

NEBRASKA CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITALS &
RURAL HEALTH CLINICS CONFERENCE ON QUALITY



2025



QUALITY CONFERENCE

2025 Nebraska CAHs & RHCs Conference on Quality

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CONFERENCE PRESENTERS

MELINDA ALLEN

Columbus Community Hospital

CHRISTINE ARASMITH

Columbus Community Hospital

LAURA BATEMAN MSN, CPHQ

Kimball Health Services

SYDNE CARRAHER DNP, APRN-NP, NNP-BC

NPQIC

CHRIS DERIENZO MD, CHIEF PHYSICIAN EXECUTIVE

American Hospital Association (AHA)

WHITNEY FELDMAN MHA

Senior Life Solutions

RHONDA FISCHER RN, TEAM TRAINING CLINICAL PROGRAM LEAD

American Hospital Association (AHA)

VICTORIA KENNEL PHD

University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC)

DONA KUDRON MSN, RN

Columbus Community Hospital

AMBER KAVAN BSN, RN, CPHQ

Nebraska Hospital Association (NHA)

ELIZABETH LEHMKUHLER RN, CPHQ

Jennie M. Melham Memorial Medical Center

RENEE LIGHTHALL BHA, MLT (ASCP)

Cozad Community Hospital

MIKE PARADISO

ChartSpan Medical

TARA PALENSKY RN

Butler County Health

JENNA PREUSKER PHARM D, BCPS, BCIDP

Nebraska Medicine/NE DHHS

DR. BOB RAUNER MD, MPH, FAAFP

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RYAN ANDERSON MS

Nebraska Hospital Association (NHA)

LINDSEY STEELE MPH

NPQIC

STEPHANIE WETOVICK PHARM D

Jennie M. Melham Memorial Medical Center

ALECIA NEIDIG MSN, RN

Columbus Community Hospital

Accredited Continuing Education

LOCATION

Younes Conference Center South | [416 Talmadge St, Kearney, NE 68845](#)

TARGET AUDIENCE

Quality Leaders, Nursing Leaders, Clinic Managers, Pharmacists, CEO's, Providers, Board Members

OVERVIEW

This program has been designed to meet the education needs of health care professionals, including hospital and clinic quality and nursing leaders, pharmacists, CEO's, governing board members, and providers. This program will focus on national and state best practices and create intentional thought around the role of CAH Quality in the future of Nebraska health care.

REGISTRATION

[Click here](#) for more information and to register for the conference.

LODGING

For overnight accommodations, there is a block of rooms available at the Fairfield Inn & Suites for the nights of Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, November 11-13, 2025 at the rate of \$144.95 + tax/per night. Please call the Fairfield Inn at 308-236-4200 **no later than October 22, 2025**. After that date, rates cannot be guaranteed.

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT



In support of improving patient care, this activity has been planned and implemented by AXIS Medical Education and the Nebraska Hospital Association. AXIS Medical Education is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

Pre-Conference | November 12 — Sponsored by NAHQRS + NHA

OPTIONAL ADD-ON

9:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.

CRYSTAL 3



Nebraska Association for Healthcare
Quality, Risk and Safety

BEYOND BUY-IN: BUILDING OWNERSHIP FOR CHANGE WITH TEAMSTEPS

Chris DeRienzo MD, Chief Physician Executive | American Hospital Association

Rhonda Fischer RN, Team Training Clinical Program Lead | American Hospital Association

In today's value-driven health care landscape, aligning clinical quality with organizational culture and financial performance is not optional—it's mission-critical. This immersive, hands-on workshop brings together health care executives, quality leaders and clinical leadership to tackle one of the most persistent challenges in health care: how to implement and sustain meaningful change.

Using the proven tools and change management methodology of TeamSTEPS, participants will explore the powerful intersection between quality improvement, cost containment and organizational culture. Through engaging simulations, leadership frameworks and team-based activities, attendees will gain actionable strategies to overcome resistance, build lasting ownership and measure what matters.

Whether you're driving clinical transformation, leading QAPI initiatives or managing change across service lines, this session offers a blueprint for implementing structured, scalable change management—grounded in communication, engagement and measurable results.

OBJECTIVES:

- Explore the connection between quality improvement and cost reduction within the population health environment.
- Discover how TeamSTEPS tools and the TeamSTEPS methodology contribute to meaningful change management.
- Discuss the importance of measuring success and identify measures that can be used to assess the impact of a change management program.
- Discuss common challenges to organizational change management and strategies to overcome them.
- Discuss key principles of implementing change and develop a tactical and strategic change management plan for a current challenge.

Pre-Conference | November 12 — At-A-Glance Agenda

8:55 A.M. - 9:00 A.M.

WELCOME FROM NAHQRS

9:00 A.M. - 10:45 A.M.

TEAMSTEPS OVERVIEW

10:45 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.

