



The Fourth Annual AzHHA Quality Awards celebrates and recognizes Arizona’s leaders committed to advancing healthcare with exceptional quality performance, community engagement and a culture of continuous improvement. The outstanding achievements will be honored at the AzHHA Quality Awards Luncheon during the 2026 Arizona Hospital Leadership Conference on Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2026.

Applications must be submitted by **5 p.m. on Friday, May 29, 2026**. Submit applications to clinicalexcellence@azhha.org with the email subject line: 2026 Quality Awards Submission.

ELIGIBILITY AND CRITERIA

Applications will be accepted from all AzHHA member hospitals and health systems.

To apply for the AzHHA Quality Awards applicants must:

1. Complete the Applicant Information Form [here](#).
2. Complete a storyboard [here](#) that includes a summary of an improvement project, including:
 - Problem and approach
 - Outcomes and impact
 - Lessons learned and sustainability

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- Hospitals may submit as many applications per category as they wish.
- Each application submitted must:
 - Reflect on an improvement project within the past 12 months.
 - Follow the storyboard template format.
- Projects can be submitted for either of two categories:
 - **Outstanding Patient/Community Impact** which recognizes healthcare facilities that have made a direct and measurable difference in patient outcomes in the hospital and community setting. This includes initiatives that reduce hospital-acquired infection rates, lower fall rates, improve maternal and mental health, improve patient safety and quality, and promote equitable and respectful treatment.
 - **Workforce Engagement** which celebrates healthcare facilities and teams that have achieved outstanding results in clinical workflows, workforce and process improvement. This recognition highlights initiatives that positively influence care delivery, staff engagement and clinical relationships.
- Do not lock or protect the storyboard template. The document must remain in PowerPoint.
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- AzHHA will send an email confirming receipt of the application.

SELECTION PROCESS

AzHHA staff will review all initial applications for completion. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. All completed applications will be scored first by the AzHHA Clinical Excellence Committee members that are not representing a hospital applying for an award.

Applications will be rated by the scale below in each of the following categories:

- Problem and approach
- Outcomes and impact
- Lessons learned and sustainability

1 Poor	2 Average	3 Above average	4 Excellent
Application is missing majority of requirements. Project summaries are hard to follow.	Project summaries nearly meet or meet requirements.	Project summaries exceed expectations. Project demonstrates some evidence of best practice.	Best practice is evident throughout application.

Applications with the highest scores will move to the next step in the process.

Next, volunteers from other state hospital associations will score applications using the same scale above. Total scores will determine the top five winners for each award (one from each classification) and the Top Overall Excellence Award (11 awards total).

One winner from each of the following classifications will be selected for each award category:

- 25 beds or less (including, but not limited to, critical access hospitals)
- 26-100 beds
- 101-300 beds
- More than 300 beds
- Specialty hospital (behavioral health, surgical, long-term acute care, freestanding ED, other)

STORYBOARD TEMPLATE DETAILS

Following the storyboard template, applicants will fill out the following information:

1. Project title

The title should be descriptive and one or two lines. (Maximum 125 characters.)

2. Name of hospital or health system

3. Team members

List the names of team members that worked on this project.

4. Project details

Describe your project by addressing each of the following categories. Be sure to address the topics listed below.

- Category 1: Problem and approach

- a. Describe the challenge or opportunity your organization identified and why it mattered.
 - b. Summarize how leadership and teams planned and carried out the improvement effort, including key strategies, tools or methods used.
- Category 2: Outcomes and impact
 - a. Highlight the results of your improvement effort.
 - b. Included key outcomes, data or observed changes and explain the impact on patients, staff or the organization.
- Category 3: Lessons learned and sustainability
 - a. Share key lessons learned from the project and how improvements are being sustained or expanded.
 - b. Include insights that may help other organizations replicate or build on this work.

Please note: Keep text/charts/graphs/photos within each section's boundaries. Font size shall be no smaller than 14 pt.