

**THE AHCA/NCAL QUALITY AWARD** is a criteria-based program that recognizes a commitment to performance excellence by member facilities of the American Health Care Association (AHCA) and National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL). Quality Award recipients demonstrate their commitment to deliver ever-improving value to residents and other customers, to improve overall organizational effectiveness and capabilities, and to champion organizational and personal learning

**THE AHCA/NCAL QUALITY AWARD** is a “step-based” program. Facilities may apply for recognition and awards at three levels, each of which requires a more detailed and comprehensive demonstration of systematic quality. Facilities must receive a quality award at each level to progress to the next level.

**STEP I APPLICANTS** are assessed on their ability to develop a profile of their mission, services, environment, resources, and basic ability to initiate improvement and measure results.

**STEP II APPLICANTS** are assessed on their ability to apply the core values and concepts of quality. The core values and concepts are adapted to long term care from the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria for performance excellence. Only facilities that have earned a Step I level award may apply at this level.

**STEP III APPLICANTS** address the seven categories and related items of the Baldrige criteria in its entirety. The application is assessed based on their ability to demonstrate a systematic approach and deployment with superior results. Only facilities that have earned a Step II level award may apply at this level.

“The AHCA/NCAL Quality Award provides our members an excellent opportunity for recognition of their hard work and commitment to quality. No other association initiative has ever created this much excitement and enthusiasm to excel. We appreciate this program very much.

—Fred Watson  
President, Georgia Nursing Home Association



A Covenant For Healthy, Affordable  
And Ethical Long Term Care

The AHCA/NCAL Quality Awards program directly aligns with the Quality First principles that cultivate and nourish an environment of continuous quality improvement, openness and leadership.

- Continuous Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement
- Public Disclosure and Accountability
- Patient/Resident and Family Rights
- Workforce Excellence
- Public Input and Community Involvement
- Ethical Practices and
- Financial Stewardship.

Participation in the AHCA/NCAL Quality Awards program anchors your facility focus and processes to evidenced-based systematic quality. For more information and resources to support you in your quality journey log on to [AHCA.org](http://AHCA.org) or [NCAL.org](http://NCAL.org) and click on Quality First.

AHCA/NCAL QUALITY AWARD  
1201 L Street NW  
Washington, DC 20005-4015



## *The* 2005 AHCA/NCAL Quality Award: A Benchmark of Performance

# Demonstrate your commitment to continuous quality improvement.



## BENEFITS

Moving through the three steps of the AHCA/NCAL Quality Award can help you begin a quality "journey" and assess your progress as you proceed. The quality award program is designed to encourage continuous learning about quality. Every application receives feedback designed to help the facility improve. When successful in meeting the criteria for each step, the award brings public recognition for the goals the facility has achieved. The application process will help you:

- Gain a true picture of your mission, goals, and customer expectations
- Assess and maximize your facility's strengths
- Apply systematic approaches that produce consistent results across operations
- Receive customized feedback and solutions to improve performance
- Increase your performance management, planning, training, and assessment proficiencies
- Validate and secure the links between continuous improvement, quality, and customer satisfaction

## SELECTION

A team of trained examiners, who are long term care professionals, review each AHCA/NCAL Quality Award application relative to the award criteria, identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement. This criteria-based program focuses on results and the conditions and processes that lead to results. All applicants receive a comprehensive feedback report from the examiners, regardless of whether they earn an award.

The feedback report serves as an explanation of the examiners' decision and as a resource for quality improvement. Examiner review is rigorous. While less than one-third of the applicants receive the award on first application, many facilities use the feedback report as a roadmap, and succeed the following year. Recipients of this prestigious award, modeled after the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, know that the pursuit of excellence is a continuous journey, and that the journey is as important as the destination.

## ELIGIBILITY

All long term care facilities, including nursing facilities, assisted living residences, and MR/DD residential care facilities, that are members of an AHCA/NCAL affiliate association may apply. National and regional multifacility corporations may not apply as an organization; however, their individual facilities may apply. To receive the award, skilled nursing facilities must also meet the following requirements:

Applicants at all three award levels must not have a substandard care or immediate jeopardy on standard or complaint surveys within the last three years.

Applicants for the Step II and Step III levels must have a 3-year weighted average survey deficiency score that is no higher than the three-year weighted average for the state. Weights are assigned for scope and severity. A table of state averages and weighting is provided in each application.

## RECOGNITION

The AHCA/NCAL Quality Award is a great way to showcase your facility's commitment to continuous quality improvement and to achieve performance excellence. The recognizable gold quality seal identifies the standard-bearers of continuous quality improvement and achievement in the long term care profession. Awardees may use the seal on letterhead, business cards, brochures, and other marketing materials developed for facility use.

In addition, winners are announced and recognized at the AHCA/NCAL Annual Convention, the largest long term care meeting in the country, and receive specially designed awards to display at the facility.

## APPLY TODAY

**The application deadline is March 31, 2005.** Recipients are notified by mail in late summer, and awards are presented at the annual convention, October 2005.

For more information on the AHCA/NCAL Quality Award or to download an application, go to [www.ahca.org](http://www.ahca.org) or [www.ncal.org](http://www.ncal.org) and click on the Quality Improvement or Quality Award area.

“The AHCA/NCAL Quality Award program has been very beneficial for Harborside Healthcare facilities. It's not only an opportunity for recognition but it provides a structure for systematic quality improvement. By participating in the program, facility teams gain the perspective of how their efforts fit into the framework that the Malcolm Baldrige National Award provides. We see the achievement of the Step I award not as a destination, but the beginning of a journey towards organizational excellence.”

—Brad Shiverick  
Vice President, Quality Assurance and Improvement  
Harborside Healthcare

“At Sunshine Terrace continuous quality improvement is part of our culture. It comes naturally. We are proud to have received AHCA's quality award. It enhances our determination to continuously improve our systems and processes to promote our ability to have consistently positive outcomes.”

—Sara Sinclair  
Chief Executive Officer, Sunshine Terrace Foundation  
Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center  
(2003 Step I Recipient)

“The application process focused the center's team by providing the pathway and the foundation to identify successes and communicate performance excellence by quantifiable indicators. In the journey to the Step I level, it brought the team together around performance practices and capabilities, and helped us enhance our business plan incorporating our mission statement and stakeholder's needs. The Step II level has given us the platform to expand our pursuit of excellence, by sharing our best practice models with others and becoming visible leaders in our community.”

—Ira M. Schoenberger  
Senior Administrator, Heritage Hall East  
(2002 Step I and 2003 Step II Recipient)