BREAK

11:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

BUILDING OWNERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M.

LUNCH

1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.

LEADING CHANGE

2:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.

MEASURING SUCCESS

3:00 P.M. - 3:15 P.M.

BREAK

3:15 P.M. - 4:45 P.M.

PRINCIPLES OF CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION

4:45 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

WRAP-UP & DEBRIEF

Agenda | November 13

8:55 A.M. - 9:00 A.M.

WELCOME

9:00 A.M. - 10:15 A.M.

WHEN SECONDS CHANGE LIVES: PATIENT SAFETY AND SYSTEM BREAKDOWNS

RaDonda Vaught

DESCRIPTION:

RaDonda Vaught will share her profoundly personal story. Ms. Vaught's case made headlines in March 2022 when a jury found her guilty of criminally negligent homicide and gross neglect of an impaired adult in the death of a patient to whom she accidentally gave the wrong medication. She will speak first hand on the impact this sentinel event has had on her life and her profession, along with the implications of the legal actions that followed. A passionate advocate for safety and improvement, her story will be one that is not easily forgotten.

OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the impact of human factors & system factors combined on error potential.
- Discuss the range of feelings providers can have in the aftermath of a medical error.
- To assess the course of events following a medication error.

10:15 A.M. - 10:30 A.M.

BREAK

10:30 A.M. - 11:15 A.M.

SENIOR LIFE SOLUTIONS: ENHANCING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE FOR OLDER ADULTS

Whitney Feldman MHA

OBJECTIVES:

- Describe the role of Senior Life Solutions.
- Outline the unmet mental health needs throughout the country.
- Detail the impact of mental health on Americans.
- Identify Senior Life Solutions program benefits.

11:15 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

ADVANCING PERINATAL CARE FOR A THRIVING RURAL NEBRASKA: COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR BETTER OUTCOMES

Sydney Carraher DNP, APRN-NP, NNP-BC

Lindsey Steele MPH

OBJECTIVES:

- Discuss the current state of perinatal health in Nebraska.
- Describe the Nebraska Perinatal Quality Improvement Collaborative's maternal safety initiatives.
- Identify strategies and resources to improve maternal and infant health in rural health care settings.

12:00 P.M. - 1:15 P.M.

AWARDS LUNCHEON:

- Quest for Excellence
- Top CAHs in Nebraska
- QI Residency 2.0 Graduates
- Age-Friendly Recognition
- Quality Award of Excellence in Lung Cancer Screening
- Connect with Exhibitors

Agenda | November 13 — Hospital Sessions

1:15 P.M. - 2:15 P.M.

STUDENT NURSE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM: STRUCTURING THE FUTURE AND STRENGTHENING THE NURSING WORKFORCE

Dona Kudron MSN, RN **Christine Arasmith**
Alecia Neidig MSN, RN **Tawny Sandifer MSN, RN, NEA-BC**
Melinda Allen

OBJECTIVES:

- Discuss the development and structure of a student nurse intern program (SNIP).
- Discuss the impacts of SNIP on participants involved and the organization.
- Review the outcomes and lessons learned following implementation of a SNIP.

2:15 P.M. - 2:45 P.M.

THE ROAD TO STROKE REHABILITATION CERTIFICATION AT BUTLER COUNTY HEALTH

Tara Palensky RN

OBJECTIVES:

- Define the why, where, when, and how behind the initiation of becoming Stroke Rehab Certified.
- Describe the team approach by defining the roles of the different disciplines within the Stroke Rehab Committee.
- Describe the Program Standards: a brief description of the AHA program requirements to become Stroke Rehab Certified.
- Explore effective treatment and education strategies implemented to meet certification requirements.
- Discuss the continuum of care at BCH from the acute emergency room admission to post-acute stroke rehabilitation.

2:45 P.M. - 3:15 P.M.

STANDARDIZING SEPSIS MANAGEMENT TO ELEVATE QUALITY OF CARE AND PATIENT OUTCOMES

Elizabeth Lehmkuhler RN, CPHQ
Jennifer Schaaf PharmD, R.P., CPHQ, CHC **Stephanie Wetovick PharmD**

OBJECTIVES:

- Assess the critical role of thorough project planning in achieving successful project outcomes.
- Explain the importance of leveraging data to inform decision-making and identify key benefits of data-driven strategies in improving outcomes.
- Explain the importance of early recognition and standardized care in reducing sepsis mortality.

3:15 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.

BREAK

3:30 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

BUILDING NURSING SUPPORT

Laura Bateman MSN, CPHQ

OBJECTIVES:

- Discuss how a rapid response team looks in the CAH setting.
- Discuss the benefits of educational programs.
- Discuss methods to implement EMS providers into Nursing Department functions.

