



FALL 2025



NEWSLETTER



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Fall Conference

Registration is still open for our Fall In-Person and Virtual Conference on Friday, October 17, 2025

Navigating the Changing Healthcare Environment

Key Topics:

- The Changing Landscape of QI: A Health Plan Perspective on Medicare & Medicaid
- Improving Member Experience with Smart Insights
- Navigating Change Together
- Proactive Risk Management in Healthcare
- Optimizing Analytics to Improve Interventions
- Panel Discussion: Navigating the Changing Healthcare Environment

We Need You: Open 2026 Board Seat

We need your expertise! We have the following vacant position for 2026:

- President-Elect
(must have prior AZAHQ Board experience)

Please reach out to Holly Grems at manager@azahq.org with questions to learn more.

Fall Conference Networking Session

As we gear up for our Fall event, we invite everyone to come ready to dive into some key topics to help shape our discussions.

- What keeps you up at night regarding healthcare quality, patient safety, accreditation, or risk management, and how can AZAHQ help address these pressing concerns in a way that encourages leadership commitment and staff participation?
- What are the biggest challenges you're facing in your organization, and what practical tools, resources, or programs from AZAHQ would help you overcome these challenges and drive organizational alignment toward quality goals?
- What emerging trends or future needs in healthcare do you foresee, and how can AZAHQ support your organization in staying ahead of these changes while ensuring that leadership and staff are fully engaged in driving improvements?
- What specific services, networking opportunities, or professional development programs could AZAHQ provide that would create value for your organization and motivate leaders to commit to guiding staff in quality improvement efforts?

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear AZAHQ Members,

We are so excited to celebrate our 30th anniversary of serving the healthcare quality community this year. We recognize 1995 as the starting point, which was the year the organization was restructured as the Arizona Association for Healthcare Quality and began offering CPHQ® courses.

The mission has always been to serve as a resource to advance healthcare quality within Arizona through leadership, education and communication. The vision is to be recognized by the Arizona healthcare community as leaders in advancing healthcare quality. Critical success factors were membership retention and growth, products and services, financial viability, visibility, credibility, and advocacy.

In alignment with our mission and vision, we are thrilled to invite you to our fall conference on October 17 which you can attend in-person or virtually! This outstanding program will explore how evolving healthcare landscapes are reshaping healthcare quality, with topics including data analytics, innovative tools, and collaborative strategies for continuous improvement and informed decision making.

We are here to continue to support you in your quality journey to obtain the Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality (CPHQ®) credential. We will be offering the Quality Journey education program, a 12-hour virtual offering covering information on topics in the CPHQ content outline in three four-hour sessions from 8 am – 12 pm on October 10, 11, and 12.

We are continuing our partnership with other state healthcare quality associations to provide webinars that are free to active members of participating associations. Each offers 4 hours of NAHQ-approved CPHQ® continuing education annually. We are now nine organizations strong! We are actively planning webinars to help you on your quality journey. The webinars and educational conferences support quality professionals not only by providing education and networking opportunities, but also by providing continuing education credits for quality professionals who hold the CPHQ® credential.

Finally, we have a few key initiatives on the horizon to help grow our community, and we're looking for your support. We're especially focused on promoting student memberships as they represent the next generation of healthcare quality professionals, and bringing them in early can help enrich our community with fresh perspectives and support their professional growth through networking with seasoned members. We're also looking at ways we can collaborate with other healthcare professionals to provide a mutual exchange of learning and advancement. Don't forget, we have a Member-Get-a-Member referral program where you, as members, can receive discounts toward your annual dues.



Thank you for all you do to promote healthcare quality every day.

Nancy Claflin, DNP, MS, RN, NEA-BC, CENP, CNEcl, CCRN, CPHQ, FNAHQ
AZAHQ President 2025



Board Member Shoutouts

Kimberly Johnson is currently serving as the Associate Communications Director with AzAHQ. With over 30 years of experience in healthcare, Kim achieved her CPHQ in 2016 to support her new love of healthcare quality and her master's degree in healthcare administration.

Kim points out that working in the quality field without a clinical background brings it own unique challenges. She encourages her staff to use the CPHQ® credential as a great steppingstone to quality leadership, adding credibility to their resume.

