



# Why Should I Apply?

## Using the AHCA/NCAL Quality Award Criteria as a Management Tool

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AHCA/NCAL Quality Award Judge


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# Session Objectives

- Navigating the AHCA/NCAL Quality Award criteria
  - Recognizing parallels between criteria and regulatory requirements
  - Using the criteria to identify organizational gaps, opportunities
  - Developing systematic approaches to address identified gaps.
  - Learn how organizational self-analysis can improve outcomes
  - Using the Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework as a management tool
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# Let's get acquainted


- Award recipients? Bronze or Silver?
  - Administrators/DONS/Others?
  - Potential Quality Award Applicants?
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# What is the AHCA/NCAL Criteria all about?

The Quality Award Criteria is a Framework for performance

- A 3 level, progressive award program for Long-term Care, Assisted Living and Residential Care facilities
  - Established in 1996 and is now the largest Baldrige-based program in the U.S.
  - The program is based on the core values and criteria of the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program.
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# What is the AHCA/NCAL Criteria all about?

- Progressively higher standards for performance at each of the 3 award levels
  - Moving through the levels enables organizations to improve performance related to care and services.
  - Provides national, external validation of organizational performance.
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## How does this process help your organization?

**Performance Improvement:** A proven framework to make improvements in any clinical, quality or operational outcome area. *The majority of applicants identify performance improvement as a main reason in applying for an award.*

**Team Engagement:** Your team working toward a common goal and achieving desired results and quality outcomes through continuous learning and improvement. *The application process is a team building activity to engage staff across all levels of your organization.*

**Regulatory Demands:** The criteria prepares providers for regulatory demands such as QAPI and FRA requirements and CMS Requirements of Participation (RoP). *Quality improvement is a key component to regulatory compliance.*





# Regulatory compliance requirements

CMS Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement (QAPI) requirement purpose:

“QAPI will take many nursing homes into a new realm in quality- a systematic, comprehensive, data-driven, proactive approach to performance management and improvement.” (CMS.gov- NH QAPI)

- AHCA research indicates that 90% of Quality Award applicants identify performance improvement as a primary reason in deciding to apply for an award.
- Silver and Gold recipient data supports superior performance in key quality outcome areas such as:

***30-day hospital readmission, off-label use of antipsychotics, 5-Star ratings, occupancy rates, and operating margin***





# The Award Criteria as a “Management Tool”

The Baldrige Excellence Framework provides a systems approach to organizational management, performance improvements and overall success.

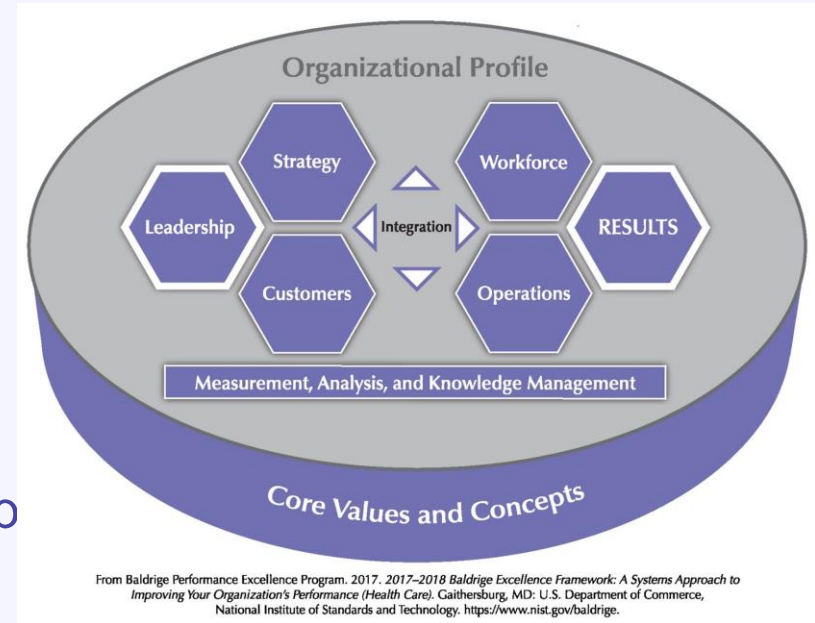
- Systems perspective
  - Visionary leadership
  - Patient-focused excellence
  - Valuing people
  - Organizational learning
  - Focus on success
  - Managing for innovation
  - Management by fact
  - Societal responsibility and community health
  - Ethics and transparency
  - Delivering value and results
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# The Award Criteria as a “Management Tool”

