AHA 2016 Diamond Awards Announced

Recipients of the Arkansas Hospital Association’s 2016 Diamond Awards have been selected. The competition, co-sponsored by the Arkansas Society for Healthcare Marketing and Public Relations, is designed to recognize excellence in hospital public relations and marketing. Diamond Awards and Certificates of Excellence were possible in four divisions (hospitals with 0-25 beds, hospitals with 26-99 beds, hospitals with 100-249 beds and hospitals with 250 or more beds) in eight categories. The competition drew 137 entries.

The top awards (Diamond) will be presented during the Arkansas Hospital Association’s 86th Annual Meeting and Trade Show at the Little Rock Marriott. The Awards Dinner will be Thursday evening, October 6, 2016. Certificates of Excellence will be mailed to recipients prior to the annual meeting. Judging for each entry was based on goals and objectives, audience to whom directed reasons for choosing the format, frequency and quantity, portions that were created internally/externally, results/evaluation and total budget. New this year, only one Diamond Award was awarded in each category, per division (bed size). The diamond award-winning hospitals, by category and bed size are:

Advertising Print, 100-249 Beds
Medical Center of South Arkansas, El Dorado
Advertising Print, 250 + Beds
Sparks Regional Medical Center, Fort Smith
Advertising Special Visuals, 100-249 Beds
Conway Regional Health System
Advertising Special Visuals, 250 + Beds
Unity Health - White County Medical Center, Searcy
Advertising Television, 250 + Beds
UAMS Medical Center, Little Rock
Advertising Total Campaign, 0-25 Beds
Howard Memorial Hospital, Nashville
Advertising Total Campaign, 26-99 Beds
Ouachita County Medical Center, Camden
Advertising Total Campaign, 100-249 Beds
Forrest City Medical Center
Advertising Total Campaign, 250 + Beds
Baptist Health Medical Center-Little Rock
Annual Report, 250 + Beds
Arkansas Children’s Hospital, Little Rock
Writing, 26-99 Beds
Arkansas Hospice, North Little Rock
Writing, 100-249 Beds
White River Health System, Batesville
Writing, 250 + Beds
Jefferson Regional Medical Center, Pine Bluff
Arkansas Methodist Medical Center, Paragould
Annual Report, 250 + Beds
Washington Regional Medical System, Fayetteville
Foundation, 26-99 Beds
Methodist Behavioral Hospital, Maumelle
Foundation, 100-249 Beds
NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital, Jonesboro
Foundation, 250 + Beds
UAMS Medical Center, Little Rock
Publication, 0-25 Beds
Howard Memorial Hospital, Nashville
Publication, 26-99 Beds
Drew Memorial Hospital, Monticello
Publication, 100-249 Beds
The BridgeWay, North Little Rock
Publication, 250 + Beds
Arkansas Children’s Hospital, Little Rock
Writing, 26-99 Beds
Arkansas Hospice, North Little Rock
Writing, 100-249 Beds
White River Health System, Batesville
Writing, 250 + Beds
Jefferson Regional Medical Center, Pine Bluff

Congratulations to all the 2016 Diamond Award Winners!
**AHA 2016 Annual Meeting: Reaching New Horizons**

The Arkansas Hospital Association’s (AHA) 86th Annual Meeting and Trade Show is set for October 5-7, 2016 at the Little Rock Marriott.

This year’s event will feature Susan Keane Baker, MHA, author of *Higher HCAHPS Scores: The Willing to Recommend Approach*, as presenter for Wednesday’s leadership workshop. Susan will provide practical, ready-to-implement tools for leaders of all levels to take back to their teams. Another highlight of the three-day meeting includes Dr. Tejal Gandhi, president and CEO of the National Patient Safety Foundation, who will present “The Changing Landscape of Patient Safety.” Dr. Gandhi will discuss new directions in patient safety that are critical to ensure that hospitals, health systems and providers in the ambulatory care center are providing the safest care.

The highlight of the meeting will be the Keynote Presentation featuring Brian Muirhead, chief engineer for the Mars Science Laboratory at Caltech/Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) for NASA. Muirhead has worked on numerous spacecraft and technology projects since joining NASA’s JPL in 1978, including the Galileo mission to Jupiter and the Shuttle Imaging Radar-C. He will draw parallels between the exploration of deep space and the hospital environment in this session. These parallels are sometimes surprising and always motivating.