Kim has benefited from working on both the provider and payer sides of the healthcare continuum in roles from practice management to credentialing to contracting and claims. "Quality is BY FAR the most interesting and fun of all areas," and she has become quite a cheerleader! She is currently in quality leadership and is the subject matter expert for NCQA health plan accreditation at a large healthcare company. Kim is also a board member of the Nevada Cancer Coalition and has a particular interest in colorectal cancer screening rates and how to improve them. She joined the Association for Healthcare Quality of Arizona in 2024 to meet like-minded healthcare professionals, support quality education and advance overall quality improvement in our state.

Kim shares the following tips for an up-and-coming healthcare quality professional:

- Network
- Volunteer
- work hard enough to get noticed!

“

Quality is not a switch you turn on or off; it is the primary component of your daily work.

”



Meet the ones that are leading AzAHQ to success!

Kimberly Johnson
Communications Associate Director

Membership Initiatives Update

Membership Initiatives

Did you know that we now have over 130 members? We want to keep that momentum going and share a few updates on our membership growth efforts.

- **Organizational Membership:** Still in progress. Looking at a way for organizations to join collectively which provides their employees membership and access to our educational webinars at a discount
- **Student Membership:** Designed to connect students with a supportive gateway into our professional community, we are exploring ways to engage with academic institutions
- **Member-Get-a-Member:** Referral program where members refer others and earn discounts towards their membership fee
- **Professional Healthcare Organizations:** Exploring ways to collaborate with other professional organizations who share the same commitment to quality and education



Education Forum

AzAHQ Events

Friday, October 10 - Sunday, October 12, 2025

[AzAHQ's Quality Journey](#)

Virtual Event

Friday, October 17, 2025

[2025 Fall Conference: Navigating the Changing Healthcare Environment](#)

In-Person and Virtual

Thursday, October 23, 2025

8:00 AM - 4:30 PM MST

[Lead with Purpose: Discover Your Why and Activate Your Strengths](#)

Virtual Event



Healthcare Quality Collective Events

[TGCAHQ: From Conflict to Collaboration 10/30/25](#)

[TGCAHQ: What's in the AI Black Box? 11/13/25](#)

[OrAHQ: CPHQ Prep Course 11/6 to 11/7/25](#)



A Walk Down Quality Lane with Nancy Claflin and Holly Grems

Nancy's and Holly's unwavering commitment as healthcare quality professionals has been a force behind AzAHQ's growth and evolution.

Nancy achieved CPHQ® certification in 1987, was named a Fellow of NAHQ in 1999, and has been an active member of NAHQ, serving on the Board in various roles, including president in 2004. She also held board positions with the AzAHQ, serving as president in 1995, 2007, and 2024-2025.

Holly achieved CPHQ® certification in 1993 while serving in the USAF. Since joining AzAHQ in 2002, Holly has served on the Board for three years in communications roles and then as a manager since 2006. Holly has played a pivotal role from AzAHQ's incorporation to attaining tax-exempt status.

From the beginning, AzAHQ, formerly Arizona Association of Quality Assurance Professionals (AzAQAP), had a clear purpose and goal in mind.

Purpose:

- to educate healthcare professionals to facilitate systems to optimize the quality of healthcare delivered within the state of Arizona in the most cost-effective manner

Goal:

- to provide an educational and professional forum which facilitates communication, cooperation, and the sharing of knowledge in the field of healthcare quality
- to evaluate the professional and educational needs of the membership and to provide educational tools consistent with current theory and common practice
- to encourage, develop, and provide continuing education for all persons involved in the provision of healthcare quality
- to promote professional ethics



In the timeline below, Nancy and Holly share AzAHQ's and NAHQ's key milestones.