The criteria is

- Outcome-focused
- Evidence-based
- Systematic management model
- Leading edge, validated leadership
- Performance driven practice

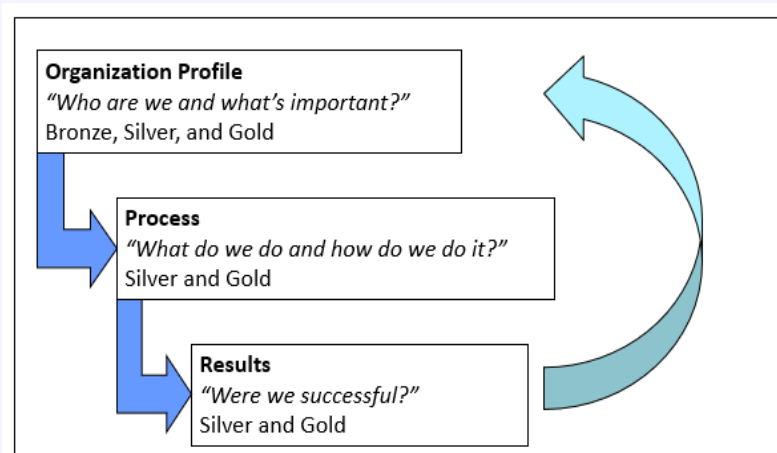


# The Award Criteria as a “Management Tool”

## Award Criteria Management Document Components

a.k.a.

Your AHCA/NCAL  
Quality Award Application!





# AHCA/NCAL Award Criteria Categories

**Organizational Profile** Key factors, competitive situation

## **Category 1 – Leadership**

- 1.1 Senior Leadership
- 1.2 Governance and Societal Responsibility

## **Category 2 – Strategy**

- 2.1 Strategy Development
- 2.2 Strategy Implementation

## **Category 3 – Customer**

- 3.1 Voice of the Customer
- 3.2 Customer Engagement

## **Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, & Knowledge Mgmt**

- 4.1 Measurement, Analysis and Performance
- 4.2 Information and Knowledge Management

## **Category 5 – Workforce**

- 5.1 Workforce Environment
- 5.2 Workforce Engagement

## **Category 6 – Operations**

- 6.1 Work Processes
  - 6.2 Operational Effectiveness
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# Regulatory Requirement: CMS QAPI Plan Elements

**Element 1:** Design and Scope...

**Element 2:** Governance and Leadership ...

**Element 3:** Feedback, Data Systems, and Monitoring ...

**Element 4:** Performance Improvement Projects (PIPs)...

**Element 5:** Systematic Analysis and Systemic Action.





# Regulatory Requirement: CMS Facility Assessment

**Part 1:** Resident Profile – types, care needs

**Part 2:** Services and care required based on resident needs

**Part 3:** Resources (staff, training, etc.) needed for care daily and in emergencies, synthesize and use the assessment findings and data, and evaluate processes and plan for future assessments



