicative or conflict with each other, diverting precious resources away from patient care and making healthcare less affordable, the report notes. Payers and regulators could streamline or align requirements and processes to reduce the administrative burden on hospitals and other healthcare providers, the report states. For example, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services could reduce the number and type of contractors performing Medicare and Medicaid oversight, while payers could standardize benefit packages, claims processing procedures, and business practices.