4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

LEVERAGING CHARTIS INDEX REPORTS: DRIVING PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT THROUGH DATA AND PEER COLLABORATION

Amber Kavan BSN, RN, CPHQ

OBJECTIVES:

- Interpret key metrics within the Chartis Index Reports to identify organizational strengths and areas for growth.
- Engage in peer sharing to explore best practices and innovative strategies for performance improvement.
- Develop actionable plans to address identified gaps and enhance quality, efficiency, and patient outcomes.

Agenda | November 13 — Clinic Sessions

1:15 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.

FROM DATA TO DETECTION: PERSONALIZING CANCER SCREENING IN NEBRASKA WITH RISK TOOLS AND EHR WORKFLOWS

Rachael Schmidt DNP, APRN, AOCNP

OBJECTIVES:

- Describe current cancer incidence and cancer screening rates across Nebraska.
- Explain how risk-assessment tools (e.g., CancerIQ) can personalize cancer screening and prevention-based recommendations.
- Analyze the lung cancer screening program case study to outline integration steps, review metrics, and lessons learned.

2:00 P.M. - 2:45 P.M.

ACHIEVING HIGH COMMUNITY HPV VACCINATION RATES

Dr. Bob Rauner MD, MPH, FAAFP

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the reasons for communities to achieve high HPV vaccination rates.
- Learn about implementation challenges for clinic quality improvement initiatives.
- Learn the key interventions clinics use to achieve high vaccination rates.

2:45 P.M. - 3:15 P.M.

ADVANCING AGE-FRIENDLY CARE IN AMBULATORY SETTINGS: STRATEGIES FOR BETTER OUTCOMES

AMBER KAVAN BSN, RN, CPHQ

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify the core principles of the Age-Friendly Health Systems framework and their application in ambulatory care.
- Examine practical approaches to integrating the 4Ms into routine outpatient workflows.
- Evaluate strategies to improve patient engagement, safety, and care coordination for older adults across ambulatory settings.

3:15 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.

BREAK

3:30 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

CATCH RURAL FALLS: A PROGRAM TO SUPPORT RURAL HEALTH CLINICS WITH FALL RISK MANAGEMENT FOR OLDER ADULTS

Dawn Venema PT, PhD

Victoria Kennel PhD

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify recommended fall risk management strategies for older adults for use in primary care settings.
- Describe the use of fall risk management strategies in a sample of Nebraska RHCs.
- Discuss the purpose of and resources available to Nebraska RHCs in the CATCH RURAL Falls program.

4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

HOW 15 MINUTES WITH CLAIMS DATA CAN IMPROVE PATIENT OUTCOMES

Ryan Anderson MS

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify ways that claims data can illuminate trends in patient complexity and chronic disease burden across service lines and geographies.
- Interpret quality variation and benchmark performance using publicly available Medicare data integrated into comparative dashboards.
- Describe how pre-built analytics tools can support hospital quality initiatives in under 15 minutes of review time.

Agenda | November 14

8:15 A.M. - 8:30 A.M.

OPENING STATEMENTS

Amber Kavan BSN, RN, CPHQ

8:30 A.M. - 9:30 A.M.

TRUE OR FALSE?! TOP MYTHS OF DIAGNOSIS AND MANAGEMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES FOR BEST PRACTICES IN ANTIBIOTIC STEWARDSHIP

Jenna Preusker PharmD, BCPS, BCIDP

OBJECTIVES:

- Explore why myths commonly exist in diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases.
- Identify common misconceptions in the diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases that contribute to antibiotic overuse in both inpatient and outpatient settings.
- Recognize opportunities to improve antibiotic therapy related to common infectious disease myths through quality improvement strategies that support antibiotic stewardship across care settings.

9:30 A.M. - 10:00 A.M.

BRIDGING THE GAP: COMMUNICATING QUALITY TO BOARDS AND MEDICAL STAFF

Renee Lighthall BHA, MLT (ASCP)

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand how to communicate quality in ways that help board members and medical staff connect with its relevance and impact.
- Translate quality data into strategic and clinical language that supports informed decision-making.
- Apply engagement strategies that foster trust, alignment, and shared accountability for quality outcomes.

10:00 A.M. - 10:15 A.M.

BREAK

10:15 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.

LEVERAGING CARE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS TO DRIVE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Mike Paradiso

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand how a care management program can help you identify and address care gaps.
- Describe how CCM and APCM support chronic condition management and quality measures through education and monitoring.
- Explore strategies for addressing quality measures, including connecting patients with community resources, improving care coordination, and engaging patients in self-management.

11:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

NHA UPDATES

Amber Kavan BSN, RN, CPHQ

OBJECTIVES:

- Summarize recent NHA initiatives focused on quality improvement and workforce.
- Identify opportunities for member hospitals to engage in statewide quality and policy initiatives.
- Outline strategic priorities and planned initiatives for 2026 to advance quality across Nebraska.