# AHCA-CMS QAPI-FA Crossover Elements


<b>QAPI PLAN ELEMENTS</b> <i>CMS requirements</i>	<b>BALDRIGE FRAMEWORK</b> <i>Where does it fit the plan?</i>
<b>Design and Scope</b>	<b>Organizational Profile:</b> <i>Organizational Description</i> <i>Organizational Position (Competitive position, Comparative Data, Strategic Context)</i>
<b>Governance and Leadership</b>	<b>Category 1 - Leadership</b>
<b>Feedback, Data Systems, and Monitoring</b>	<b>Category 2 – Strategy Development</b> <b>Category 3 – Customers</b> <b>Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge</b> <b>Category 5 – Workforce</b> <b>Category 6 – Operations (Work processes, operational effectiveness.)</b>
<b>Performance Improvement Projects</b>	<b>Organizational Profile – (Performance Improvement System)</b> <b>Category 2 – Strategy Development</b> <b>Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge</b> <b>Category 6 – Operations (Work processes, operational effectiveness.)</b>
<b>Systematic Analysis and Systemic Action</b>	<b>Organizational Profile – (Performance Improvement System)</b> <b>Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge</b> <b>Category 6 – Operations (Work processes, operational effectiveness.)</b> <b>Category 7 – Results (Health care, process, customers, workforce, leadership and governance, financial/ market/ strategy)</b>

# AHCA-CMS QAPI-FA Crossover Elements

<b>FACILITY ASSESSMENT</b> <i>CMS requirements</i>	<b>BALDRIGE FRAMEWORK</b> <i>Where does it fit the assessment?</i>
<b>Part 1: Resident profile</b> Numbers, diseases/conditions, physical and cognitive disabilities, acuity, and ethnic/cultural/religious factors that impact care	<b>Organizational Profile:</b> <i>Organizational Description</i> <b>Category 3</b> – Customers (Service offerings, fair treatment, customer experiences) <b>Category 4</b> – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge
<b>Part 2: Services and care offered</b> Based on resident needs (includes types of care your resident population requires)	<b>Category 2</b> – Strategy Development <b>Category 3</b> – Customers (Service offerings, fair treatment, customer experiences) <b>Category 4</b> – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge <b>Category 6</b> – Operations (Work processes, operational effectiveness, Safety, emergencies, business continuity.)
<b>Part 3: Facility resources needed</b> To provide competent care for residents, including staff, staffing plan, staff training/education and competencies, education and training, physical environment and building needs, and other resources, including agreements with third parties, health information technology resources and systems, a facility-based and community-based risk assessment, and other information as appropriate.	<b>Organizational Profile: <i>Organizational Description and Organizational Position</i></b> <b>Category 1</b> – Leadership and Governance <b>Category 2</b> – Strategy Development <b>Category 3</b> – Customers (Service offerings, fair treatment, customer experiences) <b>Category 4</b> – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge (Performance improvement, innovation, data security/cybersecurity) <b>Category 5</b> – Workforce (Capability/capacity, high performance, learning/development, equity/inclusion) <b>Category 6</b> – Operations (Work processes, operational effectiveness, Safety, emergencies, business continuity.)



## The Award Criteria as a “Management Tool”

- The AHCA/NCAL Quality Award Criteria helps create organizational alignment
  - Leadership supports the overall performance and organizational strategy
  - Effective alignment of improvement efforts leads to better results – and competitive advantage
  - Use the Criteria to *focus, align, and accelerate* organizational strategy and performance efforts
  - *Organizations that achieve improved results are the ones that view and use the Criteria as an management improvement tool, not just as an Award application*
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## The Award Criteria as a “Management Tool”

The AHCA/NCAL Quality Award process can help...

...improve organizational *accountability*

...create organizational *sustainability*

...achieve organizational *alignment*

...promote organizational *improvement*


...improve organizational workforce *recruitment*

...provide for organizational *reward and recognition*






## **Criteria requirements define focus areas**

- The Baldrige Excellence Framework is updated every 2 years by the National Institute of Standards and Technology
  - New criteria questions are developed based on areas of significant change in various industries such as healthcare, education, manufacturing, etc.
  - Changes in questions include overarching concepts that face organizations.
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## **Criteria requirements identify key focus areas**

Areas of focus in the current criteria include:

- Agility and resilience
  - Workforce retention
  - Diversity, equity, and inclusion
  - Accessibility and fair treatment
  - Knowledge security and cybersecurity
  - Strategic planning and development
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# Key focus area - Agility and Resilience


**Agility** enables organizations to rapidly respond to emergencies and operational changes or take advantage of opportunities and address challenges.