- **1975** The National Association of Utilization Review Coordinators (NAURC) was formed
- **1978** NAURC changed its name to the National Association of Quality Assurance Professionals (NAQAP)
- **1979** AzAHQ was first organized as the Arizona Association of Quality Assurance Professionals (AZAQAP)
- **1982** AZAQAP became an affiliate of NAQAP
- **1983** The Certified Professional in Quality Assurance (CPQA) certification was launched
- **1985** Healthcare Quality Week was established to honor health care quality professionals, supported by a Presidential Proclamation from Ronald Reagan
- **1986** The first CPHQ® study course was provided by NAQAP
- **1989** NAQAP published the Journal of Quality Assurance
- **1991** NAQAP changed its name to the National Association for Healthcare Quality (NAHQ); the Journal of Quality Assurance became the Journal for Healthcare Quality, and the CPQA certification changed to CPHQ® (Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality)
- **1995** AZAQAP was restructured as the Arizona Association for Healthcare Quality (AZAHQ) and began offering CPHQ® review and study courses, which was NAHQ-approved for CE credit
- **2001** NAHQ previously provided state affiliate billing so members paid both national and state membership dues to NAHQ and NAHQ-reimbursed states. NAHQ restructured the affiliation and state billing process with all state quality healthcare associations, ending state affiliate billing which resulted in a significant drop in membership.
- **2011** First CPHQ® grant scholarship was awarded
- **2013** AAHQ was incorporated as an Arizona non-profit organization with a slight name change to Association for Healthcare Quality of Arizona, Inc. (AZAHQ). NAHQ developed new trademark and copyright restrictions resulting in AZAHQ's CPHQ review course being renamed the Quality Journey, which has been offered annually.
- **2014** AZAHQ tax-exempt status was approved; highest membership at 196
- **2020** The Healthcare Quality Collective was born, which began as a simple hand-shake agreement with AZAHQ and 2 other regional & state healthcare quality associations to each annually provide 4 hours of NAHQ-approved CPHQ® continuing education to all members at no cost
- **2023** AZAHQ partnered with Grand Canyon University (GCU) offering tuition discounts to members.
- **2025** Healthcare Quality Collective has now grown to a total of 9 participating organizations offering over 30 hours of CPHQ® CE each year

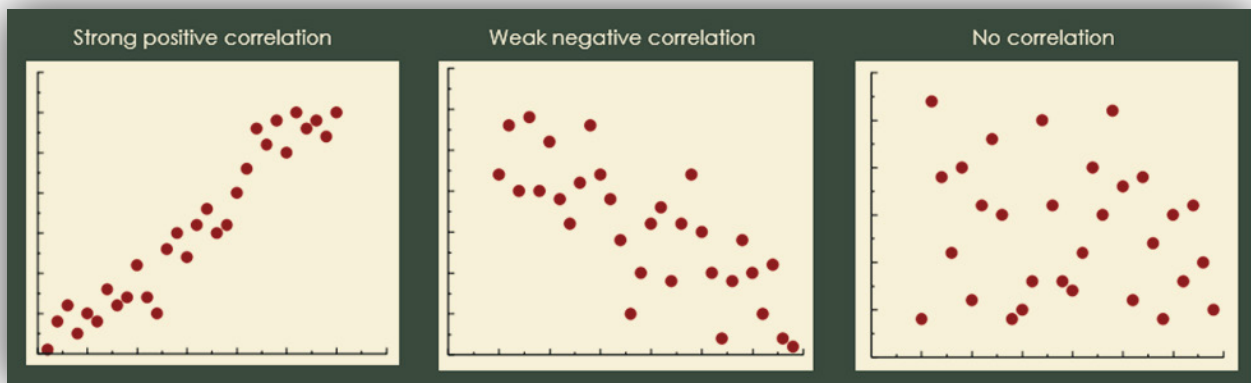
Scatter Diagram: Quality Tool of the Month

Ever need to visualize whether two variables are related? A scatter diagram, scattergram, or scatter plot does just that, a simple go-to tool for spotting potential patterns at a glance.

- Used to demonstrate a cause-effect relationship better than a simple table of numbers
- Uses only two variables, but many data points
- Can show correlation (or that there isn't one)
- Start with a hypothesis (e.g., offering walk-in appointments will reduce ED visits)

In these examples, we see the following:

- 1) a clear and distinct relationship between X and Y -- control of one variable results in control of the other
- 2) a weak correlation indicating some relationship. Take these results with caution
- 3) no correlation is seen between the variables, so revise your hypothesis



Share Your Quality Story With Us

Have a great story to tell? We're always eager to invite our members to contribute to our newsletter by sharing an article, a quality initiative, or a project they're proud of. If you would like to share, please email manager@azahq.org.