As always, the Annual Meeting is filled with continuing education opportunities for nurses, quality professionals and executives (ACHE and nursing home administrators).

This Annual Meeting has much more to offer, and we hope that you will plan to join us once you review the complete program online ([http://www.arkhospitals.org/events/annual-meeting](http://www.arkhospitals.org/events/annual-meeting)). A hardcopy program was mailed and the electronic version was emailed last week to hospital members. Be on the lookout for featured sessions in future issues of *The Notebook*. Please contact Lyndsey Dumas at (501) 224-7878 or ldumas@arkhospitals.org with questions regarding the event.

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**ADH Survey on Trauma Education**

One of the key components of the Arkansas Trauma System is appropriate education for personnel. Because education is key to an effective trauma system, current regulations outline the educational requirements for specific individuals who are a part of the system. Trauma medical directors, certain physicians, and certain mid-level practitioners must have appropriate education in Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS); trauma program managers must have appropriate education in the American Trauma Society Trauma Program Manager course (ATSTMP), the Society of Trauma Nurses Trauma Outcomes and Performance Improvement Course (TOPIC), and the AIS course provided by the Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine (AAAM); trauma registrars must have appropriate education in injury severity scaling; and trauma nurses who assist in trauma resuscitation must be certified in one of the trauma nursing courses – Advanced Trauma Care Nursing (ATN), Trauma Nurse Coordinator Course (TNCC) or ADH-approved equivalent course.

Many Arkansas hospitals have been educating their staff internally, while others have utilized courses offered by the Arkansas Trauma Education and Research Foundation (ATERF), which was created by a contract with the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) that required these courses and others. A few weeks ago, the Arkansas Hospital Association (AHA) was notified that the contract between the ADH and ATERF had been canceled.

AHA staff expressed concerns to ADH officials that trauma education continue to be of the highest quality, affordable, and offered in convenient locations around the state. The ADH staff fully agreed and is currently making plans to identify personnel who need education within hospitals via a survey
that will be sent from the ADH to each designated trauma center. Once the need has been identified, the ADH is proposing to create individual contracts with each trauma center, individually, to allow flexibility in attaining the required education. A separate process for pre-hospital personnel education will also be created.

To that end, if you have not already received a survey from the ADH related to trauma education, one is coming quickly. Please complete the survey and return it to ADH as soon as possible. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Greg Brown in the Trauma, Preparedness, and EMS Branch of ADH at greg.brown@arkansas.gov.

CMS Releases Hospital Star Rating Info

Over the strong objections of the hospital field, CMS last week released its new star ratings for hospitals on the Hospital Compare website. Earlier this month, the American Hospital Association (AHA), along with the Association of American Medical Colleges, America’s Essential Hospitals and the Federation of American Hospitals, urged CMS to share additional information with hospitals and the public about how accurately the overall hospital quality star ratings portray hospital performance and work with hospitals to validate the methodology or continue to withhold publication of the ratings. AHA also shared an analysis by an independent expert that gave reason to believe that the assumptions on which the current model is based are flawed. On July 21, the agency released impact data that continues to raise questions and concerns about the methodology and may unfairly penalize teaching hospitals and those serving the poor.

Those concerns were echoed by a bipartisan majority of both houses of Congress, which in April urged CMS to delay the release of the star ratings to allow time to work with the hospital field to ensure the ratings are fair and reliable. Reps. Jim Renacci (R-OH) and Kathleen Rice (D-NY) introduced a bill on July 25 to delay for at least one year the introduction of the hospital star ratings. The AHA will continue pushing Congress to address this issue when they reconvene. The release will likely raise questions with the media and patients. Please visit Hospital Compare to view your organization’s star rating. In addition, the AHA has posted a Media Advisory covering the matter on its website at www.aha.org. If you have questions, please contact AHA Member Relations at (800) 424-4301.