The capacity for rapid change and flexibility in operations.

**Resilience** means being able to respond quickly to both opportunities and threats - to adapt operations, action plans, workforce plans, and organizational processes.

The ability to anticipate, prepare for and recover from disasters, emergencies, and other disruptions.

**Agility and Resilience** is about the ability to recognize when change is needed, respond and shift, and “bounce back” or continue operating during a disruption.





# Key focus area - Agility and Resilience

Agility and Resilience are key to organizational performance in these areas:

**Leadership: 1.1c(1)** How do senior leaders create an environment for success now and in the future? *How do leaders cultivate agility and resilience, accountability...*

**Strategy development: 2.1a (1)** Strategic planning process. *How does this process address the potential need for change, changing initiatives, agility and resilience...*

**Strategy implementation: 2.2b** Action Plan Modification. *How do you recognize when circumstances require a shift in action plans and rapid execution of new plans.*





# Key focus area - Agility and Resilience

**Workforce: 5.1a(4)** How do you organize and manage your workforce? *How do you reinforce organizational resilience, agility, and a patient/customer and business focus...*

**Work Process design: 6.1a(4)** How do you design key work processes to support key requirements? *How do you incorporate new technology, knowledge, the need for agility into these processes.*

**Operational effectiveness: 6.2(b)** How do you manage your supply chain network? *How do you mitigate risk and enhance supply chain agility and resilience?*






## **Key focus area - Agility and Resilience**

Ultimately, Agility and Resilience ensure your organization's ability to continue operations in situations such as disasters, emergencies, and other disruptions and recover from these events.

**Business Continuity and Resilience: 6.2c(3)** How do you ensure that your organization can anticipate, prepare for, and recover from disaster, emergencies, and other disruptions?






# Key focus area - Workforce Retention

The nature of work in healthcare has changed. Understanding key drivers of **Employee Engagement** that lead to **Workforce Retention** is critical.

Engagement factors may include employee health and safety, job quality, and retention have become more important since the “great resignation of 2020” continues to be an economic trend.

The criteria has renewed focus on **Workforce Engagement** and retention, including promoting high performance work, how to use, assess, and improvement workforce engagement.








# Key focus area - Workforce Retention

Workforce has its own criteria category and specifically focuses on the Workforce Environment and Workforce Engagement.

**Workforce Change: 5.1a(3)** How do you prepare your workforce for changing capability and capacity needs? *Balance workforce needs to ensure continuity, prevent reductions, minimize impact from reductions; prepare for and manage periods of workforce growth or shortages...*

**Workforce Compensation and Benefits: 5.1b(2)** How do you support your workforce via compensation and benefits? *How do your policies support fairness? How do your benefits address the needs of a diverse workforce?*






# Key focus area - Workforce Retention

**Drivers of Engagement: 5.2a(1)** How do you determine the key drivers of workforce engagement? *How do you determine drivers for different workforce groups and segments?*

**Assessment of Engagement and Retention: 5.2a(2)** How do you assess workforce engagement? *What assessment methods and measures do you use to determine workforce satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement? How do you use these and other indicators to assess and improve engagement and retention?*






## Key focus area - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility

**Diversity** includes more than gender, race, ethnicity. Diversity also includes factors such as age, education, or disability. This may apply to both the workforce and patient groups. Successful organizations capitalize on the diverse backgrounds, characteristics, knowledge, skills, and creativity of people.

**Equity** means supporting fair treatment for all patients, other customers, and workforce members within the organization.

**Inclusion** refers to enabling full participation for all patients, customers, and workforce members and supporting them to feel a sense of belonging and empowerment.

**Accessibility** is an element of the organization's culture, climate, and environment. This includes fair treatment of patients, customers, and workforce members.





## Key focus area - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility** were added to the criteria in 2021 and have become more prevalent in the most recent version of the criteria in the following areas:

**Patient, Customer experience: 3.2a(1)** How do you build and manage patient/customer relationships? *How do you build a patient/customer-focused organizational culture? Meet patient/customer requirements and expectations?*

**Fair Treatment: 3.2a(4)** How do your patient/customer experience processes promote and ensure fair treatment for different patients, patient groups, other customer groups, and market segments?






## Key focus area - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility

**New Workforce Members: 5.1a(2)** How do you recruit, hire, and onboard new workforce members? *How do you ensure your workforce represents the diversity of ideas, cultures, and thinking in your hiring and patient communities.*

**Workplace Environment: 5.1b(1)** How do you address workforce health and accessibility for the workforce? *What are your performance measures, improvement goals, workplace environmental factors?*

**Workforce Compensation and Benefits: 5.1b(2)** How do you support your workforce via compensation and benefits? *How do your policies related to compensation address fairness? How do your benefits address the needs of a diverse workforce, different workforce groups and segments?*






## Key focus area - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility

**Organizational Culture: 5.2b** How do you foster an organizational culture characterized by open communication, high performance, patient safety, and an engaged workforce? *How do ensure your organizational culture promotes empowerment, equity, and inclusion; and benefits from the diversity of ideas, cultures, and thinking of your workforce?*

**Equity and Inclusion: 5.2c(4)** How do you ensure that your performance management, performance development, and career development processes promote equity and inclusion for a diverse workforce and different workforce groups and segments?






## Key focus area - Knowledge, Security, and Cybersecurity

Information and knowledge management encompasses organizational data, technology systems, clinical and financial software used for electronic records, and how sensitive data and information is protected against loss.

**Data and Information: 4.2a(1) Quality** How do you verify and ensure the quality of organizational data and information? **4.2a(2) Availability** How do you ensure the availability of organizational data and information?

**Cybersecurity: 4.2a(3)** How do you secure sensitive or privileged data and information technology assets, and internet-enabled systems? This includes managing physical and digital data and information; ensuring key networked, cloud-based systems to ensure confidentiality and maintain awareness of security and cybersecurity threats.






## Key focus area - Knowledge, Security, and Cybersecurity

**Organizational Knowledge: 4.2b(1)** How do you build and manage organizational knowledge? To include: collecting and transferring knowledge among the workforce, analyzing data and information, and embedding learning into the organizational operations.

**Best Practices: 4.2b(2)** How do you identify and share best practices in your organization? How do you determine internal and external sources for best practices??

**Pursuit of Innovation: 4.2c** How do you determine which opportunities for innovation to pursue? How do you determine when the opportunity results in meaningful change for the organization?








# Key focus area - Strategic planning and development

**Strategic planning and development** refers to the organizational approach to preparing for the future and considers acceptable levels of risk. Strategy is directed toward becoming a high performing organization that is reliable, focused on customizing service, being an employer of choice, and meeting community and population health care needs.

**Strategic planning and development** will include developing goals and objectives in key areas of focus including:

- Agility and resilience
  - Workforce retention
  - Diversity, equity, and inclusion
  - Accessibility and fair treatment
  - Knowledge, security, and cybersecurity
- 



## **Key focus area - Strategic planning and development**

**Strategy Development Process: 2.1a(1)** How do you conduct your strategic planning? What are your short- and long-term planning horizons? Does the process address the potential need for change?

**Strategic Opportunities and Intelligent Risks: 2.1a(3)** How do you identify strategic opportunities and stimulate innovation?

**Key Strategic Objectives: 2.1b(1)** What are your organization's key strategic objectives and their most important related goals?