The AHA Calendar

August 2016
2 Getting Ready: Operational Efficiency and Its Impact on Reimbursement – Webinar NE080216
2 CMS Hospital Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement (QAPI) Worksheet and QAPI Conditions of Participation – Webinar T3057
2 CMS Proposed Changes to the Medicare Provider-Based Rules Will They Reshape the Future or Rewrite the Past? – Webinar T3058
4 Why Don’t We Speak Up? The Impact on Patient Safety – Webinar T3044
4 Nondiscrimination Under the Affordable Care Act: The Future of Nondiscrimination Compliance and Risk for Healthcare Providers – Webinar T3059
9 Strategic Planning for Healthcare Boards: The Value of Peer Organization Networks – Webinar TX080916

Information on all AHA educational programs and activities is available at http://www.arkhospitals.org/event. 
Final Thoughts by Paul Cunningham

Did you know that the Arkansas Hospital Association (AHA) boasts exactly 100 member organizations and that combined they employ more than 45,000 Arkansans? Or, that Medicare and Medicaid together cover 63% of all patients admitted to the state’s hospitals for inpatient care and that the people in 24 counties and cities across the state have voted local taxes on themselves designated to support their local hospital? Or, that total uncovered hospital costs for treating uninsured patients fell by 42% in 2014, the first year of Arkansas’ Private Option insurance expansion plan? You can find all that and more in the Summer 2016 issue of Arkansas Hospitals, the Arkansas Hospital Association’s (AHA) quarterly magazine, which is now available at http://www.arkhospitals.org/archive/arkhosmpmagpdf/AHASummer16.pdf.

Each year, the AHA dedicates the summer issue of its magazine to cover a broad range of information about the state’s hospitals. The summer issue for 2016 continues the tradition and contains an assortment of useful and interesting information that shows how the state’s hospitals stand comparatively in the areas of financial strength and utilization. You’ll also get a sense of how legislation and governmental policies continue to impact hospitals’ operational decisions.

Of course, what you’ll find in the magazine is just the low-hanging fruit sprouting from AHA’s data efforts. The power for AHA to be one of the most effective and efficient advocacy organizations in the state by first analyzing and then applying the knowledge derived from those efforts is the real benefit.

Sir Francis Bacon, the 16th Century English philosopher and Renaissance man extraordinaire, in every sense of the term, is credited as the first person to push for the acquisition of knowledge through scientific experimentation and observation, versus relying on theory and rhetoric. He is also thought to be the originator of the quote, “Knowledge is power.” Methinks he was onto something. Bacon’s observation has held up nicely across the years. Power certainly is acquired from knowledge that comes from information, which is derived from data.

It was no coincidence that the summer magazine also included a brief article noting the rise of “big data” throughout the healthcare field in recent years. It’s becoming such a key part of healthcare decision making that the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences is currently thinking about new graduate programs in both Clinical Informatics and Healthcare Analytics.

Whether it is hospitals, other provider and payer organizations or advocacy groups like AHA, there is a growing need to invest in the tools for gathering, sifting through, analyzing and translating data into information which can be effectively communicated among others for their use in making better-informed decisions for operational and policy purposes.

As important as it is, don’t assume that data is the backbone of an organization. Data in and of itself has little value. It must be used for a purpose. Consider it as providing the backbeat for the organization rather than the backbone.

In a musical context, the backbeat is that accent on a normally unaccented beat that keeps things rolling along while everyone else claps hands to keep time with the heavy percussion downbeat. The backbeat goes on practically unnoticed while everyone else in the band, or on the team, puts it to use to improve overall performance. Hits are made when all are in sync.

Think of your favorite rock bands. Now think of how their music would sound with only the heavy bass drum, sans the backbeat of the snare drum. It probably wouldn’t be quite as compelling. That’s the way it is with data. Except for the occasional spotlighted solo, its role is to support the more visible functions of the organization (i.e. vocalists, lead guitarists and bass players). By keeping the downbeats and backbeats, the data adds verve to those activities and hopefully improves the probability of a good outcome (a chart-topping hit?).

The truth is that The Rolling Stones would never have been the same without the backbeat that Charlie Watts has provided for the past 50 years. The same is true of Ginger Baker, who helped make the groups Cream and Blind Faith classic rock bands. Try to imagine The Beatles without Ringo! Data serves the same purpose for an organization.

The data speaks for itself, as everyone knows. But, listen closely and you might even hear the ensemble of facts, figures and statistics singing, only slightly altering the words to the 1973 Moody Blues hit, “I’m Just the Singer” to I’m just the drummer in a rock ‘n’ roll band. I’m the heart, the soul, and, yeah, I am the man.