## **Key focus area - Strategic planning and development**

Where do you start your organizational strategic planning and development process? You can start by identifying:

**Strategic Advantages:** Organizational features/benefits that may have decisive influence on future success.

**Strategic Challenges:** External influences/pressures that may negatively affect future success.

**Strategic Opportunities:** What are prospects for new or changed services, processes, or markets.






# Key focus area - Strategic planning and development

**Strategic Objectives:** Focus on both internal and external situations and conditions, advantages, and challenges facing the organization and are used to set direction to facilitate competitiveness, guide resource allocation, and ensure long-term organizational success.

**Strategic Goals:** Performance levels the organization intends to attain. Goals guide actions and are quantitative targets for achieving success. Goals clarify strategic objectives, focus on a common end, provide a basis for measuring progress.

**SMART Goals:** Goals used for strategic planning and development should be SMART - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound. These goals must be clear, trackable, and achievable to promote overall organizational success.






## **Key focus area - Strategic planning and development**

How does the process start? Where do you begin?

An **Organizational SWOT Analysis** is a great place to start.

Exactly what is a **SWOT**?

It is a framework used to evaluate an organization's competitive position and to develop strategic planning. SWOT analysis assesses internal and external factors, as well as current and future potential. SWOT analysis is designed to facilitate a realistic, fact-based, data-driven look at the strategic advantages and challenges facing the organization.





# Key focus area - Strategic planning and development


## SWOT- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

**Strengths** - Internal factors, positive attributes that provide an advantage over competitors. The things you do well, services you are known for, what sets you apart from others who offer similar services.

**Weaknesses** - Negative attributes that limit performance or hinder growth. Things to improve, fix, or avoid. Examples may include lack of financial resources, high turnover, low customer satisfaction, or poor quality of care.

**Opportunities** - External, favorable situations or conditions that can be leveraged to achieve goals that are a benefit or advantage to the organization. These may include a demand for your services, a new market segment or niche, a new partnership or collaboration.

**Threats** - Unfavorable situations or conditions that can harm business. Risks or challenges that need to be recognized. Some examples may be declining demand for current services, a new competitor, negative publicity, a regulatory change.





# So why should you begin the Quality Award Journey?

The **Baldrige Excellence Framework** empowers your organization to:

- Reach organizational goals
- Improve results and outcomes
- Become more competitive

The Baldrige criteria is a proven foundation of high performing organizations that are successful now and in the future.





# So why should you begin the Quality Award Journey?

The Baldrige Excellence Framework provides a systems approach to organizational management, performance improvements and overall success.

- Systems perspective
  - Visionary leadership
  - Patient-focused excellence
  - Valuing people
  - Organizational learning
  - Focus on success
  - Managing for innovation
  - Management by fact
  - Societal responsibility and community health
  - Ethics and transparency
  - Delivering value and results
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# 2025 Quality Award Program Important Dates

**Available now:**

2025 Bronze, Silver, and Gold AHCA/NCAL Award Criteria Packets at [www.ahcancal.org/Quality/National-Quality-Award-Program](http://www.ahcancal.org/Quality/National-Quality-Award-Program)

**Intent to Apply** [August 14 - November 14, 2024, 8 p.m. EST](#)

**Application Deadline** - [January 23, 2025, 8 p.m. EST](#)





# Contact Information

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## AHCA/NCAL Quality Award Program:

Panel of Judges (2018-present)

Master Examiner (2012-2017)

Senior Examiner (2008-2011)

Quality Award Recipient: Bronze (2008, 2016); Silver (2009, 2017);  
Gold (2014)





# **Presentation Resources**

**AHCA/NCAL Quality Award Program,**

**[www.ahcancal.org/quality\\_improvement/quality\\_award](http://www.ahcancal.org/quality_improvement/quality_award)**

**Baldrige Excellence Framework, Health Care**

**[www.nist.gov/Baldrige/healthcare](http://www.nist.gov/Baldrige/healthcare)**

**Core Values Partners, Inc., Paul Grizzell, President**

**[www.corevaluespartners.com](http://www.corevaluespartners.com)**





**Thank you for your time and attention**

Good Luck and Enjoy

Your Quality Journey!

